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The father-wound in folklore: A critique of Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers

Hal W. Lanse

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THE FATHER-WOUND IN FOLKLORE: A CRITIQUE OF MITSCHERLICH, BLY, AND THEIR FOLLOWERS

by

Hal W. Lanse

M.A., Queens College Of the City University Of New York, 1991
B.A., Queens College of the City University of New York, 1979

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Education

Walden University
November 1996

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DISSERTATION

OF

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1996

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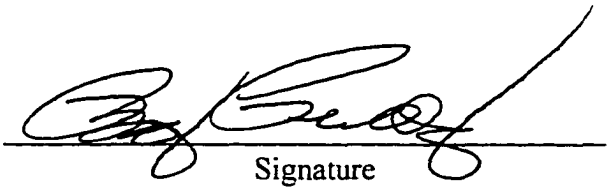

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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

Bly, following the work of Mitscherlich, posits that the Industrial Revolution divided fathers and sons, because they no longer bond while working together on family farms. Bly claims that one result is that fathers feel angry and disenfranchised and their sons consequently suffer a father-wound (either physical or psychic abuse) at their hands.

This, according to Bly, causes young men either to be so angry that they become a threat to society, or so dependent on their mothers that they are socialized as ineffectual, soft males. Many writers and therapists have embraced this theory--despite a lack of historical evidence. This study tested Bly's theory by comparing dysfunctional relationships described in the literature of the Men's Movement with relationships portrayed in ancient myths, folk tales, and Bible stories. Evidence of the father-wound was found in many of these stories, thus, casting doubt upon the historical validity of Bly's theory.

To Vali

In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die:

Ever drifting down the stream--
Lingering in the golden gleam--
Life, what is it but a dream?

--Lewis Carroll

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> So the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden and made him cultivate the soil from which he had been formed. . . . Then at the west side of the garden he put . . . a flaming sword . . . to keep anyone from coming near the tree that gives life. (Good News Bible 1976, 4)

The Bible, one of the oldest collections of stories know to humanity, is a treasure-trove of religious wisdom, allegorical tales, poetry, songs, mystical revelations, and adventures. It is also a sourcebook for the study of human nature and interpersonal relationships. This most famous of books provides many examples of courtship's, marital relationships, sibling rivalries, conflicts among neighbors, and parent-child interactions. God, from a literary point of view, can be viewed as a character who talks and acts most humanly and can therefore be included in the study of "human nature"-- often as a father figure.

In the early passage from Genesis, quoted above, God, in a most spectacular manner, does what many mortal fathers have done. He punishes a disobedient son. Whatever one makes of the theology that motivated the story it is clear that the authors of the Bible recognized and reported the existence of such conflicts. Fathers and sons have, since the beginning of recorded time, found themselves embroiled in emotional conflicts; they have fought, they have separated, they have competed.

Sons have experienced a painful awareness of rejection and have reacted against the perceived hostility of their fathers. The aim here is not to determine whether such rejections were just or morally motivated; that is the job of theologians and philosophers. The goal is to establish the fact of such situations and the fact of a **father-wound** as evidenced by world mythology and the stories of the Bible.

A popular notion has arisen in contemporary psychology and sociology--a notion generated by such writers as Alexander Mitscherlich and Robert Bly. These writers would have us believe that conflict between fathers and sons and the existence of a father-wound is a contemporary phenomenon that appeared as a result of Western industrialization. The aim of the present dissertation was to engage in a study of the father-wound in order to determine whether a study of pre-Industrial literature might yield evidence that would call this theory into question. The Bible, for example, contains stories of fathers and sons that illustrate conflicts that predate the Industrial Revolution. This study included an analysis of the Bible and an array of myths and folktales to gather evidence that pre-Industrial people were aware of such conflicts and that the assumption of a greater rift between post-Industrial fathers and sons is a flawed assumption.

Bly, perhaps the most visible of the new "Men's Movement" writers, insists that the pre-Industrial father/son relationships were closer and more nurturing because in agrarian societies fathers worked with their sons on their farms, teaching them both their trade and their moral values. After the nineteenth century, Bly theorizes, more and more men moved to the cities, worked in factories, and became estranged from their sons. As a result, contemporary men are angrier, lonelier, and more dysfunctional in their interpersonal relationships than their pre-Industrial counterparts. Fathers, Bly posits, experience a greater dissatisfaction of life because they work for someone else rather than tilling and tending their own land. In his

bestseller, **Iron John** (1990), Bly compares modern fathers with their pre-Industrial predecessors:

> When a father, absent during the day, returns home at six, his children receive only his temperament, and not his teaching. . . . What a father brings home today is usually a touchy mood, springing from powerlessness and despair mingled with long-standing shame and the numbness peculiarto those who hate their jobs. Fathers in earlier times could often break through their own humanly inadequate temperaments by teaching rope-making, fishing . . . harness making, animal care, and even singing and storytelling. The teaching sweetened . . . the temperament. (Bly 1190, 96-7)

This is a highly romanticized view of the past and, while attractive, Bly offers no historical evidence of its truth. We are asked by Bly to believe this comparison of the past to the present without documentation.

This is not to deny that Bly has raised legitimate issues. Certainly, the popularity of **Iron John**, the emergency of a Men's Movement, and the publication of many new books on men's issues provide evidence that a large number of contemporary males have experienced a rift between themselves and their fathers and that they wish to understand and heal their wounds. Still, the question remains: is this a post-Industrial phenomenon or a pan-historical situation of which evidence can be provided?

Bly has taken his cue from Mitscherlich (1993), the German sociologist who first theorized that the West is headed for moral and social decay because we have developed what amounts to a fatherless society. Fathers, Mitscherlich asserts, are less present in the lives of their children since the rise of industrialization. Once, business meant agriculture. Men worked on farms and their families worked with them. These families, according to Mitscherlich, were unified by a central authority

figure in the person of the father. This, the sociologist believes, was true of European society as a whole. Citizens were aware of a central authority figure as represented by the king and while kings could be cruel and oppressive they were also held as symbols of justice and morality.

With the emergence of the Industrial Revolution, so the theory goes, fathers moved away from farms and began to work in factories. Their children saw less of them and they became absent both as authority figures and teachers. It is no longer common for a son to learn his trade from his father. Fathers have become strangers, and this fosters a sense of alienation on the part of their sons. It also encourages derision from sons because fathers are no longer representatives of expertise and pride. Sons see discouraged fathers who work in "sardine-can" factory jobs and office jobs while they experience little satisfaction and no sense of fulfillment. They see discouraged, dehumanized fathers who become ineffectual in their eyes.

Fathers, thus, have lost their position as the moral center of their families. Mitscherlich argues that this disables them in their efforts to teach values to their children and has brought about the degeneration of Western civilization. Without a strong moral guide early in life, he theorizes, individuals reach maturity with a stunted sense of morality and no sense of obligation to social rules and properties. The implication is that we are becoming an increasingly selfish and lawless society because industrialization has caused a rift between fathers and sons.

Mitscherlich's theory, while popular with recent writers of the Men's Movement, is grounded in a questionable set of assumptions. First, he states that sons and fathers formed closer emotional bonds in the pre-Industrial West as compared with the West of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Next, he and Bly both assume that fathers and sons spent more time together when they worked on

family farms and that this physical proximity naturally resulted in a greater emotional intimacy than one generally finds in contemporary father/son relationships.

The responsible social scientist cannot assume the truth of these notions without evidence based on historical documentation. Mitscherlich and Bly each fail to provide such documentation. For all we know, fathers and sons might have spent most of their time working different acres of their farms and may have spent as much time apart as contemporary fathers and sons. Since no historical data was gathered in an attempt to ascertain the truth one would be careless in assuming that pre-Industrial fathers and sons spent more time together. It would also be unwise to assume that teaching skills to a son automatically translates into love or any form of emotional bonding. A son might have resented his father or loved him depending upon the quality of the father's teaching and the depth of his feelings for his offspring. The circumstances of a relationship do not necessarily determine its quality.

In keeping with literary tradition, the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries are seen as an era of alienation. It is during this period that many writers and artists expressed and continue to express their loneliness, anger, and frustration with life and society. Sociologists and psychologists began to study, in depth, people's dissatisfaction with life, closely examining the nature of dysfunctional relationships. Many scholars and writers, Bly and Mitscherlich among them, see this as evidence that we live in a more troubled time. This is not necessarily an accurate conclusion. It is true that post-Industrial individuals express their dissatisfactions and dysfunctions with abandon but expression of such conditions is not equivalent to their increase. It may well be that pre-Industrial families were just as dysfunctional as post-Industrial families. No effort was made by Mitscherlich or Bly to gather historical evidence for a greater degree of pain among contemporary families.

The fact is, pre-Industrial literary texts provide evidence that domestic conflicts were just as prevalent prior to the Industrial Revolution as they were after it. Do we not speak, even today, of Oedipus, who slew his father and slept with his mother? Did the Greeks not tell of Medea, who slaughtered her children as an act of revenge against her husband? These are sensational stories, to be sure, but they demonstrate an awareness among pre-Industrial storytellers that families could be dysfunctional, and violently so.

The writers of the Men's Movement focus on father/son relationships, believing that dysfunctions have arisen as a result of the Industrial Revolution. This researcher examined pre-Industrial literature to see whether the literary/historical record would support Mitscherlich and Bly or call their theory into question. Myths, folktales, and Bible stories were analyzed to see whether Bly and Mitscherlich are on the right track or the wrong track when they finger the Industrial Revolution as the chief culprit in the wounding of sons by their fathers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mitscherlich and Bly have asserted that father/son conflicts and a son's experience of a father-wound are chiefly the result of social conditions brought about by the Industrial Revolution. This dissertation took the form of a literature-based critical analysis of this assumption. As stated above, Mitscherlich and Bly have provided little historical evidence to support their theory regarding father/son relationships. This dissertation presents an effort to discover whether pre-Industrial writers were familiar with the same dysfunctional relationships described by Bly, Mitscherlich, and subsequent authors who are associated with the Men's Movement.

Myths, folktales, and Bible stories were examined to determine whether ancient people, both Western and non-Western, experienced the same distractions as

individuals currently living in the post-Industrial West. The theories of Mitscherlich and Bly assume an essential change in human behavior since the Industrial Revolution. This study questioned that assumption. Is there sufficient evidence to support a belief in an essential change in father/son relationships since the early nineteenth century? More evidence was needed that Mitscherlich, Bly and their followers have provided.

Myths and Bible stories, while sometimes containing supernatural elements, also provide (as does all literature) examples of human interaction. There are many father/son relationships to be found in the Bible and in world mythology. Many of these can be fairly described as dysfunctional or, at least, troubled. Would these stories serve as a refutation of the theories of Bly and Mitscherlich? Would they support the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships? This study attempted to answer these questions.

BACKGROUND

Why is this issue important? Researchers in the social sciences often interest themselves in the alleviation of human suffering. Writers and teachers of the Men's Movement wish to alleviate the pain of dysfunctional relationships in the lives of contemporary men. Many of them base their efforts on the theories of Bly and Mitscherlich, and if these theories contain flawed assumptions it would be well to note that fact so that these writers and researchers can look for new causes of men's dysfunctional relationships.

Bly and Mitscherlich are not wrong in one respect. Father/son relationships in the post-Industrial West can be and often are dysfunctional in nature. This, in itself, is not proof that the father-wound is a consequence of the Industrial Revolution. It is, nevertheless, important to note that many writers on men's issues have identified dysfunctions that exist in contemporary father/son relationships. It was necessary to

identify many of these dysfunctions in order to compare them with those described in the Bible or in any other pre-Industrial source. It was felt that if a consistency could be found among ancient and modern relationships then it would be useful to begin with an examination of modern relationships. These relationships would then be compared with pre-Industrial father/son interactions to see whether or not evidence existed of a substantial difference between them.

Many of the writers who discuss contemporary father/son relationships can be viewed as being part of the Men's Movement. Thus, as a background to this study, it became necessary to define the Men's Movement. While there is no definition for this term that is universally accepted it is possible to provide an overview that will reflect much of the contents of this loose-knit social movement. For some, the Men's Movement is a formal or semiformal attempt to gather men for the purpose of discussing personal issues, alleviating loneliness, and creating a sense of community. For others, the Men's Movement is a political movement dealing with issues such as child custody, fair treatment in sexual harassment cases, and issues of race and gender.

Many, but not all of the proponents of the Men's Movement, have been influenced by Bly and through him by Mitscherlich. (One is more likely to see Bly cited while Mitscherlich, who influenced him, is ignored.) Whether Bly is mentioned or not his influence can be detected in many of the writings of the Men's Movement.

For the purpose of this study, the Men's Movement was defined as the sum total of all books, articles, encounter groups, and therapies that attempt to understand how men develop their gender roles. The definition further included all efforts to alleviate those aspects of men's gender roles that create or perpetuate dysfunctional relationships. Particular attention was paid to those theorists who most clearly have been influenced by the works of Mitscherlich and Bly.

Many writers have embraced the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships. Therapists and leaders of a variety of encounter groups have built their interventions on the work of Mitscherlich and Bly; yet few, if any, provide evidence in support of the theory that father/son relationships have grown more dysfunctional since the rise of industrialization. Bly and his supporters do, however, offer a paradox. They bemoan the escalation of dysfunctional father/son relationships in post-Industrial Western society and at the same time--in Jungian or pseudo-Jungian fashion--use ancient myths and folktales to illuminate the psychology of contemporary males. A question arises--if ancient stories can illustrate contemporary psychosocial conditions could this not be considered evidence of an essential similarity of post-Industrial and pre-Industrial relationships?

Another point arises: neither Mitscherlich, nor Bly, nor those who embrace their ideas have taken into account the rise and influence of psychology since the late nineteenth century. Personal relationships are talked of with greater ease and frequency than at any other time in history. The contemporary media have made such talk more popular than ever. We talk more frequently (especially since Freud) of parent/child relationships. It may, for this reason, appear that contemporary individuals experience greater turmoil; but such an appearance may be illusory. Just because trouble has come out of the closet it does not follow that there is a greater degree of trouble. Greater discussion of pain does not signify greater quantities of it. Only a direct analysis of historical documents can lead to any certainty as to whether or not father/son relationships have undergone a substantial qualitative change.

Many proponents of the Men's Movement have embraced the Mitscherlich/Bly theory enthusiastically but uncritically. They have accepted Mitscherlich's and Bly's assertion that a qualitative change has occurred in father/son relationships since the advent of the Industrial Revolution. Few, if any, seem to have noticed that both

Mitscherlich and Bly have failed to provide historical evidence supporting their claims.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to test the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships. As noted previously, there is no convincing evidence that there has been a qualitative change in the interrelation of fathers and sons since the Industrial Revolution. Various types of historical records can be used to show that the rift between fathers and sons and the sense of woundedness experienced by many young men is pan-historical in nature. Certainly, the literature of any period documents the values and mores of the culture from which it arose.

The study employed a variety of literary documents to test the validity of Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory. The Bible, one of the documents examined, contains many stories of human relationships and while none of these need be viewed as true in the literal sense this great work, like all important works of literature, contains observations of human behavior that were clearly drawn from life. It is a well accepted notion among literary critics that if a work of literature is great one reason is that its characters are true to life. One need not accept the religious dogma of the Bible, or believe in the supernatural elements of the stories to accept that the characters and relationships are true to human experience. Certainly, the authors of this ancient text watched people and knew how they treated each other.

The study examined Biblical tales and a variety of myths and folktales that describe father/son relationships. These pre-Industrial texts were written long before the period claimed by Mitscherlich and Bly to be the most divisive era for fathers and sons. It was suspected that evidence might be found that ancient story

tellers knew of relationships among fathers and sons that were just as difficult and painful as those described by Mitscherlich, Bly, and other men's writers.

The purpose, then, was to use these tales to provide evidence either supporting or challenging Mitscherlich's and Bly's claim that father/son relationships have worsened since the nineteenth century. Ancient literature, it was believed, would provide evidence either supporting or challenging Mitscherlich and Bly.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As noted above, the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships has been adopted by many of the writers and theorists in the field of men's studies. It was likewise noted that no one in the field has questioned or challenged Mitscherlich and Bly. This study has provided a needed literary/historical analysis of the literature of the Men's Movement.

It is important that the Mitscherlich/Bly theory be questioned because if it is invalid it may interfere with men's self-exploration and therapy. Many writers, counselors, group leaders, and theorists have used this theory as a beginning point to helping men know themselves and improve their relationships. If these men are learning a theory that is baseless then the hoped for improvements might never manifest themselves. If leaders of the Men's Movement wish to change men's lives then they must be certain that their theoretical foundation is solid. If it is not then that fact must be established. If such a theory is valid then it is equally important to establish that fact so that change agents can be confident that they are using a worthwhile theoretical instrument.

It is the aim (or should be) of every research project to find out what is true in the researcher's particular field of study. If a theory has been accepted as true by a particular community and if there are questions about its authenticity then, in keeping with the tradition of scientific accuracy, it is well that the theory be

challenged. A challenge is not an assumption of invalidity. It is an attempt to sort out the facts. It is always significant, if only for the establishment of truth, when a popular theory is challenged. It is even more significant when the analysis of such a theory has the potential to encourage or alter the conduct of change agents.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

This dissertation was an example of historical research based on an analysis of literary sources. It attempted to challenge a current, fashionable sociological theory using historical data. This was necessary because the theory under questions offers assumptions about history that are questionable.

Is it true that fathers and sons have grown more distant since the Industrial Revolution? Is it also true that sons experience a greater father-wound, today, then they did in days prior to industrialization? It seemed possible that these ideas might not be true. This study constituted a critique of the theory that father/son relationships have changed qualitatively. Literary/historical sources we examined to determine whether there is evidence either supporting or challenging Mitscherlich, Bly and their followers.

Ancient stories were compared with the descriptions of father/son relationships that can be found in contemporary books and articles (including those by Mitscherlich and Bly) dealing with men's issues. In particular, the study concentrated on those books and articles that claim or imply that fathers and sons have grown farther apart since the Age of Industrialization.

It was assumed that if the relationships described in the Bible could be established as being like those described in contemporary books and articles then the Mitscherlich/Bly theory would be brought into question. Many writers on men's issues, especially those who are enamored of Jungian psychology, deem it acceptable to use ancient literature to illustrate their theories. It was established

above that this constitutes an inherent inconsistency in their theoretical model. Like these writers, this study employed ancient literature, but for a different purpose. Contrary to many writers of the Men's Movement, an attempt was made to gather documentation either supporting or challenging the theory of father/son relationships posited by Mitscherlich and Bly.

A particular issue must be discussed at this point. Why was literary research an important component of this study? The answer lies in the many writings of the Men's Movement. As noted above, the writers, poets, therapists, group leaders and social philosophers who compose the Men's Movement often see fit to offer ancient literature as a tool for illuminating the current male condition. It was therefore fitting and proper that these tools be employed in the analysis of Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory. Since this theory constitutes the foundation of much of the literature of the Men's Movement and since ancient stories are used to validate this theory it was necessary to determine whether or not ancient literature does indeed support the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships.

This study examined the literary record--in particular Bible stories, myths, and folktales from world culture--as a means of examining history. Stories often reflect the life of their times and it was believed that a study of ancient literature would help to determine whether there is a substantial difference between post-Industrial and pre-Industrial father/son relationships. Writers of the Men's Movement accept the theory that dysfunctions have arisen in father/son relationships due to pressures generated by the social forces of the post-Industrial age. This study examined the literary record to see whether or not literary/historical evidence supports Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory. One cannot support or debate a theory without evidence. This study was planned as an attempt to establish evidence one way or the other. The research was conducted with one question in mind--does the literary/historical record support or challenge the work of Mitscherlich and Bly?

This study arose from the theory that if the relationships described in Bible stories, myths, folktales, and other types of pre-Industrial literature evidenced a similarity with those relationships described in contemporary books and articles then the Mitscherlich/Bly theory would be brought into question. If a fundamental difference could be established then Mitscherlich's and Bly's work would be validated.

Jungian psychology was employed as a method of literary/historical analysis in order to help focus attention on the psychological elements in pre-Industrial stories. This provided a means of comparing ancient psychosocial relationships with contemporary relationships. Before this could be done, however, it was necessary to establish the fact that the supporters of Mitscherlich and Bly have accepted their theories while never questioning (or even seeming to notice) the lack of documentation. This effort has been documented in the Review of the Literature.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

It is to be noted that many of the terms used in this dissertation were derived from Jungian theory. This is not surprising since much of the literature of the Men's Movement is based on the theories of Jung. Jungian analysis was, in fact, the tool employed for comparing the issues of contemporary men with those described in pre-Industrial literature.

Anima - The feminine element in the masculine psyche.

Archetypes - Symbols or characters that represent unconscious states of mind.

Civilization - The culture and mores developed by a country or region during a given period of time.

Collective unconscious - The source of all archetypal images. While individual archetypes can be brought to consciousness, their source emains below the level of conscious awareness. Archetypes have been inherited from previous generations, extending back to the earliest days of human experience and, as such, are independent of an individual's personal experiences.

Dysfunctional relationship - A relationship between two or more individuals (often family members) where continual emotional distress is the result, or where the interaction of the participants prevents any or all of them from achieving a positive interaction with the environment.

Father-wound - The experience of being unfairly attacked or aabandoned by one's father. The father-wound can be a real attack or abandonment, a conceptual attack or abandonment, or some combination of these experiences.

King - A masculine archetype that serves as our spiritual center and the source of self-confidence.

Magus (or Magician) - The archetype that assists in transformations of self including those transformations that occur during the initiation process.

Men's Movement - There is no definition for this term that is universally accepted. For some, the Men's Movement is an informal or semi-formal attempt to gather men together for the purpose of discussing personal issues, alleviating loneliness, and creating a sense of community. For others, the Men's Movement is a political movement dealing with issues such as child custody and fair treatment in sexual

harassment cases. For the purpose of this study the Men's Movement was defined as the sum total of all books, articles, encounter groups, and therapies that attempt to understand how men develop their gender roles and to alter those aspects of men's gender roles that create or perpetuate negative self-images and dysfunctional personal relationships.

Mitscherlich/Bly Theory - The belief espoused by Mitscherlich and Bly that the Industrial Revolution caused a separation of fathers and sons due to the fact that the West is no longer an agrarian civilization and sons no longer work along side their fathers cultivating the land. Mitscherlich and Bly both assert their belief that this state of affairs has created many dysfunctional father/son relationships and that this, in turn, impairs many other relationships in men's lives.

Persona - The mask or image that an individual assumes as he or she relates to or negotiates with society for the purpose of satisfying personal needs.

Prince - The king archetype before it has fully matured.

Psyche - The whole personality including the conscious mind and all of the unconscious archetypes.

Self - The central archetype existing in the subconscious mind. It is the focal point around which all archetypes gather and, as such, is the organizing component of the psyche.

Shadow - The archetype that represents an individual's animal needs and desires. This archetype can be the generator of aggression and violence or it can be the

source of creativity. In the latter form the shadow becomes the source of passion that generates all artistic endeavors.

Society - A group of human beings who are united by shared interests including a common culture and commonly held sets of mores.

Subconscious - The aspects of personality and all thought processes that occur without an individual's being aware of them. This term was used synonymously with the term **unconscious**.

Unconscious - The aspects of personality and all thought processes that occur without an individual's being aware of them. This term was used synonymously with the term **subconscious**.

Warrior - The archetype that enables an individual to achieve the self-discipline and assertiveness necessary to actualize one's ideas. The warrior is the active archetype in any personal commitment to a cause or the achievement of a goal.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

One might argue that Bly's **Iron John** (1990) is something less than serious scholarship. It would be hard to detect a well-organized methodology, clearly stated procedures and testing instruments, a critical method that separates objective fact from romantic reverie. One cannot deny, despite all this, that **Iron John** is a phenomenon that has attracted and influenced men and scholars of men's studies. The book's importance as a social document can be demonstrated by the fact that it started a trend in the publishing industry. It was a best seller, and many writers have followed Bly's lead, thus, engendering a pride of new books on masculinity and its tribulations.

Whatever one thinks of his ability as a sociologist, Bly clearly had his finger on the male pulse when he published **Iron John**. His theory of the existence of a father-wound touched many men who used their purchasing power to place the poet/social critic on that all important literary map: the New York Times best sellers list. This is not an insignificant fact. It is a conspicuous success that demonstrates that Bly's work addresses--with some measure of public acceptance--the anxieties of contemporary males.

This does not mean, however, that his conclusions were correct or that his popularity validates his conclusions. Bly's popularity does provide evidence that many men in this country feel a sense of woundedness, that this woundedness is connected to their relationships with their fathers and other men, and that these men would like to heal their perceived wounds. Whether this phenomenon is peculiarly

post-Industrial, as the poet claims, or is a frequent and pan-historical disruption in father/son relationships was the questions examined by the researcher.

As stated above, issues come to the fore when there is a vehicle for their expression. In the twentieth century, many people in the West--and in the U.S. particularly--have come to feel that it is acceptable to openly discuss social and psychological issues. We do not feel compelled to express our troubles by way of veiled metaphors (though symbolism certainly has its place in contemporary culture) and the media have made the discussion of even the most intimate and sensational issues a commonplace occurrence. We have established the twin traditions of freedom of expression and self-exploration and it would be an erroneous assumption that such public displays of self-reflection constitute a change in the quality of interpersonal relationships. For this reason the researcher questioned the opening chapter of **Iron John** in which the author attempts to establish the emergence of a new breed of man: the **soft male**.

Bly comments on the methodology used in establishing the existence of such a personality type.

> In the seventies I began to see all over the country a phenomenon that we call the "soft male". Sometimes even today when I look out at an audience, perhaps half the young males are what I'd call soft. . . . They are life-preserving but not exactly life-giving. . . . The strong or life-giving women who graduated from the sixties . . . played an important part in producing this life-preserving, but not life-giving, man. (Bly 1990, 2-3)

The first and most obvious issue to be noted is Bly's unabashed antifeminism. He blames the feminist movement of the sixties for male weakness. In keeping with Bly's Jungian bent one might note that the blaming of women for the ills of men has been around since the days when the Greeks told of Pandora and her box and the Hebrews whispered of Lilith and the indiscretions of Eve. He establishes no real

grounds for his claim. Bly merely points the finger of blame and allows his troubled male readers to draw conclusions.

Equally disturbing is the claim of a social phenomenon based on casual observation. Bly believes that society has produced soft males because he has seen them at his lectures. He makes no effort to establish whether such men existed prior to the mid-twentieth century. He fails to inquire whether those qualities he views as soft are felt as softness by the men themselves. He fails to take into account the fact that his lectures might attract a troubled minority who are in no way representative of the majority of American males. Bly might be correct in all of his assumptions but it is to his discredit that he makes no organized attempt to verify his casual observations.

Perhaps we do have soft males living in our society. Perhaps it is true that their emotional disabilities have been exacerbated by the societal currents of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries; but, have these males never existed in other times and other places? The question simply is not asked by Bly; yet, one wonders if Chaucer's clerk--to take an example from medieval England--might not be viewed by the author as a soft male?

> A Clerk there was of Oxenford also,
> That unto logic had long tyme i-go.
> As lene was his hors as is a rake,
> And he was not right fat, I undertake;
> And looked hollow, and thereto soberly.
> Ful threadbare was his overest cloke to see,
> For he had nought geten him a benific,
> Nor was so worldly to have high office.
> For he would rather have at his beddes head
> Twenty bookes, clothed in blak and red. . . .
> But although that he were a philosophre,
> Yet had he but a litul gold in cofre. (Chaucer 1948, 8-9)

Chaucer did not see this young and religious man as a soft male. In fact, he is contrasted with several wealthy, corrupt, and worldly clerical figures who, while overtly energetic, are nevertheless corrupt. This is a man with great inner strength--not the conspicuous kind of strength that makes one wealthy, but the moral character that delights in servicing others and seeking wisdom. Bly's condemnation of soft males is suspect because he betrays an inability to distinguish between softness and character. He tells, for example, of a delightfully eccentric young man whose moral character is so highly developed that he is incapable of even a symbolic act of violence.

> One man, a kind of incarnation of certain spiritual attitudes of the sixties, a man who had actually lived in a tree for a year . . . found himself unable to extend his arm when it held a sword. He had learned so well not to hurt anyone that he couldn't lift the steel, even to catch the light of the sun on it. But showing a sword doesn't necessarily mean fighting. It can also suggest a joyful decisiveness. (Bly 1990, 4)

Bly does not seen to understand that some symbols are not universal and may represent different things to different people. Considering the level of violence that our country endures is it any wonder that a young man of our time might see a sword as an object of horror rather than one of "joyful decisiveness"? Bly fails to see the strength of character that allies this young man to Chaucer's Clerk. Resistance to temptation (whether it is the temptation to accumulate wealth or the temptation to violence) is as much a type of strength as are the more impressive types of behavior. It is also disingenuous of Bly to criticize pacifism as a sixties attitude when his was one of our nation's leading voices raised in condemnation of the Vietnam conflict. The problem, here, is that Bly labors under the assumption that his is the definitive viewpoint as to personal strength. He does not consider

other views nor does he (as stated previously) establish convincing evidence that the soft male is a new and contemporary personality type.

The soft male is Bly's target audience. His aim is to activate (in Jungian tradition) the assertive archetypes such as the wildman and the warrior. He would transform the soft male into a postmodern Enkidu, thus reenergizing and rescuing troubled manhood from a culturally-generated purgatory. Since Bly has made no effort to document the existence and extent of this personality type he might possibly be railing against a phenomenon that is either restricted to a small portion of the male population, or so organic and ubiquitous that it could never be eliminated from the gene pool. In either case, the entire text of **Iron John** is predicated on a concept that has never been established through scholarly research.

Bly's concept is as follows--men have been separated from their inner manhood as represented by the archetypes of the wildman and the warrior (and the various related archetypes). This trauma has been inflicted by two major cultural forces: the rise of feminism and the failure of older men (fathers in particular) to initiate younger men into the cult of manhood. The result is that many young men have become soft or receptive, by which Bly means that they can empathize with the emotions of others, but have been rendered incapable of expression themselves in an assertive and (as the poet sees it) fundamentally masculine manner.

Fathers and other male elders are no longer in a position to teach the fundamentals of masculine behavior because we have no initiation rituals in contemporary society and because fathers now work outside the home rather than working the land with their sons at their side. Consequently, they have no opportunity to model masculinity or to establish the emotional bonds that will assist their sons in developing a healthy, masculine esthetic.

According to Bly, industrial society and modern Christianity have conspired to separate men from their instinctual, masculine nature as represented by the wildman.

The poet wishes to serve as an American tribal elder by teaching myths and creating rituals that will encourage men to explore their psychic depths where, he believes, they will find the wild, hairy man. This archetype is represented, in the tale of Iron John, by an untamed wildman living at the bottom of a pool who is covered with reddish hair that looks like rusted iron. He is captured and imprisoned by the king's soldiers and locked safely (so everyone thinks) in a cage. For the young prince, who is eventually carried away on Iron John's shoulders, this man/beast represents the essential masculinity that must be activated if he is to attain life's rewards. "Making contact with this Wild Man," Bly comments, "is the step the Eighties male of the Nineties male has yet to take."

> As the story suggests . . . there's more than a little fear around this hairy man. . . . When a man welcomes his responsiveness, or what we sometimes call his internal woman, he often feels warmer, more companionable, **more alive** (italics mine). But when he approaches what I'll call the "deep male," he feels risk. . . . For generations now, the industrial community has warned young businessmen to keep away from Iron John, and the Christian church is not too fond of him either. Freud, Jung, and Wilhelm Reich are three investigators who had the courage to go down into the pond and to accept what they found there. The job of contemporary men is to follow them down. (Bly 1990, 6)

There seems to be an internal contradiction present in Bly's writing. He has already lamented the rise of the soft male, claiming that feminism has made him weak and bemoaning his "lack of energy." Now, he tells us that becoming more receptive (which he identifies as a quality of the soft male) makes men feel **more alive**. This is yet another clue that hints of a philosophy that has not been well thought out. Bly, here, is most inflammatory, blaming men's ills on feminism, Christianity, and big business. He spares no one, yet, again and again his assertions remain unsubstantiated.

Another clue to Bly's scholastic sloppiness is the lumping together of Freud, Jung, and Reich. We are here referring not only to the quote above but to Bly's continual blending, throughout **Iron John**, of Jungian and Freudian theory. Bly ignores (or forgets?) that Freudian and Jungian psychology are separate entities because the two theorists disagreed on the nature and content of the unconscious. To string together ideas from competing philosophies without regard to their differences is, again, a breach of serious scholarship. We offer a reminder at this point--clearly, Bly engages in careless scholarship. This does not mean that his conclusions are incorrect. It does mean, however, that the lack of documentation, the absence of a recognizable research methodology, and the confused blending of ideas render his theories **unsubstantiated**. Without documentation it is difficult to determine the validity of Bly's theories regarding father/son relationships.

One such relationship is at the heart of the story of Iron John (or Iron Hans in some versions). In this tale, John, the wildman, has been captured and caged. He will be released by the young prince whose golden ball has rolled into his cage. The boy makes a deal with the wildman that he will open the cage in return for the ball. Ultimately, Iron Johns makes his escape, taking the boy with him. This, according to Bly, begins the initiation process that all males must experience if they are to reach an emotionally healthy manhood. While there is a king in this story the real father figure or spiritual elder is the wildman who leads the boy into a life of adventure and self-discovery. In other words, he leads the prince towards his own manhood.

Bly believes that contemporary Western society fails to raise mentally balanced young men because we have ceased to involve them in any of the traditional forms of initiation. As examples, he cites the Hopi of the American Southwest who take boys away to the **kiva** (a "men-only" area where they are removed from their mothers' presence for a year-and-a-half), the Kikuyu of Africa, who compel their

young men to endure three days of fasting followed by a ritual ingesting of the blood of the male elders, and even Victorian men, with their fondness for hunting parties. At the point of puberty, he insists, boys must divorce their mothers and experience a new form of male nurturing. If this does not occur they will never embrace their own masculinity and will, in time, become either dangerously angry or emerge as the soft males described above.

In keeping with Freudian theory, Bly asserts that young men develop a skewed view of their fathers and older men when mothers become the primary source and symbol of nuturing. A competition takes place in which the mother usurps the affections of a son that rightfully belong to his father. The mother then imbues her son with her own biased view of the father and the son grows up with a dislike and suspicion of older men. This, Bly tells us, is the root of much of the antisocial behavior exhibited by young men. The younger generation tries to vanquish the older generation by disrupting all well-established institutions.

In time, however, this competition backfires on the mothers. Unconscious though it may be, sons become resentful of their maternal parent for inhibiting the father/son bonding that they need in order to experience a connection with the rest of the male tribe. Sons react in order to achieve the separation that should have occurred through the initiation process.

In keeping with Mitscherlich's theories, Bly claims that this dysfunction in family relationships has been exacerbated by the rise of industrialization. Since fathers (so the theory goes) spend much time working outside their homes mothers gain greater influence over their sons. Father/son bonding is less common due to this forced estrangement and the dysfunctional relationships described above are inevitable. Again, Bly romanticizes the past and condemns the modern era while failing to scrutinize the details of bygone lifestyles. While it may be true that young men understood their place inmate society in ritualized environments like that of the

Kikuyu or the Victorian gentry, it does not hold that they were satisfied with their place in life; and falling into line was certainly no proof of love for a father. Theories, here, are offered as fact without the benefit of hard evidence.

"Never being welcomed into the male world by older men," Bly tells us, "is a wound in the chest" (Bly 1990, 32). While there are certainly physical and psychological scars that fathers inflict upon sons this, in keeping with the poet's world-view, is the fundamental wound. Bly continues as follows:

> When you look at a gang, you are looking . . . at young men who have no older men around them at all. Gang members try desperately to learn courage, family loyalty, and discipline from each other. It works for a few, but for most it doesn't. To judge by men's lives in New Guinea, Kenya, North Africa, the pygmy territories, Zulu lands, and in the Arab and Persian culture . . . men have lived together in heart unions and soul connections for hundreds of thousands of years. (Bly 1990, 32)

This is naive to say the least. While it is likely that many young men join gangs for lack of a male mentor it must also be noted that many of the ancient groups itemized by Bly have engaged in warfare, have ostracized dissident group members, and may possibly have engaged in the same domestic squabbles as contemporary men. Bly does not seem to have considered any such idea. He implies, in the passage above, that lack of fathering leads to gang activity but he does nothing to prove that violence and aggression were alien to ancient men. To contrast gang activities with the "heart unions and soul connections" of ancient tribes is to imply a qualitative difference between post-Industrial and pre-Industrial men; yet, the most skeletal knowledge of ancient history would belie the notion that ancient men were less "gang-like" than their contemporary Western counterparts. Again, if Bly is correct in his assumptions where is the documentation?

Assessing Bly becomes most difficult, at times, because he functions both as poet and social scientist. This is problematic because he offers no clear boundaries

between his evocative writing and his formal social criticism. What are we to make, for example, of the following?

> The contemporary mind might want to describe the exchange between father and son as a likening of attitude, a miming, but I think a physical exchange takes place. . . . The son does not receive a hands-on healing, but a body-on healing. His cells receive some knowledge of what an adult masculine body is. The younger body . . . begins to grasp the song the adult male cells sing, and how the charming, elegant, lonely, courageous, half-shamed male molecules dance. . . . Women cannot . . . replace that particular missing substance. (Bly 1990, 3-4)

Certainly, this is a colorful passage with its spiritual and faintly homoerotic language. Are we to take it seriously as a statement of science? The poet blurs the line between science and art and expects his public to accept his ideas unquestioningly. Unfortunately, as noted below, many of them have. A further danger of this passage is rather obvious. It encourages a solution to social problems that appears to be antifeminist. Bly implies over and over in **Iron John** that the father-wound can be healed only through the establishment of contemporary initiation rites that are conducted among men. Women, he insists, cannot possibly succeed in teaching boys healthy gender roles. They have succeeded only in raising boys to be soft males or, alternately, to be angry and rebellious out of grief for the fatherless state.

The poet offers a most patriarchal theory: If society is to be saved men must do it. Men must teach boys how to be nurturing in a masculine mode. By working outside of the home (a post-Industrial phenomenon) fathers have earned nothing more than their sons' contempt and have achieved no less than the disintegration of society. We must heal the post-Industrial father-wound (whose existence has yet to be documented), take the raising of adolescent men out of the "softening" hands of women, and save them from the emptiness and anger that rose with the factories of

the nineteenth century. This entire theory rests on only one building block: Mitscherlich's **Society Without the Father**, a book that mirrors **Iron John**'s lack of documentation.

Let it be said, again, that lack of evidence does not prove a theory false, but, it makes acceptance difficult for the critical reader. Mitscherlich's masterwork is like many Freudian studies in that it assumes that a child's relationship with his or her parents is the central force in shaping the personality. Mitscherlich, however, takes psychoanalytical theory beyond the mere study of individual personality conflicts. He assumes that parental relationships have cultural as well as personal consequences. The image of the father, he posits, is a symbol around which societal behavior patterns cluster. The father, manifested variously as parent, religious elder, and political leader, acts as a control over our innate aggressive tendencies.

The id, Mitscherlich reminds us, would ruthlessly take possession of all objects of desire if not for the presence of external checks. While he does not deny the presence of internal checks as well, he notes that Western society has focused mainly on activating the super ego. The stimulation of guilt and fear--through the assertion of the father figure--have kept the id under control individually and collectively. Mitscherlich assures us that without the external presence of the father figure, internal pressure from the super ego would diminish rapidly and quickly become inconsequential as a socializing force.

This does not mean, Mitscherlich is quick to assure us, that Western life must maintain a system of patriarchy if we are to remain a civilized people (this is where Bly differs); but he insists that patriarchy has been, throughout Western history, our chief socializing force. Industrialization, he claims, has dismantled the patriarchal system with such rapidity that we have had little time to consider its consequences and to develop a system of socializing individuals that equals or surpasses patriarchy in effectiveness.

In fact, Mitscherlich, while concerned by the rapid disintegration of patriarchy, notes that it is an incomplete system of socialization. Patriarchy strengthens the superego by establishing a constant, potentially punitive presence. This, in turn, stimulates internal checks but without the constant specter of the disapproving father to reinforce the superego the internal checks will quickly lose their potency. He believes that Western society should seek ways of supplying greater energy to the ego so that the superego becomes less necessary. The education of children, Mitscherlich hopes, will one day aim at improving their understanding of the need for proper social skills so that socialization will become a **willed** rather than a **forced** process.

One of the dangers of forced socialization, Mitscherlich notes, is that some people can be so fixed on the moral teachings of their immediate environment that they become inflexible and incapable of considering new moral concepts or changes in the societal climate. The Western patriarchy has, thus, created two types of moral checks--socialization based on fear and this second socialization which is internal but inflexible. Mitscherlich offers the following observation:

> Freud has drawn attention to two types of social behaviour.
> The first is "cultural hypocrisy," in which merely superficial conformism is attained; the individual behaves socially so
> long as he feels the eye of an external judge to be upon him. . . . Another alternative is . . . overadaption. The "conscience" can develop into a force so menacing it can totally inhibit any finer individual distinctions in moral matters . . . the education of affect necessarily implies an alleviation of the conflicts between ineluctable inner impulses and social norms. (Mitscherlich 1993, 20-21)

These comments highlight the difficulty of engaging patriarchy as a socializing tool. It can maintain social order by suppressing aggressive impulses but it can become an aggressive and unbending force in itself. If one embraces a narrowly focused paradigm of social behavior one can become "menacing" to all dissident

viewpoints. Patriarchy, in this sense, is only partially effective as a socializing device. "The impact of the moral codes," Mitscherlich warns, "is to keep man psychically infantile in order to make renunciation (of the instinctual drives) easier for him" (Mitscherlich 1993, 83). Morality, in a patriarchal world, functions as an instinct suppresser but not as an instinct educator; we have failed, consequently, to achieve a mature moral sensibility.

Mitscherlich does not, strictly speaking, support a return to patriarchy, but he fears its decline when we have failed to replace moral strictures with moral reasoning. The danger behind the decline of patriarchy is that it has been replaced with nothing. This leaves us with a large potential for social anarchy. ". . . the paternalist social order," we are told, "has maneuvered itself into a critical position, from which it will not emerge with the same secure sense of permanent stability that it possessed in the age that lies behind us" (Mitscherlich 1993, 140).

Mitscherlich notes that while the patriarchal model was in place, sons viewed their fathers with awe and a consequent hatred. While this is not an ideal state of affairs a respect for authority coincided with these emotions, and this became the glue that held society together. Contemporary sons no longer feel awe and fear of their fathers. Rivalry has given way to contempt. This state of affairs, Mitscherlich believes, is most acute in the United States where rejection of patriarchy--beginning with the split from England--has been a staple in our national consciousness. Like Bly, Mitscherlich offers this broad, historical generalization without the benefit of documentation. He offers no comparison of the national character of the United States with those of other industrialized nations; he quotes no detailed study comparing the familial relationships of post-Revolutionary Americans with their predecessors.

The most crucial element in his analysis of Western society is Mitscherlich's assertion that industrialization has driven a wedge between fathers and their children

and, most pointedly, between fathers and sons. Since fathers, no longer working on the family farm, are not around to provide moral modeling and guidance, sons regard them with suspicion and derision. The derision comes because fathers no longer seem autonomous to their children. Rather, they appear as hapless servants of a massive, indifferent system.

Following Reisman's cultural typology, Mitscherlich notes that there are three types of individuals: the **tradition-directed** type, the **inner-directed** type, and the **other-directed** type. The other-directed individual is largely concerned with his/her peer group and overarching social rules hold little relevance. Likewise, this type of individual has failed to internalize the values of his or her parents or adult authorities in general. The absence of the father as a guiding force (so Mitscherlich tells us) is a major factor in the rapid disappearance of these first two types. Post-industrial society, he theorizes, has experienced a rapid emergence of the other-directed type of individual (Mitscherlich 1993, 149).

The result is that each new generation loses any sense of proportion where societal norms are concerned. Current trends, the fashions embraced by one's peers, become all important to the other-directed individual, and revered (or at lease feared) rules of society fade to insignificance. "The idea of maturity as a collectively acknowledged aim," Mitscherlich laments, "is beginning to fade" (Mitscherlich 1993, 150). In other words, as the authoritarian power of the father figure weakens each subsequent generation loses its sense of responsibility to society as a whole and the specter of anomie haunts our collective life.

Patriarchy may not be an ideal system but to replace it with anomie is hardly progress. The emergence of many other-directed individuals creates a culture of acquisitiveness and consequently contributes to a reassertion of id energy with instant gratification becoming a primary motivating force in Western society. Society without the father has become, in Mitscherlich's eye, a **sibling society** in

which "no individual holds power" (Mitscherlich 1993, 277). This is not a state of equality but one akin to sibling rivalry in which each individual competes for his or her share of society's benefits. "Fatherlessness," Mitscherlich warns:

> . . . dissolves the personal element in power relationships; one is aware of authority as ever, but it cannot be visualized. . . . The fatherless . . . child grows up into an adult with no visible master . . . and is guided by anonymous functions. What his senses are aware of is individuals similar to himself in huge numbers . . . the intensification of narcissistic and aggressive trends . . . are . . . not difficult to discover. The chance neighbor who infringes on my minimal private territory becomes an invader, an enemy who triggers off . . . aggression. (Mitscherlich 1993, 278-79)

The questions arises: given the history of human violence what steps has Mitscherlich taken to determine whether the aggressive tendencies he describes are new and substantially different from that which led to the many wars murders, and acts of torture that have plagued humanity since its earliest recorded history? Have chaos and aggression advanced since the rise of the Industrial Age, or have they always been a staple in the human diet? No comparative study has been offered. No attempt has been made to validate Mitscherlich's view that Western civilization is being washed away in the wake of the Industrial Revolution.

Following Mitscherlich, Bly has popularized the idea of a fatherless society that generates disorder and aggression by psychologically wounding our young men. The phrase often used by leaders of the Men's Movement--the **father-wound**--symbolizes the breakdown of father/son relationships described by Bly and by Mitscherlich before him. Fathers, we are told, are frustrated, angrier, and more distant from their sons in the oppressive post-Industrial atmosphere of our contemporary world. They are more likely to reject their children or hurt them through neglect or even direct violence. Sons, being higher in testosterone than daughters, are more likely to respond to the father-wound with aggression, dominance of their own progeny, and violence. Bly writes as follows:

> As I've participated in men's gathering since the early 1980s, I've heard one statement over and over from American males. . . ."There is not enough father." . . . Clearly, "father water" in the home has sunk below the reach of most wells . . . the young man's body lacks salt, water, or protein. . . . Such hungry sons . . . feel shame over their condition, and it is nameless, bitter, unexpungeable shame. (Bly 1990, 92-94)

An awareness of woundedness, shame, hunger, and lack of guidance pervade the literature of the Men's Movement. The jury is out as to whether these feelings were rare in pre-Industrial men but, clearly, many contemporary men suffer these dissatisfactions. That is why books on men's issues continue to be published and men's conferences have attracted customers throughout the nation.

According to Bly, the separation of fathers from their families has left young men feeling isolated from the male community as a whole. Young men grow up regarding older men with suspicion. There is no sense that they are part of a continuing line, members of a tribe. Young men build up a self-image based on the tearing down of structures built by previous generations of men, thus, a state of anomie reigns. Young men see no value in honoring traditions so they compete with the previous generation and also fight among themselves. Instead of celebrating their unity with the male community many young men go to war (literally and figuratively) with their brothers and suffer the anguish of isolation.

A major reason for this state of affairs, Bly reasons, is the death of initiation rituals in contemporary society. There is no formal means of introducing young men into the cult of manhood. There are few fathers and elders who are prepared to teach--formally and ritualistically--a man's role in society. Furthermore, there are no guiding myths to help young men find their way through life's vicissitudes. In his work, Bly has attempted to create new rituals and revive ancient myths as a means

of helping men to reconnect to their gender community. This, he believes, will heal the father-wound and inspire young men to feel less isolated and less aggressive (or less "soft" as he says in other places).

Following Bly's lead, many writers of the Men's Movement have followed two trends. First, they affirm (again, with little documentation) the emergence of a father/son rift or father-wound as the result of post-Industrial social currents. This, they lament is aggravated by the absence of initiation rituals that help men appreciate their place in the male community. In some cases, writers and group leaders try to invent new rituals to fill the void left by faded traditions.

Another trend is the retelling of myths by writers of the Men's Movement who analyze these tales in a Jungian or pseudo-Jungian manner in order to help men to affirm their connection with generations that are long gone. Books on men's issues have appeared regularly since the publication of **Society Without the Father** and especially since the success of **Iron John**. In many of these books some, if not all, of the stated trends have manifested themselves.

Blaming the Industrial Revolution for the father-wound can either be implicit or explicitly in writings of the Men's Movement. It is a ubiquitous concept whatever form it takes. Sometimes, the acceptance of the Mitscherlich/Bly model of father/son relationships takes the form of complaining: Why can't it be like the good old days, when each man knew his place and fathers and sons revered each other? Is this a romanticized view of the past? Very likely. Many writers, however, accept this assessment of the past seemingly without question. They point to the lack of initiation rituals as a sign that the intergenerational bond enjoyed by pre-Industrial men saw these rituals as comforting or enslaving.

An unquestioned romanticizing of initiation rituals can be found throughout the literature of the Men's Movement. Taylor (1992), for example, insists that no father/son relationship can be completely healthy without the presence of initiation

rituals. This, he reason, is why sons feel a sense of abandonment even when their fathers try their best to support them. In premodern times, whatever the specific religion, men were aware of two dimensions of fatherhood: the personal father and the mythological father. Fathers will fail to nurture their sons unless their actions bring these younger men closer to the mythological elements of existence. "No generation of men," Taylor comments, "has ever been born so separated from our masculine traditions of power, responsibility, and wisdom, so of course we long to connect with something bigger than ourselves and our personal histories: our male community, our ancestors, our stories" (Taylor 1992, 15).

Is it true that an alienation from traditions is felt more deeply by post-Industrial men? Participating formally in any ritual does not necessarily indicate a psychic acceptance. Taylor provides no evidence that pre-Industrial men felt a deeper satisfaction with life because they participated in mandated rituals. When Taylor further comments that we ". . .seek the connection beyond words with the holy masculine, the ineffable, the unspeakable" (Taylor 1990, 15), he offers no reason to believe that pre-Industrial men were any more successful than contemporary men in attaining this transcendental state of consciousness.

It would certainly be difficult to determine whether a qualitative spiritual change has occurred in the life of men since the advent of industrialization, but it is most unscholarly to assume such a change without any attempt at providing evidence. Taylor, like many writers of the Men's Movement, offers a highly colored version of ancient initiation rituals without once asking whether the original participants in these rituals viewed their experiences with the same romantic longing that he feels. Such a longing is clearly present in Bliss's account of a mythopoetic weekend. In his history of one particular gathering, Bliss (1992)demonstrates his **amour** with male images of the past. While he does not (in this article at least)

specifically condemn post-Industrial life, his fascination with figures from the past clearly demonstrates that his philosophy falls in line with the Mitscherlich/Bly model.

> I work to evoke our ancestors, such as Francis of Assisi, Walt Whitman, and Henry David Thoreau. My partner . . . sometimes appears mysteriously as Saint Francis--dressed appropriately and with a medieval Italian accent. . . . Then we go off to prepare for the weekend's celebration. Masks and costumes are donned and faces painted. A wild carnival ensues to samba music. (Bliss 1992, 99)

Bliss and his partner attempt, in their retreats, to evoke a sense of male community, of great spiritual leaders of the past, of wild male ritual as an attempt to recapture a sense of community and male experience that may be mere fantasy. While the attempt to create a spiritual group experience is commendable, Bliss may be encouraging a sense of loss of a past that was far more problematical than these colorful rituals would indicate. It may be dangerous to create nostalgia for bygone years if men wind up feeling deprived of experiences that were never as rewarding as Bliss and other men's leaders imagine.

Many men's leaders mirror Bliss in their acceptance of Bly's call for new male rituals. They may or may not explicitly lament the loss of a male community in modern times. They may never mention the Industrial Revolution and its supposed destruction of fruitful male initiation rituals; yet, these leaders clearly demonstrate an attempt (as does Bliss) to recapture a past that they believe to be lost. Group leaders have conceived a great variety of rituals to create a sense of male bonding. Harding's collection of essays in **Wingspan: Inside the Men's Movement** (1992) includes many descriptions of such rituals. Many of these are attempts at creating a sense of a primitivism and spiritualism as a means of initiating the participants into the community of men. "We know how to eat," writes poet James Oshinsky:

> We know how to feed our brains,

but not yet the alchemy to make a meal of our Pain
Our gathering of men.
Is it fun? Politically correct?
An adaptation to an increasingly
alienating world. (Oshinsky 1992, 94)

Perhaps the answer is "yes," perhaps "no;" how can we tell if those who ask the question romanticize but fail to inquire? Is this an "increasingly alienating world" or is this a world in which pain is simply talked of more openly? One might make an argument that the post-Industrial world is less alienating than other times because we can, at least, talk of our misery.

Finger's (1992) description of a men's gathering clearly demonstrates that talk of pain is an ingredient of the Men's Movement. Again, the discussions and activities that Finger describes clearly evidence the influence of Mitscherlich and Bly. There is no surprise here: Bly was one of the leaders of this event. Present, too, was mythologist Michael Meade. Both leaders employed mythology and archetypal psychology in the creation of modern rituals that offered participants emotionally provocative and glamorized reinterpretations of ancient initiation rites.

Laced among the rituals were discussions on such topics as "Male Initiation and Isolation," and the male archetypes; but emotional issues were also addressed through telling of myths, the reading of poetry, mask-making, drumming, and chanting. These, of course, are not true initiation rituals because they are not mandated formalities required by societal tradition; they can never be experienced in the way that primitive men experienced them because they are employed as consciously formulated healing devices and not as natural extensions of one's cultural experience. The subject of fathers and wounds is mentioned, but Finger provides no detailed description of these discussions. In a way, the lack of details is evidence of the ubiquitous influence of Mitscherlich and Bly; it is assumed that the mere mention of these subjects will be understood by the readers.

Finger indicates that this conference changed his life but, like his mentor Bly, his language is evocative yet unclear. We are never quite sure what his issues are or how he changed. While he clearly supports Bly he leaves us with no evidence in support of a theory of changing father/son relationships. It is all very vague, pseudo-religious, and ecstatic. This is a large problem with a good deal of the writing of the Men's Movement. So much of it is emotionally charged and subjective that it is hard to separate the serious attempts at comprehending male psychology from the fanaticism and emotionalism of writers like Finger.

So what are we left with? Finger provides a picture of a group of men who are in pain--some of whom are possibly suffering from severe emotional dysfunctions--who come together to heal their wounds. They participate in rituals, story-telling sessions, and public confessionals. Perhaps they weep, or get caught up in the drumming and chanting and experience a sensation of ecstasy; but, what do they do next? How do they deal with their issues when they get home? Some will join men's groups where the leaders may or may not be equipped to deal with emotional dysfunctions. They may get into therapy and, if they are lucky, find a competent practitioner. The question remains: are the ideas presented in such groups as Finger describes clear enough in their therapeutic foundation to be useful to the men who attend them?

The theatricality described by Finger can be exiting, but what evidence are we left with in support of its long-term benefits? So, we have created modern initiation rituals. What evidence do we have that these are of any lasting psychological value for modern men? Finger provides none. What evidence is there that these men are any better or worse off than their pre-Industrial counterparts? Finger demonstrates passion but he offers no evidence.

Despite such effusive yet unsubstantiated claims of psychic renewal we still have no reason to credit the Mitscherlich/Bly model of male development with any

validity. Isolated personal testimonies cannot be taken seriously unless they can be proven applicable to a broad population. The validity of Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory is assumed by Finger and others to be true, but the question of evidence is never discussed.

Despite this, Reitman (1993) declares that "it's time for ritual." Like Finger, he revels in the return to primitivism (or the illusion of it) through ritual. He believes, like many people in and out of the Men's Movement, that by rejecting modern technology (temporarily at least) and embracing primitive rites we will become saner, happier people. Reitman offers the following advice:

> While we may seem to be connected talking on our cellular phones, many of us don't really connect until we disconnect, by chewing through our own techno-plasmic umbilical chord and getting the hell out of Dodge. . . . by providing a container for our desire to connect, out springs ritual. . . . It seems just as we begin to reject our own Judeo-Christian rituals, we also begin to find more indigenous and often more meaningful ones. (Reitman 1993, 4)

This is careless. While ought have no objection to the repudiation of any tradition--if said repudiations are carefully thought out--the wholesale rejection of the Judeo-Christian ethic, so popular among some intellectuals, often fails to weigh the values as well as the flaws of this tradition. True, bigotry often flies on two right wings, and the Judeo-Christian tradition is often used in support of bigotry, narrow-mindedness, and intolerance; but this tradition also contains within it a call to compassion, good will, and personal responsibility. To blame the abuses of a tradition on the tradition itself is careless. To say the rituals of Christianity and Judaism are no longer relevant or useful is to overlook thousands of years of wisdom. A return to primitive rituals may also nourish the psyche of many a man or woman, but we must heed this warning--these rituals, like the Judeo-Christian

rituals, can also be used in the name of intolerance, can become just as rote and meaningless as some people find Christianity and Judaism to be.

Reitman finds, in the more primitive rituals, a connection to the male community that he cannot achieve through Judeo-Christian rituals. He fails to acknowledge that many people **do** find such a connection through participation in Jewish or Christian rituals. Like Bly before him, Reitman has rejected modern mores as incapable of satisfying the need for male interconnection. We must ask--are the rituals being performed at men's gatherings truly reflective of per-Industrial experience, or a reinterpretation that is consciously psychological and, therefore, modern? Ancient rituals, it can be argued, arose from the unconscious. The consciousness with which modern rituals are conceived would make them as contemporary as air travel or fiber optics.

This not a condemnation of contemporary rituals; but it must be asked whether a return to pre-Industrial mores would constitute a panacea as many Men's Movement writers believe? Greenberg (1993) is a typical example of those who champion the ritual process. He offers an almost worshipful support of contemporary rituals.

> I am beginning to sense another dimension to ritual: Time. If time is a continuum, and eternity a profession of endless "nows," then by acting ritually we join time's endless stream. I can feel linkage with something past, and I am starting to sense linkage with the future. (Greenberg 1993, 4)

There appears to be a belief held by many participants in the Men's Movement that rituals of the past helped to link men with countless generations, thus providing a sense of a timeless, perhaps eternal, connection with men of all ages. It is quite possible that such transcendental experiences have occurred to men from time to time but it is also possible that for many participants in ancient rituals the experience was as meaningless and rote as Judeo-Christian tradition has become for many

contemporary individuals. We cannot tell unless a psychological study of these men is conducted. None of the authors yet quoted has attempted any comparative study of ancient participants in initiation rituals with participants in contemporary rituals.

Miller (1993) echoes Greenberg's call for a return to ritual. He, too, believes that pre-Industrial life provided healthy, guiding rituals that are absent from modern life. Miller's tone is more strident than any writer yet examined. He writes as follows:

> Traditional initiations of indigenous cultures work
> well to sustain the values and unique aspects of those
> cultures, creating men and women who fit and find their
> sense of identity within the larger identity of the culture.
> Now, with separatism and ethnic strife taking center stage
> in the "new world order," it is not enough to initiate young people into
> human cultures, societies, religions, politics
> or lifestyles . . . whether we like it or not, we initiate our children into a
> society where it is . . . acceptable to gun
> down babies . . . pollute the environment . . . and where projected trends . . .
> lead toward the same inevitable
> conclusion, oblivion. (Miller 1993, 4)

Along with being terrifying, Miller's historical perspective is highly questionable. First, he presents an image of indigenous cultures as creating an easy system for learning one's identity. He ignores the fact that indigenous societies were generally small groups of the same ethnic background with close family ties. Similarity would have made assimilation easy. It is harder to find an appropriate role in contemporary Western society, particularly in the United States, where the population is large and the society pluralistic. The failure to assimilate, given such circumstances, would derive less from an absence of rituals than from the sheer variety of ethnicity's, national backgrounds, and viewpoints. The problem, seen from this angle, is not the absence of patriarchal rituals but presence of many more differences than an indigenous culture would ever face.

Miller's assumption that we are a society on the verge of oblivion is not new. History and literature are filled with tales of violence, madness, anarchy, and endless varieties of social unrest. What evidence has Miller provided that contemporary acts of violence are more heated or proportionally more widespread than acts committed at any other time in history? Is ours a truly more violent time, or do we merely fix on this notion because our own troubles fascinate us more than any others? This is never considered in Miller's article. Like other writers of the Men's Movement, he merely accepts a romantic dream of the past and assumes that ours is the less livable era.

This assumption permeates the work of the Men's Movement writers. To be sure, they are not alone in their contempt for modern life. There are many who complain that the post-Industrial world is dehumanizing and causes a great deal of alienation among those who live in the contemporary West. Many New Age philosophers have rejected Western thought in favor of Eastern though, believing Eastern philosophy to be more integrating. Environmentalists often encourage a back-to-basics approach to life believing that the technologies of modern living are the cause of unbearable stress. Rarely do they provide evidence that the stress level of pre-Industrialization individuals was lower than it is today.

We have an impression that modern life is harsher than ancient life. The question remains--did pre-Industrial individuals see their lives with less anxiety than we do? Bly's translation of Neruda's **The Ruined Street** (1975) exemplifies the attitude of many contemporary people including those who belong to the Men's Movement.

> It's possible that the conversations now underway,
> the bodies brushing,
> the chastity of the tired ladies who make their nest in
> the smoke,
> the tomatoes murdered without mercy,

> the horses of a depressed regiment going by,
> the light, the pressure of the nameless fingertips,
> are wearing out the flat fiber of the lime,
> surrounding the building fronts with neuter air
> like knives: while
> the dangerous air goes chewing up the way we
> stay alive. (Neruda 1975, 25)

Adams (1993) sees contact with nature as an antidote to the ravages of technology.

> The contact and nourishment of a community of men enhances our sense of place and well-being. We have been isolated from each other for far too long. Bringing together the healing powers of ritual, wilderness and brotherhood creates an avenue for personal transformation and growth unlike any other. Adams 1993, 23)

While it may be true that many contemporary individuals find psychological rejuvenation through contact with nature, few have to wrest a living from the land. It is very easy to find spiritual wonderment in the natural world when one is a visitor; but to fight the elements, to worry about the blight of one's crops, to suffer the ravages of snow and wind, or to hunt meat from a sparse population of animals in the hope of obtaining a meager meal may have been a trial to those who depended on nature for their survival.

Nature may not have seemed so sweet to those who were at its mercy. Adams seems not to have considered the idea that the ancient rituals he would emulate may have been borne of fear. Primitive men may have celebrated nature, but is it not possible that some of their rituals were attempts to curry the favor of a capricious environment?

An what of the nature of ritual itself? Modern imitations of ritual are often pale versions of the grueling, terrifying, and sometimes painful rites that primitive

males, past and present, have been forced to endure. "It's hard to become a man," Ross tells us, ". . . and many societies repeatedly brutalize their boys to rid them of their mother's imprint . . . the violence of males among themselves is used as a way of exorcising the woman still inside them . (Ross 1992, 264) Ritual, in this sense, is not the inspirational experience, the transcendental occurrence that Bly and his followers believe it to be. Ross describes several societies that perform various types of genital mutilation as part of their initiation rites.

> Typically, the older generation cuts the boy's penis. Usually, the pubertal boy is circumcised . . . making the event an agonizing ordeal. In the Islamic world this occurs when he's five or six. But in some instances, usually among the most aboriginal groups, the shaft may be "subincised." The urethra is slit at the bottom so that the adolescent must now urinate in a squatting position, thereafter referring to his male genital as a "penis-womb." (Ross 1992, 263-64)

Gersi's experience of the Iban people of Borneo is equally unappetizing. Gersi did what many followers of the Men's Movement think they would like to do--he participated in a primitive initiation ritual. Failure in this ritual, he tells us, brings more than shame upon the participant. A man might literally lose his head in a dangerous game of hide and seek; but, prior to that the initial part of the ritual is as far from romantic as one can get. Gersi recounts his experience with these Eastern headhunters.

> For my initiation, they had me lie down naked in a four-foot-deep pit filled with giant carnivorous ants. . . . I am not sure what their reactions would have been if I had tried to get out of the pit before their signal, but it occurred to me that although the ants might eat a little of my flesh, the Iban offered more dramatic potentials. . . . I had the ants running all over my body . . . the pain of the ants' bites was intense, so I tried to relax and decrease . . . my circulation and therefore the effects of the poison. But I couldn't help trying to get them away from my face where they were exploring every inch of my skin. (Gersi 1992, 101)

Another firsthand account of an initiation, that of a young Maasai warrior, is even more horrific. Saitoi's account of his own circumcision illustrates clearly that primitive initiation rites can be anything but nurturing. Do contemporary men really want to risk this?

> As soon as I sat down the circumciser appeared, his knives at the ready. He spread my legs and . . . almost immediately I felt a spark of pain under my belly. . . . I remained pinned dowwn until the operation was over. . . . I was carried inside the house to my own bed. . . . The blood must be retained within the bed, for according to Maasai tradition, it must noot spill to the ground. I was drenched in my own blood . . . I was supposed to squeeze my organ and force blood to flow out of the wound, but no one had told me, so the blood coagulated and caused unbearable pain. (Saitoi 1992, 119)

Is it possible that the comforting and embracing world of primitive rituals, so longed for by participants in the Men's Movement, is fiction? If so, is it wise to encourage nostalgia for something that is not real? Miedzian (1991) agrees with Ross that antifeminism is a chief element in primitive initiation rituals. Perhaps in primitive societies--where survival requires men to be hypermasculine hunters and warriors--it is necessary to squelch the gentler aspects of a man's personality; but in contemporary Western society the repression of major components of the psyche is not only undesirable, it is dangerous. Ours is a pluralistic civilization with many types of people living together in a tenuous harmony. The promotion of hypermasculinity and the encouragement of tribalism can only lead to chaos under such circumstances.

Miedzian does not agree with Bly's point of view that young men can best be nurtured by older men. She points out that sociologists have determined that

hypermasculinity is encouraged in primitive societies where boys are raised exclusively by women then separated from them to endure rites of passage at the hands of older men.

> The view that the more exclusively a boy is reared by his mother without the presence of a male figure, the more he will need later on the deny his identification with her and her feminine qualities to prove his masculinity through "hypermasculinity," is . . . corroborated by anthropological research on initiation ceremonies into manhood. . . . The conflict is resolved in favor of manhood by often excruciatingly painful initiation rites. . . . In most societies with elaborate initiation rites there is one term that refers both to women and unititiated boys and another term for initiated males. (Miedzian 1991, 88)

While Bly has not created a term that refers to both women and unititiated males he certainly mirrors the spirit of that concept when he refers to many young men as "soft males." If Miedzian is correct, such language can encourage a hypermasculinity that will not serve young men well in contemporary society. The well-adjusted male, Miedzian claims, has been raised in families where both father and mother have a hand in the nurturing process. In "cultures that were the most violent," he comments, "fathers were most loosely connected with the family and had least to do with the rearing of children" (Miedzian 1991, 88). Both Miedzian and Bly call for greater paternal involvement in child-rearing but their approach is different. While Miedzian calls for a greater effort at joint parenting, Bly and the followers of the Men's Movement seek a return to the ritualistic sequestering of young males practiced by primitive tribes past and present.

The father, Bly believes, must be the chief role model because socialization by women will lead to the "softness" he so deplores. He also believes that emulating ancient storytelling rituals will help to guide young men to a greater understanding of their place in the male community and in the larger society. The repetition and

exploration of ancient stories, he asserts, will help men to understand who they are and how they should live.

> Eventually a man needs to throw off all indoctrination and begin to discover for himself what the father is and what masculinity is. For that task, ancient stories are a good help, because they are free of modern psychological prejudices, because they have endured the scrutiny of generations of women and men, and because they give both the light and dark sides of manhood, the admirable and dangerous. Their model is not a perfect man, nor an overly spiritual man. These powerful energies inside men are lying, like Iron John, in ponds we haven't walked past yet. (Bly 1992, 25-26)

Bly's use of the Iron John tale exemplifies the Jungian branch of the Men's movement, or, as many writers call it, the mythopoetic branch of men's studies. Coinciding with the call for new initiation rituals is the claim by Bly and others that we must embrace ancient stories and understand the archetypes in these stories and in ourselves. Clearly, Bly practices what he preaches in **Iron John**. The book is nothing if not an archetypal morality tale. Many writers have emulated this approach. Some are strict Jungians, others use archetypes in a loose manner, rarely quoting Jung but frequently talking of the various archetypal figures in literature and the unconscious.

Harding (1992) views mythopoetic studies as a distinct branch of the Men's Movement. He describes this aspect of the Movement in the following manner:

> **The Mythopoetic Branch** is a freewheeling exploration of male spirituality and male psychology (especially from a Jungian perspective). It encourages men to delve into their psyches by reintroducing them to literature, mythology, and art. Adherents are primarily heterosexual, mid-life men. (Harding 1992, xiii)

Harding further identifies mythopoetics as the "biggest and fastest growing segment of the movement." Mythopoetics includes not only the telling of stories but all recreations of primitive rituals including various elements of Native American

tradition, drumming councils, mask-making, participation in rustic retreats, and group meetings combining any or all of these elements.

It is likely that a major reason why mythopoetics has become so popular is that this approach to psychology is colorful, romantic, and engages men first at an affective level. It stimulates the senses and the imagination and is therefore, not surprisingly, most popular. In fact, Jungian theory is embraced not only by adherents of the Men's Movements but with participants in the increasingly popular New Age Movement. (Not surprisingly, these two movements have a tendency to overlap.)

"We're beginning to come up hard against the painful limitations in our traditional role models," Kipnis tells us, and further comments that we are," . . . seeking **new** (italics mine) images of masculinity that support us in a return to feeling aliveness . . ." (Kipnis 1991, 24). The new images are in fact old ones that have been recycled and reinterpreted. The tool, as mentioned above, is Jungian analysis (or an adaptation thereof).

Kipnis compares Western archetypes, as represented by the Greek and Roman gods and Biblical figures, with primitive archetypal figures. He favors the latter. Western images, he claims, are mainly sky gods and patriarchal power figures who dominate their environment.

Hercules is an invincible hero. Zeus is an omnipotent sky god who is "capricious, wrathful, possessive, jealous, dominating, and devaluing of the feminine" (Kipnis 1991, 24). Christ is a victim and martyr who receives power from a distant "sky-god." Even Moses and Abraham are seen by Kipnis as ruling from above. The implication is that Western archetypes have created images for men that are unrealistic and harmfully condescending. We derive our notion of what it means to be a man from these "unhealthy" archetypes.

Kipnis favors earth-gods over sky-gods. He believes that modern men should embrace ancient and primitive earth-god archetypes. Like Bly, he believes that men have been overly feminized and that they need to reconnect with "primordial earth-based masculinity" in order to fully realize their manhood.

> Men require initiation into the field of archetypal masculinity . . . the newly emerging image of sacred masculinity is . . . a far cry from the invincible, rigid, patriarchal, war-making hero, the silently suffering martyr, or the feminized "soft" male who serves the goddess. (Kipnis 1991, 25)

Kipnis offers a disclaimer. He tells us that he wishes to encourage a more earthy masculinity because this is necessary before men can live in equal partnership with women. His language, despite this, is provocative. He criticizes male environmentalists (those who worship a "female earth"), and those who cultivate their anima or "inner feminine." While he claims that the cultivation of such archetypes as Ogun, the Dragonslayer, the Sumerian god Dumzi (the Wild Bull), and Pluto, Roman god of the underworld would be more beneficial to men then engaging the anima, he offers no concrete psychological evidence to support his theory. (And dare we mention that Pluto is depicted as a rapist in the myth of Persephone?) It is not possible, despite Kipnis's argument to the contrary, that cultivation of such archetypes would encourage patriarchal thinking and discourage men's tendency to share power with women?

This question does not get asked by proponents of the Men's Movement. In fact, it never gets asked whether cultivation of masculine archetypes has any lasting benefit at all. It is simply assumed to be so. One of the chief healing benefits of archetypal analysis, it is assumed, is the healing of the so-called father-wound: the psychological damage caused by paternal abuse or indifference. The creation of new

rituals and the study of male archetypes is widely believed by followers of the Men's Movement to be therapeutic in nature.

"The father-son wound is not the only source of troubles in a man's life," Gurian (1992) asserts, "but it is one of the most profound." He never explains the basis on which this opinion was developed, but he adds the following:

> We must . . . realize that our healthy manhood depends on making genuine peace with the wounded and disengaged father within us. . . . Only then can we begin to seek profound recovery and a new self-confidence . . . we . . . assume that we men can engage in this confrontation with our own wounds as our need and inspiration, certain techniques and rituals as our tools, and ancient myths and stories as our guides. (Gurian 1992, xi-xii)

Gurian offers his book **The Prince and the King: Healing the Father-Son Wound: A Guided Journey of Initiation** as a vision quest for contemporary men. Though he borrows the term vision quest from Native American rituals his book is clearly an eclectic conglomeration of ancient rituals and myths, medieval quests, and Jungian theory. Clearly, Gurian's work falls in line with the precedent set by Bly. It is passionate, spiritual, though-provoking, and haphazard in its use of various theoretical tools.

In keeping with the philosophy of Bly, Kipnis, and others, a strain of antifeminism can be detected in Gurian's writing. His opening pages convey an image of the mother as a smothering, omnipresent force (Cybele with her gigantic, multiple breasts; Mary smothering Jesus in her bosom) from which sons must, over time, separate. As separation occurs (so Gurian believes) the father can become a nurturing spiritual guide. Through the father, and through healing the father-wound, we can activate the various masculine archetypes. This is necessary if men are to access their full potential. "We become more creative, more loving, wise, and

powerful," Gurian believes, "the more we access all archetypes in our blueprint" (Gurian 1992, 10).

As children, Gurian tells us, men are underdeveloped princes. To become fully individualated men must learn the different archetypes in the unconscious mind. Only then can one's full range of personality traits become expressed. The spiritual center of these archetypes (and the source of self-confidence) is the king. Archetypes that constellate around the king include the warrior (self-discipline and assertiveness), the magician (transformation), the lover (connection with others), and the explorer. These are identified as aspects of "mature masculinity."

The value of studying archetypes, according to Gurian, is that by exploring seemingly external images we become connected with and conscious of our own interior world. This enables self-exploration and growth to occur. It is the job of the father to lay the foundation for spiritual growth, to invest his son with a sense of connectedness with the world and the past. Failure to do so will result in "sacred wounds" to the son. These wounds, Gurian posits, can be healed only through an appreciation and activation of the masculine archetypes. If a father/son wound is present engagement with the archetypes can heal it.

Like many leaders of the Men's Movement, Gurian offers a series of rituals and exercises to strengthen the masculine archetypes; and, like many writers thus far examined, he intimates that the father-wound is a modern malaise without bothering to provide evidence. Gilette and Moore (1992), in their foreword to **The Prince and the King**, agree with Gurian's conviction that "The centuries-long abdication of masculine fullness of being is gradually coming to an end as men begin to take up their swords and scepters, their magician's staves, and reaffirm their phallic joy, first in their inner worlds of archetypal potentials and resources, and then in the public sphere" (Gilette and Moore 1992, viii).

Two of the major issues reappear throughout the writing of the Men's Movement: questionable historic claims and a distinct antifeminism (tempered as it often is with a pallid disclaimer). Is this last quote an attack on feminism? It should be noted that Gilette and Moore further comment that Gurian's book ". . . rightly lifts up the much neglected truth that men do not need to become more like women; instead, they need to become more like men" (Gilette and Moore 1992, ix).

One shudders to attack such pre-eminent theorists as Gilette and Moore but they, like other proponents of the men's Movement, tend to regard the cultivation of the inner feminine as a capitulation to female dominance when, in fact, the inner feminine (a popular term for the anima) is no more than a convenient image used to represent abstract psychic qualities. These qualities are part of every individual's unconscious whether female or male. To cultivate the inner feminine is, seen properly, a very different matter from cultivating femininity. These concepts are often confused by writers of the Men's Movement.

A conviction is found in much of the writing of the Men's Movement that the Industrial Revolution robbed men of their fathers, that their mothers have dominated them and encouraged a negative image of manhood. The implication is that many men embrace feminism because their concept of male/female relationships has been warped. Writers who espouse this theory never consider that many men embrace feminism out of a sense of social justice and with the force of intellectual rigor behind them. They never consider that cultivating the anima is an expansion of one's resources rather than a softening of one's masculinity.

Let us examine Jung's words from **Psyche and Symbol**:

> . . . (archetypes) belong to the realm of instinctual activity and in that sense they represent inherited patterns of psychic behavior . . . if understood by a mature mind, the archetypal preformations can yield numinous ideas ahead of our intellectual level. That is just what our time is in need of. (Jung 1991, xiii)

Written in 1957, these words remain relevant. Leaders of the Men's Movement and, indeed, all contemporary individuals, need to understand that to engage the inner feminine is to engage a part of the psyche that is below the intellectual level; it is part of our instinctual nature and not simply an effect of a smothering mother. Jung explains in **The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious**.

> Either sex is inhabited by the opposite sex up to a point, for, biologically speaking, it is simply the greater number of feminine genes that tips the scales in favor of masculinity. The smaller number of feminine genes seems to form a feminine character, which usually remains unconscious because of its subordinate position. (Jung 1990, 27-28)

In this sense, activating the inner feminine is equivalent to mining some of the undiscovered elements secreted in the unconscious. Men's writers too often view the exploration of the anima as an extension of the father-wound. In their view, men are becoming feminized because their fathers have been spirited away by the industrialized world and have failed to take the time to initiate them into the ways of manhood.

Archetypes are used to explain this wounding. The anima, as represented by such figures as Cybele and Mary, is to be shunned in favor of the more apparently masculine images such as the king and the warrior. Again, it is often forgotten that these are merely symbols of abstractions and that they exist, in varying proportions, in both sexes.

In the canon of books on men's issues, none is more blatantly antifeminist than Keen's **Fire in the Belly** (1991). Throughout this work, the word **woman** is capitalized and set in italics. Its repetition is so constant, its visual presence in the text so pervasive, that femininity takes on a quality of monstrosity. The repetition of that particular word encourages a negative view of the feminine influence in much

the same way as Gurian's comparison of contemporary women to the monstrous, multibreasted Cybele.

Are the following words likely to inspire deep respect for women?

> I would guess that a majority of men never break free, never define manhood by weighing and testing their own experience. And the single largest reason is that we never acknowledge the primal power **WOMAN** wields over us. The average man spends a lifetime denying, defending against, trying to control, and reacting to the power of **WOMAN**. . . . we must . . . become conscious of the ways we are enmeshed, incorporated, inwombed, and defined by **WOMAN**. (Keen, 1991, 14-15)

Keen, like other writers on men's issues, offers a disclaimer. He tells us that his ultimate goal is to encourage each man's love for women but that this can be done only after women are demythologized; yet, his very style belies his claim. The intensity with which **woman** is assailed must surely encourage a disabling negativity in impressionable men. The anima, Keen tells us, simply has too much power over men. In creative men it becomes the muse or source of inspiration--an erotic influence that is irresistible to the creative mind. The same is true for the rapist who cannot resist the desire to control the force that so overwhelms him. Such power, we are told, prevents men from accessing their own male power. Keen, thus, offers the following offensive comment:

> . . . the rapist confesses . . . the experience of the irresistible erotic power of **WOMAN**. His defense is inevitably: "She tempted me. She wanted it. She seduced me." For a moment, put aside the correct response to such deluded excuses, which is that it is not the victim's fault, and consider the raw unconscious experience of **WOMAN** that underlies rape. . . . she is experienced as the active, initiatory power. (Keen 1991, 22)

This is an unconscionable statement. We must **never** put aside the correct response to rape. Rape is a moral choice and an ugly one that any civilized man is obligated to condemn. The ethical problem here is one to be found throughout

much of the literature of the Men's Movement. Keen seems to condemn sexism on the one hand while excusing it on the other. Surely, such a confused message can only serve to aggravate men's misconceptions about their relationships with women.

Keen supports Mitscherlich's theory that the Industrial Revolution separated fathers and sons. The result, he believes, is an imbalance of power in favor of mothers. Their influence, and thus the influence of women in general, is all-encompassing. Contemporary men have no chance to explore the values of masculinity, he further posits, because they have been smothered by feminine values. Again, we must ask--what historical evidence has Keen provided to demonstrate that mothers have greater influence over sons since the rise of industrialization? He provides none. He simply accepts as fact an imbalance in favor of the anima.

The smothering mothers, as described by many men's writers, is a condition facilitated by the absence of or wounding by the father. As stated previously, the father-wound can either be direct (anger in the home, verbal abuse, physical violence) or indirect (absence due to work, indifference, poor communication skills). Dominance by the mother occurs because the father abdicates his role as nurturer and the only form of nurturing a boy knows is of the female variety. A boy feels isolated, hungry for his father, and a sense of woundedness arises because this hunger is not sated. A further result is that men never learn to bond with other men, and they consequently feel isolated from the male community.

Many of the rituals created by the Men's Movement, and many of the myths that are offered for study, serve as attempt to reconnect men to the male community. Michael Meade (1993), for example, offers a mythological meditation on Mitscherlich's theory of a sibling society. Mitscherlich suggests that in a society without the father a competition reminiscent of sibling rivalry is the inevitable result. This, he insists, is the current state of Western society. Individuals, like quarreling children, jockey for power in a sibling society. Mitscherlich elaborates:

> The error of perspective that causes all the members of the crowd to look like mass men to each individual member of it brings us back to the subject of sibling rivalry, the trend to horizontal aggression. As modern man is continually confronted with anonymous . . . other men who reveal no certain sign of their status but in one way or another continually get in his way, his mood is one of diffuse aggressitivity. (Mitscherlich 1993, 274-75)

Elaborating on this theme, Meade recounts the tale of the Water of Life, in which three princes compete in an effort to save the dying king. For the two eldest brothers the goal is to win the king's favor and inherit the kingdom. The youngest, seemingly least qualified brother, is the only one who succeeds in obtaining the healing water of life because his journey is borne of true love and compassion for his ailing father. Meade makes it clear that while each brother acts according to his position in the family (eldest, middle or youngest) these are psychological positions which men can assume in society. Through ritual and the study of myth Meade wishes to reverse the contemporary trend toward male competitiveness and create a supportive, nurturing form of brotherhood--the type of relationship he claims can be found in many initiation cultures (Meade 1993, 311).

In essence, Meade attempts to achieve the same goal as Gurian--the reuniting of the archetypes of prince and king. He further attempts the reuniting of all princes in the service of the king. What he implies is that men will not be whole unless they erect anew a patriarchal system. This subverts Mitscherlich's original thesis in which he asserts that the collapse of patriarchy is dangerous not because it is the best system but because it is disintegrating too quickly for Western society to develop a superior replacement. Mitscherlich does not--let it be remembered--offer patriarchy as the ideal system.

In keeping with Mitscherlich's work, Meade highlights the problems associated with the collapse of patriarchy, but unlike Mitscherlich his support of patriarchy is

very nearly unqualified. The archetype of the prince, as noted above, is divided by Meade into three phases: eldest, middle, and youngest. Meade's description of these figures clearly reveals his pro-patriarchal stance.

> The "oldest brother" is the part of our psyches that believes it will inherit the realm. The "middle brother" in the psyche shares the older brother's sense of inheritance. Only when we are at the end of our wits do we turn to the deeper wit of the youngest brother. The sickness of the king and the older brothers lies partly in their exclusiveness. Something begins to change when the king allows even the youngest son to try to find the cure. (Meade 1993, 315-16)

Unfortunately, the king never seems to consider the women in the family. It is commendable that Meade encourages support for those men who are overlooked and disenfranchised. This is a part of the process of healing the father-wound; but this healing apparently excludes the help of women. A theme running throughout the writings of the Men's Movement is that men must be cured of their dysfunctions in order to establish healthy relationships with women. Men must heal each other. Women cannot be part of the process . They are either ignored as nurturers or condemned for being too smothering. Are there no intelligent, balanced women who can contribute to the psychic well-being of developing males?

Meade, furthermore, fails to illuminate the question of whether the presence of the father-wound is truly a post-Industrial phenomenon. He confesses himself to be a follower of Bly and, like so many of Bly's proponents, accepts his theories without question. Like Meade and the rest, Farmer (1991), offers the Mitscherlich/Bly theory as accepted fact; and he offers therapeutic advice based on this unquestioned theory. Farmer, like so many advocates of the Men's Movement, tells his readers that "(a) sad consequence of the industrialization of life is that men become less and

less familiar with the earth and with nature" (Farmer 1991, 28). He continues as follows:

> A man had to put aside his connectedness to nature and closeness to his family in order to accommodate the necessity of making a living and thus providing for his family. Not only did the industrial era remove your father from home and from nature, but it offered him little to pass on to you about respect for the larger cycles of the earth and the values that reflected this ancient way of honoring the earth. (Farmer 1991, 28)

Again, we have the romantic view of the post-Industrial life. Again, we have an undocumented historical statement; and, with Farmer we confront an additional element of the Men's Movement. Farmer turns his undocumented beliefs into a series of therapeutic exercises. Being a therapist, he has the right to employ any techniques he sees fit. Would it not be wise, however, to be sure of the accuracy of the theories upon which one builds one's practice? Farmer never questions his theoretical foundation--at least not in print.

One cannot call Farmer a Jungian since he does not speak of archetypes. It is fair, however, to refer to him as a pseudo-Jungian since he uses the role-playing of nonhumans as a part of his therapeutic method. For example, he offers the following exercise to be performed by two men:

> Interlace your fingers palm to palm with those of the person across from you. The only ground rule is that you do not actually hurt one another. . . .Push against each other, palm to palm, and while doing so, look in each other's eyes and growl. . . . Soon you will feel some real anger and perhaps some real rage. After you you stop, talk to each other about what your experience was. (Farmer 1991, 102)

This is an attempt to release the anger that arises from the father-wound. In a rudimentary way, Farmer attempts what stricter Jungians also attempt. He tries to get a man to manifest and explore those elements of self that are pre-civilized. This is a way that leaders of the Men's Movement attempt to help men reconnect with their maleness and become less "soft." This is part of the logic behind the role playing of animals, the study of ancient heroes, and participation in sweat lodges, drumming councils, and all sorts of rituals.

Whether we call him the wild man, the green man, or Iron John; whether we seek his spirit in a Greek myth or a Native American ritual, the aim of the mythopoetic branch of the Men's Movement is to heal the father-wound by reconnecting men with their primal selves. The assumption behind this effort is that post-Industrial men are further from their primal selves than pre-Industrial men, that they are softer, more feminized and, by implication, weaker than their ancestors. Burant (1992) tells us that Bly's workshops have ". . . incorporated a deep respect for the feminine" (Burant 1992, 167), but is it true? Faludi discovered otherwise when she inquired into the nature of Bly's mythopoetic weekends.

> The question of how to improve relations with women . . . gets remarkably short shrift on these weekends. Bly may be an advocate of world peace, but as the general of the men's movement, he is overseeing a battle on the domestic front--and he withholds his dovish sentiments from the family-circle conflict. At a 1987 seminar . . . a man in the audience told Bly, "Robert, when we tell woman our desires, they tell us we're wrong." Bly instructed, "So, then you bust them in the mouth." (Faludi 1991, 310)

When criticized for this remark, Bly claimed that he meant that men should strike out verbally, but, still, his sexism betrayed him in an unguarded moment. Still, Burant, like so many others, reveres Bly and accepts his leadership unquestioningly. We have seen, thus far, that Bly and many other writers of the Men's Movement propose to heal men's wounds while at the same time serving up an unhealthy does

of antifeminism. As for the question of the father-wound, itself--despite Mitscherlich, despite Bly, who brought Mitscherlich to the general public, and despite the many writers who have followed Mitscherlich and Bly, there is yet no evidence to support their belief in a deeper father-wound as the result of Western industrialization. While it may be true, how can we know? None of these writers has documented their claims.

Having established a decided lack of documentation in support of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory, the study proceeded with an analysis of various historical documents in order to gain evidence supporting or refuting Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers. The preceding pages described the first of what will, with hope, be many historical studies. A series of such studies is required if we are to determine the validity or invalidity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In the Review of the Literature, the researcher established that the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships has been adopted by many of the writers and theorists in the field of men's studies. Additionally, none of the writers who were cited questioned or challenged Mitscherlich and Bly. Acceptance of a theory should be based on critical judgment, and none was in evidence when the researcher examined the literature. As stated previously, the absence of critical judgment does not invalidate Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory. It became clear, however, that careful scrutiny was justified.

HYPOTHESES

1. It was expected that a comprehensive study of the writings on men's issues since the publication of **Society Without the Father** (1993) and **Iron John** (1990) would indicate that a substantial number of writers, therapists and group leaders have accepted Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory that a major result of the Industrial Revolution has been the disintegration of father/son relationships in Western civilization. Based on the researcher's previous acquaintance with the literature, he anticipated that a majority of writers in the field of men's studies would prove to have accepted the Mitscherlich/Bly theory without questioning its historical foundation. This hypothesis was corroborated by the information provided in the Review of the Literature.

2. It was expected that an analysis of pre-Industrial literature (myths, folktales, and Bible stories) would provide initial evidence either corroborating or calling into question the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships.

It was not expected that the present study would provide the final judgment as to the validity or invalidity of Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory. It was expected, however, that the present study would enable the researcher to decide in which direction the initial evidence points. The ultimate acceptance or rejection of this theory is possible only if the present study is joined by many others and if these studies mostly agree in their conclusions. A single study cannot possibly offer conclusive evidence. It can, however, initiate the debate and provide a forecast of possible conclusions.

One aim of the study was to provide such a forecast. This will, hopefully, be joined in time by a variety of studies designed to examine the issue. If such studies are conducted it is likely that evidence will mount for or against Mitscherlich and Bly.

ASSUMPTIONS

As stated previously, a major assumption of this study was that the analysis of a work of literature can yield information about the life of the society from which it comes. It is with this assumption in mind that much of the world's literary analysis has been written. It was assumed that the human relationships described in various myths, folktales, and Bible stories constitute a legitimate resource for the study of pre-Industrial life. One need not believe in the religious or supernatural elements in these stories to believe in their human truth.

Just as the novels of Dickens are seen as chronicles of their time, as the Canterbury Tales are used to study life in medieval England, as the plays of Ibsen

are seen to represent societal changes in nineteenth century Europe so, too, can myths and folktales be thought of as representing the values and mores of the societies from which they arise. It was assumed that if father/son relationships in pre-Industrial stories bear a similarity to those described by contemporary writers then evidence questioning the Mitscherlich/Bly theory will have been found. If, on the other hand, a substantial difference can be found in the quality of father/son relationships before and after the Industrial Revolution, then evidence will have been provided in support of Mitscherlich and Bly.

It was further assumed that the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory or the lack thereof is of concern to many contemporary men. It was assumed that the popularity of the Men's Movement, and the fact that books on men's issues continue to be published, demonstrates that men want to know themselves and to feel good about the conduct of their lives. It was, therefore, deemed vital that any theory of male development be grounded in verifiable facts. The aim of this study, then, was to conduct an initial inquiry into the possible validity or invalidity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory. It was further assumed that a literature-based historical study would be a valuable addition to the field of men's studies.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Obviously, there are many types of historical research that could be used to examine the issue at hand. A literature-based study was chosen for several reasons. First, the project combined the researcher's interest and background in both literature and gender studies. The application of the researcher's skill and experience in the conduct of literary biography and literary history seemed to be appropriate to this study. As previously noted, this is a valid tool for analyzing the writings of the Men's Movement since myths and archetypal images are used by Bly and many of his supporters to explain the struggles of contemporary males.

Collections of myths from a variety of cultures and time periods were sought and analyzed in the hope of finding evidence for or against the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships. It goes without saying that it would have been impossible to analyze all of the myths and folktales that have been recorded. The study, of necessity, was limited to the gathering of some twenty to thirty myths, folktales, and Bible stories.

This limitation made it possible to develop an initial assumption as to the validity or invalidity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory. It did not, however, provide conclusive evidence. No single study can reasonably be expected to provide sufficient evidence for a final conclusion.

It was assumed that the present study would validate the need for additional historical studies aimed at providing evidence either supporting or questioning Mitscherlich, Bly , and their proponents. The present study did not provide a final conclusion with regard to the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory. It did, however, provide sufficient evidence to offer a forecast as to where the debate is likely to lead and, most importantly, it established the fact that there is, indeed, a controversy regarding the validity or invalidity of Mitscherlich's and Bly's theory.

PROCEDURE

The study employed the same analytical tool used by many writers of the Men's Movement: Jungian analysis. The first step was to identify a variety of archetypes that are central in the literature of the Men's Movement. Evidence was gathered demonstrating how these archetypes are used by writers of the Men's Movement to illuminate dysfunctions in the lives of contemporary males. These same archetypes were then analyzed as they appeared in myths, folktales, Bible stories, and other published sources in which father/son relationships or related relationships (man and God, king and subject, etc.) are described.

The aim was to observe whether the application of archetypes would yield similar dysfunctions to those described in the lives of contemporary males. The assumption was that if such dysfunctions were uncovered, evidence could then be provided demonstrating a similarity between pre-Industrial and post-Industrial father/son relationships. If no such dysfunctions could be found then the study would have uncovered evidence in support of Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers.

The application of Jungian archetypes to literature, and the consequent confluence of literature and psychology, is a well-accepted procedure in the field of literary analysis. While there are many competing theoretical tools applicable to literary analysis, Freudian and Jungian theory--the psychoanalytical approach--certainly constitute an established branch of the profession. The present dissertation fell well within the parameters of that branch of literary/historical studies.

The procedure of this study involved the analysis of archetypes in pre-Industrial literature (myths, folktales, Bible stories) as compared with the same archetypes operating in the lives and psyches of contemporary males. The ancient and the modern, in keeping with Jungian theory, were not viewed as disconnected. Henderson comments as follows:

> The ancient history of man is begin meaningfully rediscovered today in the symbolic images and myths that have survived ancient man. In London or New York we may dismiss the fertility rites of Neolithic man as archaic superstition. We read the myths of the ancient Greeks or the folk stories of American Indians, but we fail to see any connection between them and our attitudes . . . or dramatic events of today. Yet the connections are there. And the symbols that represent them have not lost their relevance for mankind. (Henderson 1968, 97)

If Henderson is correct, the archetypal issues that concern fathers and sons will remain essentially unaltered across time. The present study attempted to inquire into this very issue.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The father-wound, according to many advocates of the Men's Movement, is more than just a personality conflict between individual fathers and their sons. It is the result of a complex series of shifting social currents. Mitscherlich was the first to claim that we are suffering from a qualitative change in father/son relationships. Bly popularized this notion and was the first of many to employ Jungian theory to explain the issues involved. The same theoretical tool--Jungian psychoanalysis--was employed in the present study. The archetypes involved in the formation of the father-wound (as described by writers of the Men's Movement) were identified and compared with the archetypes to be found in a variety of myths, folktales, and Bible stories. The goal was to determine whether there is to be found a substantial similarity or difference in pre-Industrial stories as compared with the contemporary relationships described by writers of the Men's Movement. The other possibility, of course, was that the research would be inconclusive.

It was not. Many of the issues described by Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers were present in pre-Industrial life and cannot be regarded merely as post-Industrial phenomena. Jung's assumption that the psyche contains a collective as well as a personal unconscious has been corroborated by the present study. Archetypes that transcend personal experience were present in every story that was analyzed.

The issues that contemporary men deal with involve the same archetypes that are present in pre-Industrial myths, folktales, and Bible stories. Many of the

writings of the Men's Movement either state or imply that a disproportionate influence by one or more archetypes is involved in the formation of the father-wound. These same disproportion's were detected in the pre-Industrial stories that were analyzed in the study. In particular, writers of the Men's Movement have described imbalances in the psyche involving the following archetypes: the anima, prince, king, magus (or magician), shadow, and warrior. Following, are comparison of the influence of these archetypes on contemporary males with those described in pre-Industrial stories.

ANIMA

The anima, according to Bly and many of his followers, is overactive in contemporary males. This, they claim, is the result of the forced separation of the fathers and sons. As noted previously, Mitscherlich has proposed that the Industrial Revolution altered social conditions. He believes that the rise of factories and the fading of agrarian life brought an end to the intimacy experienced by fathers and sons as they cultivated the land together.

Elaborating on Mitscherlich's theme, Bly claims that the separation of fathers and sons resulted in the excessive influence of mothers. Mothers, he tells us, became the chief caregivers when fathers went away to the factories. Fathers, on the other hand, became objects of mystery and suspicion. Mothers' needs, including their grievances, became a primary issue in the minds of sons. The result of these societal changes, Bly claims, is that the anima became more prominent in the male psyche. As feminism became prominent in the male psyche. As feminism became prominent in social discourse, these mother-centered males embraced feminine values to such a degree that they were transformed into the "soft-males" that Bly finds so distasteful.

The implication, here, is that Bly believes that contemporary males have developed a complex centering around the anima. He believes, too, that mothers and feminists are complicit in the softening of young men,. The whole point behind developing the "inner-masculine" or the "wildman" archetype is to diminish the influence of the anima in the male psyche. As noted in the Review of the Literature, many writers of the Men's Movement support Bly's attack on feminism and join him in his condemnation of those males who try to cultivate their "inner-feminine" (a colloquial synonym for the anima).

The question arises--is the softening of man by woman strictly a post-Industrial phenomenon? An examination of world folklore would indicate that it is not. Take, for example, the story of Achilles, who is one of the most unambiguously masculine figures in Greek mythology. Despite his reputation as one of the strongest and bravest of heroes, Achilles was, on at least two occasions, weakened by his mother. When Achilles was born the Goddess Thetis, his mother, tried to render him invulnerable by immersing him in the River Styx. Hamilton (1989) tells us that she was not entirely successful because she was careless and covered his heels with her hands as she dipped him into the water.

In the tale of the Trojan War, it was Achilles's heel that led to his death. When battling the Trojan Prince Paris, Achilles was struck by an arrow at his one point of weakness and died. Ironically, it was his mother's protective touch that led to his downfall. This was not the only time that Thetis's overprotectiveness weakened Achilles.

The great hero nearly lost his honor when his mother tried to help him escape involvement in the Trojan War. Thetis prophesied that her son would die in the war so she convinced him to hide and avoid the call to service. Her plan was to hide Achilles by bringing him to the court of Lycomedes and disguising him as one of the

servant women. So successfully did Thetis shroud her son's masculinity, that Odysseus failed to recognize him on sight.

Only by means of trickery could Odysseus penetrate Achilles's disguise and persuade him, against his mother's wishes, to join the Greeks in their war against Troy. Achilles was sworn to defend Greece against all enemies. Had he failed to do so he would have dishonored himself, which was no small matter in the lives of the ancient Greeks. Odysseus's trick was to bring two bags of gifts to Lycomedes's court. The bag of trinkets attracted the real women, but a bag of finely wrapped weapons attracted Achilles (Hamilton 1989, 181-94). (Clearly, there were no Amazons in the court of Lycomedes.)

This tale presents a clear image of a mother emasculating her son. Through his mother's influence, Achilles was temporarily transformed into a "soft male." Odysseus takes on the role of mentor and, like many leaders of contemporary men's groups, attempts to guide him into his appropriate gender role.

Mothers, according to Bly, gain power when fathers' work takes them away from home. Many writers of the Men's Movement, as we have seen, agree with this viewpoint. Gurian (1992), for example, supports this theory, claiming that fathers, prior to industrialization, worked close to home, forging intimate relationships with their sons. Undoubtedly, life in small villages kept many fathers close to home, but, as noted previously, this does not mean that emotional bonding was the inevitable result.

It is also to be noted that for many, greater separations were necessary prior to the Industrial Revolution. The means of transportation were slower and merchants, explorers, and even soldiers could be away for months or years. The story of the Trojan war, for example, was a story of an army that fought in a foreign land for ten years. Odysseus, according to the legend, wandered for some ten years more before

fate returned him to his home and family. Long separations were not unknown to ancient peoples.

Pound's famous translation of the Chinese poem from the T'Ang Dynasty, which he calls **The River-Merchant's Wife**, provides clear evidence that men's work could take them away from home for long periods of time.

> At sixteen you departed,
> You went into far Ku-to-yen, by the river of swirling eddies,
> And you have been gone five months.
> The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.
>
> You dragged your feet when you went out.
> By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different mosses,
> Too deep to clear them away.
> The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.
> The paired butterflies are already yellow with August
> Over the grass in the West garden;
> They hurt me. I grow older. (Pound 1976, 498)

There is a painful loneliness in this poem and the tedium of an ancient wife waiting for a husband who would not return with the swift aid of an automobile or an airline. For some people in the pre-Industrial world the separations were longer and the distances wider than any with which we are familiar.

Seki (1963) translates a Japanese folktale which presents us with the same problem cited by Bly, Gurian, and others. A father must go on a journey of some three months duration, leaving his new wife in charge of the household. Such journeys, according to Seki, were not at all uncommon. During Japan's feudal period, government officials who lived in outlying districts were required to report, periodically, to the seat of the government at Edo. They were often obligated to spend months at a time attending to government business. This type of absence is far more extreme than the contemporary situation complained of by Mitscherlich,

Bly, and their supporters. Surely, an absence of some months can be as taxing on family life as the absence of a father who goes to work from nine to five.

In the tale of **The Fire Boy,** a father's journey to Edo is the starting point for a great deal of trouble. When he leaves home, he asks his new wife to look after his only son. In her jealousy, she makes a slave of the young man who is called Mamichigane. He is forced to go into the mountains to gather firewood and remains unkempt and dirty. To add insult to injury, when the father returns she slashes her face with a razor and accuses Mamichigane of mutilating her. The father sends him away without further delay allowing his son to take away only two item: a beautiful kimono and the best of his father's horses. Despite these prizes, Mamichigane is exiled from his father's house.

Two things have occurred, thus far, in the story. A young man's position within his own family has been weakened by a negative anima figure: the stepmother. He then receives a father-wound when his father, without investigation, accepts the stepmother's story. The young man is forced away from his family and out into the world to find a new place in life.

Mamichigane begins to find his way in the world when he disguises himself as a common laborer and finds employment in a rich man's house. He proves his worth by building seven stone ovens to feed his employer's household. (Previously, mealtimes were in great disarray.) Then, in a series of festivals, the young man demonstrates his riding skills, appears in his splendid kimono, and is deemed worthy to marry the rich man's daughter.

Despite his good fortune, Mamichigane cannot begin his adult life until he returns, once more, to his family. His wife warns him that if he eats any mulberries that fall into his saddle he will die. As he approaches his birth home he forgets the warning and is poisoned by the mulberries. Clearly, he has returned to a place where his life-force has been diminished. Mamichigane's corpse is carried by his

horse to the home of his childhood. As his stepmother comes out to investigate who is approaching her home, the horse rears and kicks her to death. The father then takes Mamichigane's body back into the house. At this point the wounds have been healed. The mother has been destroyed and Mamichigane, though dead, has been carried home by the father who rejected him.

It is at this point that Mamichigane can be resurrected. His wife seeks out his body and has brought with her three cups of life-restoring water. Mamichigane is brought back to life and he and his wife bid the father farewell. They return to her kingdom where, according to legend, they lived out their lives in happiness (Seki 1963, 70-77).

Mamichigane has achieved the goal that Bly wishes for the soft males of the contemporary world. He has thrown off the excessive and oppressive influence of the anima (and the same misogyny can be detected in this story that one can find in Bly's writing) and he has reconciled with his father, thus healing the father-wound. All of this has occurred in a story from medieval Japan. This type of story, Seki tells us, was common in feudal Japan. If this is true, then issues which Bly and his followers label as contemporary have been shown, in at least one culture, to predate the Industrial Revolution by more than half a millennium.

The anima has been reviled by patriarchal cultures throughout history. Why is this so? For an answer we can look to Keen's (1991) reaction to feminine power as discussed in the Review of the Literature. Keen, as noted previously, refers to WOMAN in all caps and in a repetitive manner. This is intended to symbolize the overwhelming effect of the anima on the male psyche and libido. Domination by the anima, as Keen sees it, offers an explanation if not an excuse for some men's assault on women. The power of this feminine archetype so overwhelms a man that he might want to control it, oppress it, even destroy it.

This, of course, is a sign of male immaturity. Such immaturity tends to be sustained in a patriarchal milieu. Rather than criticizing themselves for their inability to handle the power and allure of the feminine, some men tend to blame women for causing their troubles. Patriarchal myths, traditions, and religious doctrines have helped generations of men to avoid confronting their own inadequacies. This is a tradition carried on by Bly and his followers in their assault on feminism, but the issue predates the Men's Movement by some thousands of years.

The Bible, the Mahabharata, and Greek mythology all present anima images that bring trouble, sin, even death into the world. Eve is among the most famous of these world-disabling anima figures. It is she who is seduced by the serpent, she who seduces Adam, she whose weakness, allure, and iniquity bring sin and death into the world. Man is cursed because he allows himself to be seduced--as Keen would describe it--by WOMAN. God speaks to Adam in the following manner:

> You listened to your wife and ate the fruit which I told you not to eat. Because of what you have done, the ground will be under a curse. You will have to work hard all your life to make it produce enough food for you. . . . You will have to work hard and sweat to make the soil produce anything, until you go back to the soil from which you were formed. You were made from soil, and you will become soil again. (Good News Bible 1976, 4)

Toil and death, according to this patriarchal tale, are man's lot because he allowed himself to be influenced by woman. Bly claims that the softening of males is a post-Industrial phenomenon, a post-feminist psychosocial malaise; yet, clearly, there was no greater softening of man than the introduction of death into his experience. The Bible, thus, provides evidence that the viewpoint embraced by Bly and other writers of the Men's Movement was familiar to the authors of these ancient scriptures.

The ancient Hebrews were not only the people to blame the anima for inviting death into the world. The Mahabharata, one of India's great religious documents, echoes the Bible in blaming the anima for the emergence of sin and death. O'Flaherty tells us that this cornerstone of the Hindu religion describes women as being created for the purpose of bringing evil into the world. In one version of the myth, women are born of Maya, goddess of demons. The root of Maya's name also means "illusion" in Sanskrit. Woman allures man by exciting desire, but the ultimate end of such passion is death. According to this antifeminist myth, the satisfaction that the anima promises is illusory.

Why does Brahma create the anima figure of Maya? According to O'Flaherty (1975), it is to help maintain the difference between mortals and immortals. Lust is the illusion that leads mortal men to death and, thus, the gods maintain their distinction as immortals (O'Flaherty 1975, 36-37). This concept relates the Mahabharata to the Biblical tale of Adam and Eve. Two things separate humanity from God and the angels: the knowledge of good and evil and immortality. When Adam and Eve sample the forbidden fruit they become more godlike in that they are endowed with the ability to make moral choices. They are expelled from Paradise. Symbolically, this represents the fact that the ability to distinguish between good and evil burdens them with the obligation to make moral choices. Innocence, thus, has died. Until the time of the ultimate Redemption their hearts will no longer be at peace and Paradise cannot be theirs.

The first sign that Adam and Eve have lost Paradise is the awareness of their nakedness. Immodesty and lust have become possibilities and, thus, sin has manifested itself. With the awareness of sin also comes the possibility of choosing goodness rather than merely living in innocence. It is this freedom of choice that makes Adam and Eve more godlike. The distinction must be maintained between mortals and immortals and the expulsion from Eden becomes necessary.

> Then the Lord God said, "Now the man has become like one of us and has knowledge of what is good and what is bad. He must not be allowed to take fruit from the tree that gives life, eat it, and live forever." So the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden. Then at the east side of the garden he put living creatures and a flaming sword which turned in all directions. (Good News Bible 1976, 4)

The issues are the same in the Bible and the Mahabharata. Man has allowed the anima to gain too much influence. The result is his downfall. In both tales, immortality has been lost. In the Bible, Paradise is forfeited. Certainly, these dramatic events demonstrate that pre-Industrial patriarchies felt the same need as Bly, Keen, and many in the Men's Movement to suppress the power of the anima. Ancient religious leaders, refusing to take complete responsibility for their sins, blamed **woman** for blinding them on their way along the path of righteousness. Whether the anima is truly out of balance in contemporary men is a matter of debate. The fact remains that many in the Men's Movement believe it to be so.

The previous discussion makes it clear that ancient patriarchs also believed the anima to be dangerously powerful. As noted earlier, the dominance of the anima is believed to be one of the results of industrialization; but, clearly, the Bible and the Mahabharata provide initial evidence that this issue predated the Industrial Revolution. So, too, does the Greek myth of Pandora.

Bulfinch and Hamilton (1989) agree that there are two versions of this myth. Both versions have one theme in common: Pandora, the first woman, is created as a plague on mankind. Her creation is, in fact, an act of revenge. According to the myth, Prometheus befriends mankind and steals fire from the gods to help make men's lives easier. This infuriates Zeus, who is further insulted when Prometheus tricks him into accepting the worst part of an animal sacrifice. Two offerings are

displayed, and Zeus is asked to choose which will ever be his offering. The edible part of an ox is made to appear unappetizing, while bones are wrapped in gleaming fat and appear most appealing. Zeus chooses the latter and is forced, from then on, to accept the bones and entrails as his burnt offering whenever a sacrifice is made.

As revenge, Zeus creates Pandora, who is endowed with many beautiful gifts from the gods. She is presented as a wife for Epimetheus, Prometheus's brother. In one version of the story, Pandora is intentionally evil, and from her the race of women, seductresses one and all, was born. In the second, more famous version, Pandora is presented with a box that is not to be opened. She lacks resolve and her curiosity gets the better of her. The box is opened and all of the evils are released into the world. Pandora quickly shuts the lid, but only hope remains. Pandora is clearly an anima figure and a negative one. Whether she is presented as evil or merely weak, she is identified as the source of all evil. She is man's greatest weakness, according to the myth, a fact which clearly demonstrates the misogyny of the ancient Greeks (Bulfinch 15-20; Hamilton 1989, 70-72).

Each of the tales present anima figures that weaken either one man or mankind in general. Each of these figures represents a disintegrating force in the lives of men. Since these images predate the Industrial Revolution, it seems unlikely that the concept of the inflated anima is merely a post-Industrial phenomenon.

PRINCE/KING

These archetypes are presented as a single unit because some writers of the Men's Movement have linked them. The prince, in fact, is sometimes viewed as an immature or incomplete version of the king. The goal of every man is to have his prince archetype, his inherent strengths, become fully actualized. When one's potential assets are realized the prince is transformed into the king. Often, this

involves a trial or initiation of some sort. These paired archetypes are the central images to be found in Bly's **Iron John**.

In this tale, a young prince passes through a series of trials and, in time, emerges as a king. This is done with the help of a strange and primitive mentor who leads him on a journey of self-discovery. The tests experienced by the prince are not always passed, but the self-exploration encourage by the initiation process helps him to emerge as a fully mature king. Bly writes as follows:

> The ancient societies believed that a boy becomes a man only through ritual and effort--only through the "active intervention of the older men." The active intervention of the older men means that older men welcome the younger man into the ancient, mythologized, instinctive male world. (Bly 1990, 15)

Iron John does more than welcome the prince into the instinctive world. He **is** the instinctive world and he carries the young prince to his secret pool--the place where one is forced to face the depths of the self. Initiation, Bly tells us, involves an encounter with the deepest and darkest archetypal images. This can involve pain and, indeed, many forms of initiation involve some sort of wounding which, the poet claims, ". . . reverberate out from a rich center of meaning" (Bly 1990, 28). Contemporary men, he believes, have suffered deep wounds from their fathers. Their initiation process must involve the facing of these father-wounds.

In the tale of Iron John, the prince wounds himself while trying to release the wildman, the instinctual self, from his cage. He is then brought to the lair of the hairy man, a pool in the woods, where he is given the task of preventing anything from dropping into the pool. He fails. The pain of his wounded finger is so intense that he dips it in the cool water. The finger turns to gold. Iron John gives him a second chance to keep the pool pure but a hair from the prince's head falls into the

pool as he runs his still throbbing finger through his locks. The fallen hair turns to gold. Iron John gives him one last chance. This time, the prince is compelled to gaze into the eyes of his own reflection. His long hair falls forward and it all turns to gleaming gold.

The prince, by gazing at his own reflection in the archetypal pool (the collective unconscious) has faced not only his wounds but the depths of his unconscious. He is expelled from the woods. Bly notes that on one level this is a failure--men often find shame in acknowledging their wounds--but, on another level, it is only through facing one's wounds, in particular the deep and profound father-wound, that a man can find his true strength. The prince, having faced his wounds, returns to the civilized world and to a series of adventures by which he will prove his worthiness as a king. Iron John, of course, continues to serve as his supernatural mentor and aide.

In a sense, the tale of Iron John is a folkloric justification of the need for therapy. The Men's Movement, which embodies many experiences that can be considered therapeutic, echoes the same need. The irony here is that while Bly support Mitscherlich's theory of a qualitative shift in father/son dynamics, the very use of the Iron John story would indicate that pre-Industrial and post-Industrial life are of a whole cloth. In therapy, men face their wounds, cast aside the shame associated with the admission of "weakness" and, through increasing their level of self-apprehension begin to heal these emotional wounds.

This is exactly what occurs in the tale of Iron John. The prince receives a wound, finds gold when he faces his wound, and the receives the power to establish himself as a fully mature individual. He begins as a prince (potential power) and ends as a king (actualized power). Bly demonstrates no essential difference in the experience of the prince and the experiences of modern men who, through therapy or a variety of experiential encounter groups, transform themselves from suffering

children to mature men in control of their lives. The story of Iron John, then, would support a theory espousing the consistency of human experience across the generations.

Jung comments on this very subject in **The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious** (1990) when he writes that it is

> . . . impossible for us to know the nature of the preconscious psychic disposition that enables a child to react in a human manner. We can only suppose that his behavior results from patterns of functioning, which I have described as **images**. The term "image" is intended to express not only the form of the activity taking place, but the typical situation which the activity is released. These images are "primordial" images in so far as they are peculiar to the whole species, and if they ever "originated" their origin must have coincided at least with the beginning of the species. (Jung 1990, 12)

A major problem with many writers of the Men's Movement can be observed in the fact that while they adapt Jung's theories they seldom refer directly to his texts. The preceding quote provides evidence that Jung's theories, far from supporting Mitscherlich, Bly, and their proponents, are philosophically at odds with a theory that claims an essential shift in human relations. We have seen, thus far, that myths and folktales provide evidence of a similarity in father/son relationships.

Speaking of contemporary males, Gurian notes that if a boy matures psychologically as well as physically his prince archetype will evolve into the king archetype. In keeping with Mitscherlich and Bly, however, he claims that most contemporary males cannot make this transition because rather than guiding them towards maturity their fathers have wounded them. "Most of us," Gurian says, "brought up by abusive, distant, or absent fathers and thus lacking a masculine umbilical cord to our sacred masculinity, risk remaining in the Prince archetype throughout our adulthood's" (Gurian 1992, 53).

Rather than developing leadership skills, pride, and self-confidence, the immature male will become aggressive, temperamental, and enamored of the culture of acquisitiveness. Gurian suggests that popular culture encourages immaturity by offering hypermasculine figures as contemporary heroes. One reason such images are popular (the rich, aggressive, power-wielding male) is that men have adjusted their psyches to a "survival mode." Wounded by their fathers, surrounded by other aggressive males, offered hypermasculine heroes as role models, many young men believe that they must be aggressive and insensitive to survive in a dangerous world.

Gurian believes Mitscherlich's and Bly's assertion that this state of affairs is the result of industrialization. He does not, however, offer any evidence that life for men has ever been different. When have we not existed in a survival mode? Could we not consider, for instance, that the violent nature of the primitive initiation rights, described earlier, as evidence that many cultures have viewed the maturation process as a method of preparing young men to live life as survivalists?

Many myths and folktales provide evidence that the transition from prince to king has often been viewed as a movement from youthful innocence to an acceptance of a survivalist outlook. Those who cannot learn to be survivalists, according to the rules of this model, cannot become kings. We may take, as an example, the medieval story of **Beowulf**. In this tale, first recorded in Old English, the hero is revered because he is a warrior. Whatever one makes of the archetypal nature of Beowulf's confrontations with the monster Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon, one thing remains clear--**Beowulf** is the product of a warrior culture and the hero is lionized for his warlike attributes. He is no less a survivalist than Swartzenegger, Stallone or Chuck Norris.

Beowulf moves from prince to king by proving himself an outstanding warrior. He is, in fact, the son of another great warrior named Shild, and it is clear, from the

opening lines, that Beowulf is to embody the king archetype by carrying on in his father's fierce footsteps.

> Hear me! We've heard of Danish heroes,
> Ancient kings and the glory they cut
> For themselves, swinging mighty swords!
> How Shild made slaves of soldiers from every
> Land, crowds of captives he'd beaten
> Into terror; he'd traveled to Denmark alone,
> An abandoned child, but changed his own fate,
> Lived to be rich and much honored . . .
> And he gave them more than his glory,
> Conceived a son for the Danes, a new leader . . .
> Now the Lord of all life, Ruler
> Of glory, blessed them with a prince, Beo,
> Whose power and fame soon spread through the
> world. (**Beowulf** 1963, 23)

Beowulf is a fighter of monsters, creatures who leave other warriors trembling in fear. The Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships would have us believe that contemporary men embrace hypermasculinity because industrialization has placed a wedge between them and their fathers. Wounding and abandonment, according to the theory, leads to pain and often rage. In a world of angry, disenfranchised young men one is compelled (so the theory claims) to adopt an exaggerated form of masculine behavior. As noted above, Gurian believes that hypermasculinity is a post-Industrial malaise resulting from "abusive, distant, or absent fathers," and that this abuse passes from one generation to the next.

The passage quoted from **Beowulf** would indicate that hypermasculinty was passed from one generation to the next in pre-Industrial cultures, as well. Shild is an abandoned child who becomes a merciless warrior. The spoils of war make him rich, and he passes both his wealth and ferocity to his son. What makes this different from contemporary fathers and sons? Gurian offers the following lament:

> Killing a lot of men (or at least beating them up), sleeping with a lot of women, making a lot of money . . . these are the qualities of an adolescent hero, a Prince disguised as a King. These are also the qualities of most popular-culture heroes. Most of us, no matter how "developed" we are . . . feel a tug of glory at the end of **Rocky** or **Top Gun**. Most of us have been primed to want endless youth, money, conquest. (Gurian 1992, 58)

Clearly, these issues transcend contemporary popular culture. Whether or not one views Beowulf as an immature prince archetype, it is clear that the culture from which he arose revered him as a king archetype. Beowulf is honored for conquering a monster: the merciless Grendel. He vanquishes, next, an even more vicious creature, the anima figure of Grendel's mother. In his old age, Beowulf continues to demonstrate hypermasculinity (and is praised for it) by battling a dragon. Beowulf is transformed from prince to king by means of his ferocity. Clearly, values that are embraced by post-Industrial society (even as cultural critics condemn them) were likewise embraced by pre-Industrial Europeans.

The contemporary West embodies competing paradigms. The patriarchal paradigm lauds images of hypermasculinity and vilifies feminine power. There is, at the same time, another paradigm that embraces an holistic view of life. Capra (1988), in fact, claims that contemporary society is at a turning point as we shift from a mechanistic world view (one that includes patriarchal thinking) to a more organic and integrating view of the world. We are in a "crisis of perception," Capra tells us:

> . . . we are trying to apply the concepts of an outdated
> world view--the mechanistic world view of Cartesian-Newtonian science--to
> a reality that can no longer be
> understood in terms of these concepts. What we need,
> then, is a new "paradigm"--a new vision of reality. . . .
> The beginnings of this change . . . are already visible in
> all fields. This new vision includes the emerging systems

> view of life . . . the corresponding holistic approach to health and healing; the integration of Western and Eastern approaches to . . . psychotherapy; a new conceptual framework for economics . . . and an ecological and feminist perspective which is spiritual . . . and will lead to profound changes in our social and political structures. (Capra 1988, 16-17)

According to Capra, this move towards holistic thinking began in the field of physics and spread to other disciplines. In the social sciences, feminism has challenged rigid patriarchal thinking and the call for inclusiveness has become increasingly louder. Patriarchy, Capra claims, ". . . is the one system which, until recently, had never in recorded history been openly challenged, and whose doctrines were so universally accepted that they seemed to be laws of nature; indeed, they were usually presented as such" (Capra 1988, 29).

While it is true that the twentieth century has seen the dramatic emergence of feminism and a variety of civil rights movements, it is not entirely accurate to say that patriarchal thinking has gone unchallenged. True, there is ample evidence that patriarchal images have been revered--Beowulf and Shild are certainly examples--but mythology and folklore have also challenged the patriarchal paradigm. While there are heroes who could easily be described (in keeping with Gurian's theory) as princes who never matured into kings, world folklore also offers examples of princes who destroyed themselves and those around them by embracing the very outlook that the Beowulf tale embraces. In the twentieth century, the feminist challenge to patriarchy has gained influence, and society is increasingly conscious of the issues raised by feminist thinkers; but the immature and corrosive nature of the prince archetype has been demonstrated in some traditional tales that predate feminism, industrialization, and contemporary gender politics. Robertson (1968), for example, has recorded a Vietnamese tale called "The Emperor's Magic Bow." In this tale, the

prince attempts to gain his kinghood by embracing his father's politics. He succeeds on the political level but fails on the moral level because his actions are aimed at pleasing his father; he fails to listen to the ethical mandates of his own conscious.

In this tale, the emperor of Au Lac (the former name of Vietnam) has commanded that a wall be built to protect his nation from the Chinese invaders. Three times the wall collapses, and Emperor An Duong Vuong prays for help. He is visited by Kim Qui, the golden turtle, who gives him a nail from his golden claw. The emperor places the golden nail at the tip of a bow, and with this bow he defeats the Chinese army.

Trieu Da, the Chinese general, is determined not to suffer this humiliation, so he sends his son to marry the emperor's daughter. An Duong Vuong believes that this political marriage will unite the two nations and he therefore agrees to allow Trong Thuy to marry the beautiful My Chau. Trong Thuy takes advantage of My Chau's wifely obedience and wrests from her the secret of her father's power. The young man returns to his father, but he warns the princess that there may be trouble ahead. She tells him that if she needs to make an escape he will find her by following the trail of feathers from her goose-feather coat.

Trong Thuy returns to his father with the stolen bow, and the Chinese army overwhelms the emperor's men. The emperor makes his escape with his daughter, but when he learns of the betrayal he cuts off her head. Trong Thuy returns to his beloved by following the trail of feathers. When he finds her slain he is overcome by grief and leaps off a cliff (Robertson 1968, 66-74).

What has he gained? From a political standpoint Trong Thuy has fulfilled the requirements of a king. He has done what is necessary to vanquish his enemies, yet, he breaks his own heart in the process. Clearly, Trong Thuy had another option. He could have embraced the political alliance made possible by his marriage. He could have united two nations and remained close to the woman he loved. Instead of

following his conscience he followed his vanity (and his father's). This is clearly a prince who fails to mature because he fails to listen to the whisperings of his own heart. As a result, he destroys his wife, himself, and plunges two kingdoms into an unnecessary war. This Vietnamese tale demonstrates an awareness of a spurious maturation process; it clearly demonstrates that contemporary feminist critics are not alone in their condemnation of patriarchal thinking. Ancient Vietnamese storytellers were aware of the dangerous influence of the immature prince archetype.

One of the most famous kings of literature--one who is often believed to represent honor and righteousness--is King Arthur. His story is one of the great tragedies of patriarchal thinking. The tragedy of the Arthurian legend is not merely the betrayal by Lancelot and Guinevere but the sad fact that Arthur, noble as he was, became the victim of his own adherence to a rigid behavioral code.

Arthur and his knights were viewed by medieval Europeans (chiefly the French and English) as heroes and were likely revered in much the same manner as Beowulf and Shild. Today, however, the dispassionate literary historian can detect the same immature prince archetype at work in the Arthurian stories that can be detected in a Rocky movie or a high school locker room. "If a tribe's songs and dramas are centered on violence and warfare," Miedzian (1991) writes, "if its young boys play war games and violently competitive sports from the earliest age, if its paintings, sculptures, and potteries depict fights and scenes of battle, it is a pretty sure bet that this is not a peaceful, gentle tribe" (Miedzian 1991, 173). The Arthurian legends are, first and foremost, tales of warfare. If the Round Table brought an era of peace it was a tenuous peace at best and short lived.

Bulfinch's compilation of the Arthurian Legends (no publication date provided) makes it clear that the final great war, the one that leads to the dissolution of Arthur's kingdom and ultimately to the Morte D'Arthur, is not so much the result of Guinevere's unfaithfulness as it is to the egging on of the king by his knights. Take

away the romantic patina and Arthur's final battle looks much the same as a street brawl in Brooklyn or on Chicago's south side, with a group of anxious and angry adolescents pushing each other towards greater and ever greater violence.

Arthur does not go to war because he is hurt by Guinevere's betrayal. He condemns her to death because it is the law. The king is unwilling to publicly challenge a legal tradition even if he is not truely enamored of this act of revenge. In other words, he feels compelled to maintain his public persona as an upholder of the law even if the letter of the law runs contrary to his conscience. Like Trong Thuy, who steals his father-in-law's magic bow and ultimately destroys his own happiness, Arthur follows the course that is politically expedient rather than considering the course that is ethically superior. Like many immature young men of today, the intrepid king chooses to follow the rules of the pack rather than dictates of his conscience.

Guinevere is condemned to death when her infidelity is revealed. She is to be burned at the stake, but Lancelot, who has escaped capture, gathers an army and rescues her. In the fray, two unarmed knights are killed. They are the nephews of Arthur, and a surviving nephew, Sir Gawain, demands that Arthur revenge himself upon Lancelot even though these deaths were clearly accidental. Lancelot is unwilling to battle the king who knighted him. He merely wants to protect Guinevere. Arthur, egged on by Gawain and the other knights, rejects Lancelot's overture of peace. War becomes inevitable.

Lancelot escapes to France but Arthur, goaded on by taunts from Gawain ("Will you now turn back . . . If ye do, all the world will speak shame of you.") follows him in order to continue a war that he does not desire. In his absence, Sir Mordred takes control of the kingdom and Arthur with his knights must return home in order to try to regain his authority. Gawain, at last, realizes that the wedge he has placed between Arthur and his friend Lancelot has deprived the king of his

most powerful ally (". . . had Sir Lancelot been with you as of old, this war had never begun, and of all this I am the cause"). He understands, too late, the destructive nature of his immature hypermasculinity. Arthur, unfortunately, has yet to realize the same about himself.

Gawain dies in battle, but he returns to Arthur in a dream in order to warn the king that he should avoid combat with Mordred for one month. If he does this, Lancelot will return to England and together they will retake Arthur's kingdom. Arthur arranges to sign a treaty with Mordred but one of Mordred's knights is bitten by an adder. He draws his sword to kill it and Arthur's hotheaded knights take this occurrence for an act of war. A battle ensues and, despite the nocturnal warning from Gawain, Arthur slays Mordred. Unfortunately, with the last of his strength Mordred raises his sword and deals Arthur a fatal blow to the head (Bulfinch, 427-35).

Does this not remind one of the gang-like behavior which results, in the end, with the death of the participants? Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers would have us believe that father/son relationships have disintegrated since the Industrial Revolution. This, they claim, has resulted in a sibling society in which young men are competitive, aggressive, and a danger to themselves and others. **Beowulf** and the Arthurian legends demonstrate that these issues were alive long before the rise of factories. Miedzian quotes an article by David Rothenberg, former director of the Fortune Society, an organization that works with ex-convicts. "Over a period of fifteen years," she notes, "(Rothenberg) talked with thousands of adult and teen-age male criminal offenders, and found an 'amazing similarity' in their explanations of what led them to commit crimes: 'I wanted them to know that I was no sissy' and 'I had to prove that I was a man' " (Miedzian 1991, 10-11).

Majors and Billson (1992) agree with Mitscherlich's and Bly's claim that contemporary social currents have swept away young men's sense of societal

proprieties. "When a society is in a state of rapid social change," they posit, "the old rules no longer have sufficient power to inspire conformity . . ."

> . . . Confusion and anxiety prevail. "Anomie" or "normlessness"--rejection of the rules of the game or confusion over how they apply--opens the door to arbitrary behavior and systematic deviance. In twentieth century American life . . . we are surrounded by a culture that places an inordinate value on materialism, success, prestige, personal possessions and wealth . . . Trickery, conning, bank fraud, embezzlement . . . insider trading, and tax evasion have become the deviant tools of choice for a middle class bent on the competitive massing of . . . wealth. Violence, toughness, coolness, assault, and theft have become the preferred strategies of the lower-income groups in our society. (Majors and Billson, 1992 5-6)

Miedzian's report of Rothenberg's experiences parallel the events leading to the death of Arthur and the dissolution of the Round Table. "Probing one's manhood" was the chief motivating factor in the tale of King Arthur, and while "violence, toughness, and coolness" are viewed by Majors and Billson as signs of contemporary anomie, we can see that **Beowulf,** the Arthurian legends, and "the Emperor's Magic Bow" provide evidence that the same issues that trouble contemporary men were relevant to pre-Industrial men.

The issues revolving around the prince archetype were as relevant in pre-Industrial times as they are today. Perhaps Capra is correct when he claims that Western society is at a turning point. If we have one advantage, today, it is that we are free to debate the issues openly and freely. This does not negate the fact that the transformation from prince to king (or the failure to achieve this transformation) concerned pre-Industrial males. The warlike nature of Beowulf and Shild was lauded by pre-Industrial Europeans. Ancient Vietnam clearly recognized the dangers involved when a young man fixes upon the prince archetype and never

learns to use his power wisely and prosocially as only a self-actualized king can do. The Arthurian legends remain ambiguous. They often appear to support warlike behavior; yet, it becomes apparent in the end that Gawain and Arthur, having failed to mature, die as a result of their impetuous behavior.

Like contemporary society, the pre-Industrial world suffered competing paradigms of manhood. Some men failed to mature from prince to king and were condemned. Others, existing in a largely competitive environment, were lauded for their violent and impulsive behavior. Still other men, like the prince in **Iron John,** learned to face their weaknesses and evolve into truly mature and admirable kings. World folklore provides evidence that all of these situations, so significant in the lives of contemporary men, were likewise significant in the lives of pre-Industrial individuals.

MAGUS (or MAGICIAN)

In any discussion of the magus, it is well to bear in mind Jung's remarks in his essay **The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales**.

> It can never be established with on-hundred-percent certainty whether the spirit-figures in dreams are morally good. Very often they show all the signs of duplicity, if not of outright malice. I must emphasize, however, that the grand plan on which the unconscious life of the psyche is constructed is so inaccessible to our understanding that wecan never know what evil may not be necessary in order to produce good by enantiodromia, and what good may very possibly lead to evil. . . . The figure of the wise old man can appear so plastically . . . (it) appears in dreams in the guise of magician, doctor, priest, teacher, professor, grandfather, or any other person possessing authority . . . (it) appears in a situation where insight, understanding, good advice . . . are needed but cannot be mustered on one's own resources. (Jung 1992, 93-94)

Jung notes, over and over again in his writings, that the symbols present in the unconscious mind are difficult to apprehend consciously. They are fluid in nature and explicit descriptions of the archetypes are merely approximations of psychic patterns. Archetypal analysis aims at helping us intuit our own psychological states. It does not aim at mapping out the mind in a rigid, unchanging manner.

This issue is never more apparent than when we study the magus. The magus has many forms, some positive and some negative. As noted above, it can lead us into evil or good. Generally, the better we know the magus the better off we are, because it can lead us to knowledge, even wisdom that may normally be inaccessible to the conscious mind. A chief characteristic of this archetype is its fluidity or transformational abilities. Being a magician, this aspect of the psyche changes its shape to suit its needs.

Burrows, Lapides, and Shawcross (1973) identify three forms of the archetype all of which are interconnected. The magician, they tell us, is ". . . representative of the unknown . . . often the agent in the act of transference" (Burrows, Lapides, and Shawcross 1973, 458). The demon, often an evil spirit, ". . . has superior, magical knowledge" (Burrows, Lapides, and Shawcross 1973, 452). In Greek mythology, however, the demon was a guardian spirit and considered good. The trickster is described as "a figure whose physical appetites dominate his behavior; he is cruel, cynical, and unfeeling . . . moving from one mischievous exploit to another" (Burrows, Lapides, and Shawcross 1973, 463). Is he evil? At times he is; but Burrows and company further note that "The symbols of transcendence involve the trickster as a shaman, or magician, who officiates at initiation rites (Burrows, Lapides, and Shawcross 1973, 463).

Two major forms of the magician--his shamanistic form and his trickster form--are clearly present in the writings of the Men's Movement. The disintegration of father/son relationships, as posited by Mitscherlich and Bly, encourages the

development of tricksters. Sons, according to the theory, become suspicious of fathers who are absent from the home from nine to five. They become competitive with their fathers and other males. Sometimes this competitiveness is angry and aggressive, sometimes devious and deceptive. In either case, contemporary sons have a strong drive towards toppling the institutions established by their elders. Bly writes as follows:

> Throughout the ancient hunter societies, which apparently lasted thousands of years . . . and throughout the hunter-gather societies that followed them, and the subsequent agricultural and craft societies, fathers and sons worked and lived together . . . the son characteristically saw his father working at all times of the day at all seasons of the year. When the son no longer sees that, what happens? . . . The demons . . . encourage suspicion of all older men. Such a suspicion effects a breaking of the community . . . A young architect controlled by demons secretly rejoices when a Louis Sullivan building gets knocked down; and the rock musician plays with a touch of malice the music that his grandfather could never understand. (Bly 1990, 95-96)

The object of the trickster is the deflation of vanity, either one's own or another's. Jungian analyst Robert Moore says, "I like to say to groups of men in not so polite company that the trickster is your **bullshit indicator** " (Moore 1991, 192). The problem arises when the amount of suspicion is greater than the circumstances warrant. Mitscherlich and Bly both indicate that sons, while they have legitimately sustained wounds, can often develop too great a suspicion of older males for no other reason than one's father was away at work too often.

A competitive and distrusting young manhood has risen, according to Mitscherlich and Bly, as the result of the social trends brought about by the Industrial Revolution. The remedy for this, so Bly and the many proponents of the Men's Movement would have us believe, is to call forth the magus in one of his prosocial forms: the shaman or wise man. This is the function of many of the rituals

of the Men's Movement. Older men and group leaders act as mentors or shamans, magical guides leading men through the green world and introducing them to their collective unconscious. When Shepherd Bliss's partner assumes the role of St. Francis of Assisi at a men's gathering and Paul Reitman calls for a return to ritual (see the Review of the Literature) they are functioning as shaman or wise men who call young men into the spiritual domain. Clearly, this is the role that Bly has assigned to himself.

Writers and leaders of the Men's Movement acknowledge the existence of the magus in his shaman form prior to the Industrial Revolution. The purpose of taking on this role is to recreate the nurturing relationships that contemporary young men have failed to establish with the older generation. The trickster form of the magus, on the other hand, is presented by Bly and his followers as if it is a largely post-Industrial phenomenon. There are a significant number of myths and folktales, however, that clearly demonstrate the same tendency in young men to topple the existing social order--the society of their fathers.

A salient example is the story of Prometheus and Zeus which, in the light of archetypal analysis, must be viewed as a case of trickster vs. trickster. Zeus is the trickster in his harmful form, while Prometheus represents the trickster as hero. Zeus is a philanderer and a rapist who succeeds in fooling his wife or taking advantage of beautiful mortal girls by changing his shape. According to Hamilton, when the king of the Gods wishes to make love to Io, he creates a cloud to obscure their lovemaking. When this trick fails, he changes the young lady into a heifer just as Hera is about to discover them. Hera is not deceived and she sets a gadfly on the heifer, which drives her to madness. In time, Zeus would save her but not before Io spends years running desperately from the gadfly (Hamilton 1989, 75-78).

Two of Zeus's most famous conquests are Europa and Leda. One is enticed when Zeus transforms himself into a bull and carries her off on his back. Leda is

taken unaware when a beautiful swan descends from the sky. Of course, it is Zeus who flies upon her and rapes her. Yeats, in his famous poetical rendering of the tale, captures the terror and strangeness of Zeus's carnally motivated transmogrification.

> A SUDDEN blow: the great wings beating still
> Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
> By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
> He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.
>
> How can those terrified vague fingers push
> The feathered fury from her loosening thighs?
> And how can body, laid in that white rush,
> But feel the strange heart beating where it lies.
> (Yeats 1986, 121)

Zeus is a magus of the first order but he bears some similarity to other less magical males. How many men have told lies, made up stories, altered their personae in order to gain the favors of women or to fool their wives? Zeus may be a god but he also represents men at their most dishonest.

Despite his cleverness, the king of the gods is bested by another trickster. Prometheus is a god who befriends humanity. As discussed earlier, he is credited with tricking Zeus into accepting the lesser part of an animal sacrifice, enabling the human race to keep the best part of a kill for themselves. Prometheus is also credited by Hamilton with stealing fire from the gods. For this he is punished by being bound to a rock where an eagle comes and devours his liver every day. Being a god, his liver regenerates every night, so Prometheus must suffer the same torture repeatedly day after day. He knows, however, that he will win in the end because he has the power of prophesy and knows that one day Zeus will be overthrown, and he himself will be freed.

Zeus offers to free Prometheus if he reveals the name of the being who has the power to overthrow him. Prometheus refuses. Like any proper trickster he is complicit in the toppling of the previous order. Shelley's **Prometheus Unbound** presents the defiant nature of this immortal trickster.

> Submission, thou dost know I cannot try:
> For what submission but that fatal word,
> The death-seal of mankind's captivity,
> Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,
> Which trembles o'er his crown, would he accept,
> Or could I yield? Which yet I will not yield.
> Let others flatter Crime, where it sits throned
> In brief Omnipotence . . . I wait,
> Enduring thus, the retributive hour
> Which since we spake is even nearer now. (Shelley 1967, 988)

Despite his torture, Prometheus defies Zeus, warning him that his reign is as tenuous as the hair that suspended the sword of Damocles (the Sicilian). Is Prometheus any less defiant than the angry young men of today? Shelley (1967) and his wife Mary (1981), living on the cusp of the Industrial Age, saw in Prometheus and image that represented, for good or ill, their own rebellious nature. Surely, Mary saw something of the trickster in her own milieu, having both a husband and a father (William Godwin) who defied the political and social order of their time. The magus, most famously, is present in her literary character, Victor Frankenstein, who defies conventional science and delves into the world of alchemy to discover the secret of life.

Mrs. Shelley implies, in her novel, that the secret of life is to be found in the divine spark of an electric current. It is not surprising that the subtitle to her book is **The Modern Prometheus**. In some versions of the myth, Prometheus is not only the provider of fire but the deity who creates human life in defiance of the gods.

Victor Frankenstein, in defiance of his elders, delves into studies that are ridiculed and forbidden. He challenges the scientific orthodoxy, and his success in joining magic and science creates a being that destroys those whom he loves, and, ultimately, himself.

Victor Frankenstein is described as a passionate youth whose interest in alchemy is mocked and criticized by his professors. Like the young men described by Bly, men who hold their elders' beliefs in contempt, Frankenstein expresses his disdain for the established world of science and even for the more ineffectual wizards of bygone years. He determines to break the bonds of nature and wrest from it the secrets of life and death.

> The ancient teacher of science . . . promised impossibilities and performed nothing. The modern masters promise very little; they know that metals cannot be transmuted and that the elixir of life is a chimera. But these philosophers, whose hands seem only made to dabble in dirt, eyes to pore over the microscope or crucible, have indeed performed miracles. They penetrated into the recess of nature and show how she works in her hiding places. (Shelley 1981, 32-33)

But Victor is not satisfied. He mocks his professors even as he suffers their contempt. He does not defy them to their faces but he makes a fateful declaration to himself.

> As he went on I felt as if my soul were grappling with a palpable enemy; one by one the various keys were touched which formed the mechanism of my being . . . my mind was filled with one thought, one conception, one purpose. So much has been done, exclaimed the soul of Frankenstein--more, far more will I achieve . . . I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation. (Sheeley 1981, 33)

I becomes apparent, when comparing the Prometheus myth to **Frankenstein**, that the nature of the magus or trickster remains constant over time. Victor Frankenstein's sense of woundedness, and his consequent defiance of the existing order (including the natural order) seems remarkably similar to the children of the sibling society as identified by Mitscherlich and Bly.

Frankenstein, the modern Prometheus, is defiant and self-destructive. The original Greek Prometheus, on the other hand, is essentially a positive trickster since he uses his cleverness in the service of the human race. Jacob, one of the Bible's most esteemed figures, is also a tricker. While not as clearly well intended as Prometheus, his tricks fulfill God's prophesy. When they are still in the womb, Jacob and his twin brother, Esau, struggle against each other. In a dream, God tells their mother, Rebecca, that her sons will engender two rival nations and that the oldest will serve the youngest.

This comes true when the adult Esau, hungry from his work in the fields, agrees to relinquish his rights as firstborn for the price of a meal. Later, when Isaac, their father, is about to die, Jacob and Rebecca conspire to gain the patriarch's final blessing. Rebecca prepares some meat and the animal skins are placed around Jacob's neck and arms to make him seem like the hirsute Esau. Jacob, rather than the firstborn Esau, receives his father's final blessing of abundance.

This episode in the story of Jacob demonstrates that the rivalry between young men, complained of by Mitscherlich and Bly, was at issue in biblical times centuries before the first factory was built. It further tells us that young men were challenging the prevailing social order long before fathers began working away from home between the hours of nine and five.

In addition to these points, on cannot fail to notice that in this Biblical tale Jacob is the victim of a father-wound. The Bible tells us that Esau was Isaac's preferred son and Jacob was Rebecca's favorite. Isaac was a father who lived close

to the land yet, like many contemporary fathers who work in offices, he failed to bond with one of his sons. As suggested earlier, proximity does not necessarily guarantee intimacy. In the case of Jacob and Isaac, the son could only receive a blessing from the father through trickery. The son gains his revenge by subverting his father's customs.

Some magus figures are purely malicious, and seem bent on the destruction of life and society for the sheer pleasure of it. One such character is the Norse god Loki, who represents anomie as surely as any contemporary drug pusher or gang-banger. Loki is a giant who is jealous of the gods. In particular, he hates Balder, the son of Odin, who is king of the gods. Odin's wife, Frigga, dreams that Balder is in danger. She tries to protect him by visiting every living and inanimate object in the world and extracting promises that they will never harm her son.

Loki, not to be daunted, transforms himself into an old woman. He visits Frigga and begins to gossip with her. She reveals that one living thing, the mistletoe, refused to take the vow. Loki fashions a dart out of mistletoe and tricks one of the gods into throwing it a Balder. The evil Loki comes upon the gods while they are playing a game. They are amusing themselves by throwing rocks and darts at Balder, knowing that due to their promise to Frigga, all objects will keep away from him. The dart fashioned by Loki, however, strikes Balder in the heart killing him (Hamilton 1989, 310-11).

What does Loki gain? There appears to be no object beyond his own evil and he suffers terrible consequences for his troubles. He is suspended in a cave where a poisonous serpent drips venom on him eternally. His only relief comes when his wife catches some of the venom in a cup; but whenever she takes a moment to empty the cup Loki suffers the pain of the serpent's venom. This tale is melodramatic in the extreme, but is it so exotic that we cannot imaging Loki fitting into that which Miedzian calls "the culture of violence?" Is Loki so different from

young men who engage in drive-by-shootings or gang-rapes for the thrill of it? Does it not seem that hypermasculinity, taken to the point of inhumanity, was a failing in pre-Industrial times as it often is in our time?

Unlike Loki, who simply seems evil for evil's sake, some magus figures have specific goals. We have already examined, for example, the Arthurian legends in which we meet one of the famous tricksters of folklore and literature. Mordred, in the guise of a faithful informant, reveals Guinevere's unfaithfulness to Arthur. This leads to the split with Lancelot and ultimately, as we have seen, to the dissolution of the Round Table. Why wreak such havoc? It is revealed, once Arthur has taken his war with Lancelot to France, that Mordred's aim is to seize Arthur's kingdom. In fact, he forges a false report of Arthur's death in order to declare himself king. In the end, Mordred is slain by Arthur but he nearly succeeds in outmaneuvering the king (Bulfinch, 427-35).

Mordred, though a medieval knight, is clearly similar to the ruthless operators who are so plentiful in contemporary business and politics. Bly blames post-Industrial society for creating a generation of suspicious, aggressive, world-toppling males; but if a figure like that of Mordred can exist centuries ago can we truly blame the Industrial Age for the creation of such personality types?

The greatest example of this personality type, the chief trickster and magus extaordinaire, is to be found in the Bible. He also appears repeatedly throughout the world of folklore and literature. This arch-trickster is, of course, Satan. Perhaps the most richly detailed description of Satan to be found anywhere in pre-Industrial literature is in Milton's **Paradise Lost.** Satan, surely, represents an aspect of human nature recognized by writers and theologians long before the rise of factories and the so-called sibling society. He is the part of human nature that is jealous and rebellious. He takes many forms, assumes many guises in order to work his mischief and subvert God's kingdom in heaven and on earth.

Paradise Lost begins with an account of Satan's war against heaven and of the company of rebellious angels who join him in an effort to conquer heaven. When this effort fails they are hurled into Hell. Undaunted, the devils plan further mischief and Satan plots to destroy God's kingdom on earth--the kingdom of humanity--by tempting Adam and Eve to sin. In typical magus fashion, Satan changes his shape in order to work his malevolent magic. He becomes a mist and in this manner secrets himself into Eden despite the watchful eyes of God's loyal angels. Once in Eden, he possesses the serpent and seduces Eve into eating from the tree of knowledge.

How does he manage this? He engages in the one tactic that every trickster, magical or not, has in his arsenal: the art of persuasion. In other words, he talks her into it. Eve is amazed to meet a serpent who can talk and he explains to her that he gained his powers of speech and understanding by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. She is persuaded to try it herself and soon Adam joins her.

Satan knows that he is damned. He knows that he will suffer the hellfires eternally for his trickery, but he is so jealous of Adam--God's favorite--that he is bent on getting at God through bringing about the fall. Satan declares:

> . . . Revenge, at first though sweet,
> Bitter ere long back on itself recoils;
> Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,
> Since higher I fall short, on him who next
> Provokes my envy, this new favourite
> Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,
> Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
> From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.
> (Milton 1981, 238-239)

The language, here, may derive from renaissance England, but the attitude will be as familiar to twentieth century urban Americans as it was to European poets and theologians in the seventeenth century. Satan sounds very like a youthful gang member justifying his participation in a turf war, or any contemporary son bent on

revenge against an indifferent or abusive father. Satan is angry because he feels he is being ignored; God, his heavenly Father, has a new favorite. Judy (1992) notes that when a boy begins to establish his sense of identity he ". . . enters into both imitation of and a sense of competition with the father."

> Therefore, from a mythic standpoint, the father also becomes the good father and the devouring gather . . . From this vantage point we are charged with "taking dominion over the earth" and making our unique contribution to humanity . . .The legacy of this pattern is also one of gross cruelty to individuals and to nature, as individuals and our human species itself have proven too domineering in their assertion of themselves. We know only too well both the pain and joy of this quest for unique human identity apart from God, mother, father, and nature. (Judy 1992, 49-50)

Judy has provided us with a profile of the magus. This archetype is hungry for control over its environment. In Satan's case, he wishes to usurp god's kingdom; but, Judy's comments help to further clarify Jung's point that the magus is not inherently evil. This archetype can gain new territory either through adding new contributions to the human experience, through toppling the existing order or, as is often the case, by doing both. Often, as we have seen, the magus is activated as a response to one's feelings about a father, another male authority figure, or even God Himself. The myths cited above provide some evidence that these issues predate the Industrial Revolution and contemporary societal trends.

SHADOW

Jung, it was noted above, often pointed to the fact that archetypes are not fixed entities, but guides to understanding our subtle interior landscape. Such is the case with the shadow, an archetype that relates to the previously discussed magus. Hall and Nordby (1973) explain that the shadow " . . . contains more of man's basic animal nature than any other archetype does," and that it is ". . . the source of all that is best and worst in man" (Hall and Nordby 1973, 49).

The shadow is often close to the magus archetype because the magus is an aggressive, world-conquering part of the psyche. The shadow, being a most primitive psychic force, is the energy source for the magus. Satan, identified above as a prime example of the magus, gathers all of the dark forces of the universe in his effort to subvert the divine order. The magus, in this sense is the vehicle and the shadow is the fuel. This is not unlike Freud's concept of the id and ego in which the first contains all primitive desires and the second attempts to find the most appropriate method for obtaining those desires.

The shadow, being the source of primitive desires, can be the most destructive of archetypes. This is not an inevitability, but it is often the case. The shadow can be a destructive entity but, channeled properly, it can be the source of art. Hall and Nordby point to the close connection between creativity and the shadow.

> It is not surprising . . . that creative people appear to be filled with animal spirits, so much so in some cases that more mundane people regard them to be freaks. There is some truth to the relationship between genius and madness. The shadow of the very creative person may overwhelm his ego from time to time, causing the person to appear temporarily insane. (Hall and Nordby 1973, 49-50)

Such is the case in Coleridge's **Kubka Khan**, in which the poet recounts the visionary experience of a poet in the act of creativity. Coleridge likens the aesthetic

act to that of the great Khan building a fantastical, even surreal temple of pleasure. The poet, through his art, wishes to create something as magnificent as this fabled edifice.

> I would build that dome in air,
> That sunny pleasure dome! Those caves of ice!
> And all who heard should see them there,
> And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
> His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
> Weave a circle round him thrice,
> And close your eyes with holy dread,
> For he on honey-dew hath fed,
> And drunk the milk of Paradise. (Coleridge 1967, 431)

The poet is overwhelmed by a great power and appears almost demonic, yet, this is an act of creativity. The shadow, in this form, is terrifying but ultimately constructive. Creativity comes from a mysterious source. It is awesome, even dreadful, because Coleridge recognizes that this power controls the artist as much as the artist controls it.

Unfortunately, the shadow is often channeled in less prosocial directions. Johnson (1991) notes that it is often hard to accept the presence of the shadow in oneself. This is partly due to the fact that the socialization process often involves the suppression of the shadow from childhood onward. Johnson offers the following comment:

> Unless we do conscious work on it, the shadow is almost always projected; that is, it is neatly laid on someone or something else so we do not have to take responsibility for it. . . . The medieval world was based on mutual shadow projection; it thrived on a fortress mentality, armor, walled cities, possession by force, ownership of anything feminine by male prerogative, royal patronage, and city-states in perpetual siege at each other's gates. Medieval society was almost entirely ruled by patriarchal values that are famous for their one-sidedness. (Johnson 1991, 31)

This is not the idyllic world of rural camaraderie and low-angst father-centered culture reported by Mitscherlich and Bly. Johnson, apparently, does not hold the view that the pre-Industrial world was less conflicted than contemporary Western society. Johnson's comments makes it clear that men's issues were equally if not more intense five hundred years ago.

The shadow, in its negative form, is a greedy and acquisitive part of human nature; and, as Johnson notes, we often deny this part of ourselves by conveniently blaming others for our own misbehavior. Two tales that we have already discussed demonstrate the projection of the shadow onto others. Satan blames God for making his evil necessary. He sees the creation of Adam as an effort to spite him and for this reason he justifies his revenge on God and humanity.

Frankenstein's monster, like Satan, sees himself as a rejected child. His creator, Victor Frankenstein, recoils from him in horror; others shun or even attack him out of fear and revulsion. He feels despised and rejected and takes his revenge by killing Victor's infant brother and framing the governess for the murder. This raises a very contemporary question--mistreatment leads to violence but does it justify such an extreme reaction? Whatever one's individual opinion might be, many men are currently answering "yes" through their actions. At the risk of sounding sensational, it must be asked if Satan and Frankenstein's monster are so different from the disadvantaged and angry young men of today who vent their frustrations through antisocial behavior?

Majors and Billson (1992) note the tendency of some disadvantaged African-American males to project their shadow on members of their own communities.

> When cool behaviors are placed ahead of acknowledging and deal with true fears or needs, pent-up emotions and frustrations result, which are then released in aggressive behavior towards those who are closest to the black male--other black people. Hence, cool pose may contribute to one of the

> more complex problems in the black community today: black-on-black crime. (Majors and Billson 1992, 19-20)

In other words, the initial emotions are a sense of powerlessness followed by anger. If a young man cannot face these emotions consciously he might possibly lash out at those in his immediate environment, even though they are not the source of his frustration. Often, the shadow is projected on members of one's own family. Spousal abuse and child abuse are certainly projections of the shadow. Often, a man who is frustrated by life will blame and attack those closest to him rather than facing his own sense of helplessness. Farmer (1991) quotes a personal account from **Man!** magazine that offers a terrible example of a father projecting his shadow on his son.

> I remember a game we played when I was maybe two or three years old. I would climb up on a chair and yell "catch me" as I would jump into (my father's) arms, squealing with delight. I remember the day it happened clear as it was yesterday . . . I yelled out "Daddy, Daddy," as I jumped off the kitchen chair . . . with my arms outstretched . . . as I reached out to him, he turned away and I hit my head on the table as I fell to the floor . . . Days later . . . Dad took me on his lap and said, "Baby boy, you have to learn--you can't trust anyone in this life, not even your own father." (Farmer 1991, 27)

This is an intimate and dreadful account of an adult projecting his shadow on a child. Farmer believes, in keeping with Mitscherlich's and Bly's theories that shadow projections have intensified since the advent of the Industrial Revolution. Fathers are frustrated, sons in turn are frustrated, and they express these frustrations in various destructive and self-destructive ways.

It is commendable that many contemporary men enter therapy and involve themselves in group activities in which they acknowledge their wounds and confront the shadow. It must be asked, however, if the presence of the shadow and the tendency to project it outside of oneself is truly a post-Industrial phenomenon?

Myths and ancient culture do provide evidence that shadow projections were present in pre-Industrial life. Geertz, for example, demonstrates how one practice in traditional Balinese culture derives from a collective shadow projection. In his essay, provocatively entitled "Of Cocks and Men," Geertz (1992) notes that the Balinese have a revulsion for anything that reminds them of their animal nature; yet, this aspect of self must be acknowledged in some fashion. Balinese men do this by engaging in one of the bloodiest and most violent of sports: cockfighting.

According to Geertz, cockfighting is a national obsession for Balinese men in much the same way as baseball and basketball are for American men. It is a common and widespread sport in Bali and, at the same time, a projection of the shadow archetype.

> The Balinese revulsion against any behavior regarded as animal-like can hardly be overstressed. Babies are not allowed to crawl for that reason. . . . Most demons are represented . . . in some real or fantastic animal form. . . . Not only defecation but eating is regarded as a disgusting, almost obscene activity, to be conducted . . . privately, because of its association with animality. . . . In identifying with his cock, the Balinese man is identifying not just with his ideal self, or even his penis, but . . . with what he most fears, hates, and ambivalence being what it is, is fascinated by--"The Powers of Darkness." (Geertz 1992, 162)

While cockfighting persists to the present day, it started long before the age of industrialization. Geertz's comments identify this sport as a form of shadow projection thus providing evidence that this is more than a post-Industrial issue. One of the best sources for examining the shadow and its projection is in the Bible. Various Biblical figures are presented either as projecting their shadow archetypes or as the victims of other people's shadow projections.

A famous example is the true author of the sibling society, Mitscherlich to the contrary. This, of course, is Cain. His determination to project his shadow onto his brother Abel leads him to commit the first murder. Why does he do this? Cain's

sacrificial offerings are deemed unacceptable to God. Abel's offerings are accepted. Cain is angry and God speaks to him, trying to help him see that he is not giving Abel preferential treatment. Cain's offering, apparently, was not sincere and God appeals to him to look into his own heart.

> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why that scowl on your face? If you had done the right thing, you would be smiling, but because you have done evil, sin is crouching at your door. It wants to rule you, but you must overcome it." (Good News Bible 1976, 5)

In Jungian terms, sin is equivalent to the projection of the shadow onto others. Instead of looking into his own heart, Cain slays his brother out of jealousy. The implication is that Cain would rather blame Abel for losing God's favor than question the state of his own soul. Much of the evil of the Bible consists of individuals who project their shadow onto others.

Joseph's brothers, for example, are jealous of him. He is his father's favorite and God sends him two dreams. In the first, he dreams that as he and his brothers are working in the field, his sheaf of wheat
stands erect as his brothers' sheaves bow down. In the second dream, he sees the sun, moon, and eleven starts bowing to him. Out of jealousy, the brothers plot to kill him. This is not unlike the reaction of Frankenstein's monster, who kills because he feels rejected; nor, is it very different from Cain who also plots against his brother. Joseph is luckier than Abel. His brothers decide, in their magnanimous way, to sell him into slavery rather than kill him.

> While they were eating, they suddenly saw a group of Ishmaelites traveling from Gilead to Egypt. . . . Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother and covering up the murder? Let's sell him to these Ishmaelites. Then we won't have to hurt him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood." (Good News Bible 1976, 39-40)

When the shadow is out of control, it can cause one's thinking to become skewed. Such is the case with Joseph's brothers. Joseph is their flesh and blood so it would be wrong to kill him; yet, they do not seem to be aware that selling a relative into slavery is nearly as wicked. When one is busy projecting one's shadow it becomes easy to deny both the cruelty and illogic of one's acts. Estes (1992) explains:

> Though the values may change from culture to culture, thereby positing different "negatives" and "positives" in the shadow, typical impulses that are considered negative and therefore relegated to the shadowlands are those that encourage a person to steal, cheat, murder, act excessively in various ways, and so forth. . . . The negative shadow aspects tend to be oddly exciting and yet entropic in nature, stealing balance and equanimity of mood and life from individuals, relationships, and larger groups. (Estes 1992, 236)

Lack of balance is to be observed in the logic of Joseph's brothers as well in the thinking of Satan, Cain, Frankenstein's monster, and every common man who projects his shadow on others. Sometimes, whole groups or societies project their shadow collectively. The story of Joseph and his brothers is one example. Another example can be found in the New Testament account of the woman caught in adultery.

This tale, recounted in the Gospel of St. John, makes it clear that the condemnation of the adulteress is an effort on the part of the Pharisees to trap Jesus into breaking Jewish law. The implication is that if Jesus refuses to condemn her to death they will have succeeded in proving him to be a blasphemer rather than a prophet. The Pharisees are shamed by Jesus because he follows the spirit rather than the letter of the law. They are more concerned with their position in society than in serving God. They view Jesus as a political rival and, consequently, they wish to discredit him.

They do so by casting their collective shadow on a convenient victim, namely, the adulteress. They drag her to the Temple and prepare to stone her to death but Jesus, rather than fighting with them or participating in murder, simply casts the shadow back upon them. He forces the Pharisees to do the very thing they are trying to avoid. Each individual must face his shadow.

> As they stood there asking him questions he straightened up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." . . . When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. He straightened up and said to her, "Where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you?"
> "No one, sir," she answered.
> "Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again." (Good News Bible 1976, 1334)

This incident adds great sophistication to the interpretation of law. It is more than merely an example of mercy. Jesus demonstrates that law is for the improvement of society and individual people and not to be followed slavishly for the sake of following the rules. His treatment of the adulteress is one of the great blows against patriarchal thinking because he demonstrates that law must never be divorced from critical judgment and self-contemplation. Law serves the people rather than the people serving the law. The adulteress rather than being executed was given the chance to reject sin, which is the real aim (or should be) of any legal stricture.

Unfortunately, through this and many other incidents Jesus outrages the orthodoxy, forces them to contemplate their frailties and they, in response, conspire to shroud him in the darkness of their collective shadow. Jesus must die; yet, at this most dramatic juncture in the New Testament he performs an act which is still seen by many as one of the pivotal moments is ethical history. Instead of merely casting

the shadow back upon his attackers he takes the shadow, symbolically speaking, to himself. Seen from an archetypal point of view, the notion of Jesus dying for our sins means that he has provided an opportunity for the human race collectively to discharge its shadow.

Whether one believes literally in this story or not, the Crucifixion presents a model for human behavior that persists to this day. In fact, much of the Men's Movement, Christian centered or not, is a manifestation of this type of healing. Much of the writing, therapy, and group experiences of the Men's Movement revolves around the acknowledgment of the father-wound. Men express their pain, share the wounds once hidden in the dark interior of their souls, and other men accept it and share it as part of the healing process. Thompson (1991) explains that

> . . . when the male lodge takes the form of a men's talk group, it can become a context for the naming of male wounds--wounds that often fester because men don't talk about them. . . . The lodge door opens wherever and whenever men open to their feelings, to soul bonds with other men, to what it is that hurts or haunts them. . . . This is the path of living our wounds--not refusing their dark energies, their veiled gifts, the opaque depressions that somehow open to otherwise hidden depths. (Thompson 1991, 250-51)

In the story of Jesus, Crucifixion leads to Resurrection; so it is in therapy and in men's groups where the acceptance of wounds leads to healing and a psychic rebirth. The shadow is cast upon one in the form of the father-wound. In order to facilitate the healing process, therapists, group leaders, and lodge members accept the shadow from their wounded brothers and, in this manner, help them along the road to recovery. The experience of contemporary men is consonant with that of ancient men; a man can only begin to heal when others are willing to hear him cry from the heart, as Jesus once cried to his father, **"Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani,"** "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

WARRIOR

In his recorded lecture, **Healing the Masculine**, Moore (1991) describes the warrior archetype most vividly. It is not merely a violent and aggressive component of the psyche, though the shadow side of the archetype can lead men to commit the worst atrocities. The warrior is the archetype that embodies an individual's:

> . . . capacity for a radical commitment to transpersonal loyalty and service. It represents--when fully expressed--a capacity for enormous discipline, self-abnegation, enormous courage in the face of odds which seem insurmountable; . . . it represents a capacity to stand a good deal of discomfort and pain in the service of one's goal. (Moore 1991)

This archetype, according to Moore, is central to that which he calls "the crisis in masculinity." Without a doubt, a member of the Crips or Bloods demonstrates "a radical commitment to transpersonal loyalty and service; " so does any political candidate who wants the support of his party; and the CEO of a multinational corporation might demonstrate the same qualities--at least until a more lucrative offer comes along.

Some of our heroes have a "capacity to stand discomfort and pain" in the effort to reach a goal. Sports figures do this; so do some of our hypermasculine movie heroes. The problem is that these representations of the warrior often lean to the shadow side of the psyche. Is the warrior merely destructive? Do contemporary men use their warrior archetype merely in the service of aggression, financial gain, or the attainment of political power? The answer, of course, is that the warrior exists in both an admirable and disreputable form. Scammell (1992), for example, describes his experiences in Vietnam and, contrary to any notions of the soldier as a

dehumanized fighting machine, what comes across is a picture of men comforted by their sense of loyalty and service to their fellow soldiers.

> Learning how to be a buddy and how to have a buddy was one of the first steps in Vietnam. We genuinely smiled and laughed together, our arms tightly hugging each other's strong shoulders. Men comfortable holding and hugging one another. . . . Men willing to put their lives on the line for food, water, and the safety of their buddies. Men cooperating, being resourceful, and not demanding individual credit for group efforts. (Scammel 1992, 185)

Here, is the warrior in this finest form: courageous, supportive, committed to the service of others. Even in the most extreme of survivalist situations, the warrior archetype can emerge as an admirable facet of human nature. Moore goes so far as to say that creativity would not be possible without the presence of the warrior. It is this archetype that enables one to persist in the pursuit of one's goals, to bring one's ideas, whatever they are, to fruition. Spielberg (1993) agrees that an individual whose warrior archetype is channeled appropriately is "generative and full of faith despite his conscious apprehension of his own mortality." He highlights the essential qualities of the warrior, qualities that are panhistorical, when he further comments:

> At their best, heroes both historic and current, represent men's successful attempt to transcend symbolically the finality of death through both their works and faith. Like their mythological counterparts who return from the land of the dead, the modern hero can achieve immortality, albeit symbolically through his deeds and acts of commitment. (Spielberg 1993, 176)

Moses, for example, immortalizes himself not by living forever but by ensuring that his descendants, his people, survive slavery and the ravages of the desert to enter the Promised Land. Inspired by God, Moses combats the hard-heartedness of

the Egyptian pharaoh by calling forth a series of plagues. In this way, the Egyptian king's resolve is worn away.

Initially, Moses does not see himself as a warrior. The archetypes are always present in the unconscious but they are not always activated. God activates Moses's warrior archetype by turning him into a conductor of Divine power. God's power literally passes through Moses as he works various miracles in an effort to terrify and subdue the pharaoh.

> When the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, he said, "I am the LORD. Tell the king of Egypt everything I tell you." But Moses answered, "You should know that I am such a poor speaker; why should the king listen to me?" The LORD said, "I am going to make you like God to the king, and your brother Aaron will speak to him as your prophet." (Good News Bible 1976, 62)

Moses accepts his calling from God, despite his own self-doubts. Symbolically, he is facing death in that he accepts the challenge of leadership despite an awareness of his own human weaknesses. (He also might literally be killed by the pharaoh.) Moses fear that his authority will be voided as he confronts the awesome pharaoh, but he heeds God's call and persists in his efforts at winning freedom for the Israelites.

This persistence in the face of obstacles is a hallmark of the warrior archetype; and the obstacles to be faced may be external or self-generated. In the tale of Moses, the chief obstacles are self-doubt and lack of faith. One might think that the pharaoh is the chief obstacle if not for this telling quote:

> Tell Aaron everything I command you, and he will tell the king to let the Israelite leave his country. But I will make the king stubborn, and he will not listen to you, no matter how many terrifying things I do in Egypt. (Good News Bible 1976, 62)

Why prevent the pharaoh from seeing reason? God tells Moses that this is His way of demonstrating His power to the Egyptians; but, taken in context this is clearly a lesson for the Hebrews, as well. Moses, as a representative of the Jewish people, cannot gain freedom without fighting for it. He cannot fight without suspending his disbelief in himself and holding to his faith that God would lead him out of bondage.

The traditional Passover seder is a meal of thanksgiving for the blessings of freedom. The story of the Exodus is retold and God is thanked by the leader (usually the male head of the household) for bringing **me** out of Egypt. Those who do not accept this identification with the liberation from Egypt are, according to the Haggadah, to be reprimanded.

> Motivated by a spirit of mockery, the wicked child says to the parent "What does this service mean to **you**?" By saying "to you" the wicked child is speaking as an outsider. . . . The response should be a scolding, with the parent saying, "it was because of what God did for **me** when I went out of Egypt. For me, not for you! If you had been there you would not have deserved to go forth. (**Passover Seder**, 1985, 25)

In other words, like Moses, every Jewish person has to take freedom as his or her birthright. In order to be free we must **see ourselves as free people** and it is sinful to give up our right to liberty without a fight.

Our thoughts are too often self-limiting, and the point of Exodus, as well as the entire story of Moses and his people, is that the greatest oppressor is not an external tyrant but our own lack of faith in our inner resources. Whether one believes in a literal God or not, a disproportionately self-critical view of ourselves can be the most debilitating force in our lives. God has to create opposition for Moses and the Jews, for without struggle they would be slaves to their own fears. The Israelites

must be made to understand that freedom is theirs for the taking if they believe that they, like Moses, can be conductors of Divine power. In Jungian terms, they must understand that the warrior archetype is a resource in the unconscious that every individual can draw upon.

Freedom is a function of one's outlook. If you have limits in your life, the story of Moses teaches us, the first step towards psychic and actual liberation is to suspend your disbelief in yourself and your possibilities. Hay elaborates:

> How often have we said, "That's the way I am," or "That's the way it is." Those specific words are really saying that that's what we **believe** to be true for us. . . . **The Point of Power is always in the present moment**. . . . This is where the changes take place, right here and right not **in our own minds**! (Hay 1987, 36)

Many of the books, articles, and experiential groups that constitute the Men's Movement involve activities designed to free men by encouraging us to examine our limitations and their causes. The process of healing is a process of relearning the male gender role so that it does not restrict emotional growth and maturation. Men must unlearn who we thought we were and develop a broader, less limiting notion of our true potentialities. This means that the healing of the father-wound does not depend on a reconciliation with our fathers; rather, it is in our hands to reassess and alter the conduct of our lives. The real goal is to cast off any self-limiting notions that developed as a result of our dysfunctional family experiences.

The warrior may have its dark side but Arnold (1992) argues that to repress it entirely would be a mistake. The warrior archetype, he tells us, is an essential element in sustaining mental health and negotiating satisfactory interpersonal relationships.

> . . . the Warrior plays an important role in our psychic lives. Every day we encounter people who invade our space, violate our rights, infringe on our

> privacy . . . our interior Warrior is the protector of our psyche . . . the Warrior is the archetype that marshals our psychic and physical energies to do the tasks that must be done. It is the paradigm of emotional resolve and mental stamina . . . . (Arnold 1992, 103)

Emotional resolve and mental stamina are needed in many areas of life, in creativity, in therapy, in marriage and parenting, even in business. Without the warrior none of these situations would go well. Roberts (1990), for example, encourages salesmen and entrepreneurs to cultivate their inner warrior by evoking memories of Attila the Hun. He acknowledges that many historians condemn Attila as barbarian; nevertheless, he insists that we can learn from his leadership skills. Roberts identifies many qualities of the successful contemporary Attila. In his section on **Desire**, he identifies a chief motivating force in the lives of such individuals.

> Few Huns will sustain themselves as chieftains without strong personal desire--an inherent commitment to influencing people, processes and outcomes. Weak is the chieftan who does not want to be one. We must be careful to avoid placing capable warriors into positions of leadership that they have no desire to fulfill. (Roberts 1990, 18)

Such is the lesson that Moses must learn: "Weak is the chieftain who does not want to be one." The repeated struggle with pharaoh helped to build up the Israelite leader's resolve as well breaking down that of the Egyptian king. The journey through the desert serves the same purpose for the Israelites as a whole. Why must they wander? Why does God not lead them immediately to the Promised Land? The answer is that the Jewish people are not ready. Following the flight from Egypt they are physically free but maintain a slave mentality. In Numbers, even as the people are led to Canaan, they are fearful of the Canaanites and talk of returning to Egypt and the safety of slavery.

God, enraged, talks to Moses of destroying the Israelites. Moses has obviously gained courage since his days in Egypt and shows no fear of arguing with God. He convinces the Lord not to exterminate the Israelites, but there is still a significant punishment to be meted out. God says to Moses:

> I will forgive them, as you have asked. But I promise that as surely as I live and as surely as my presence fills the earth, none of these people will live to enter that land. They have seen the dazzling light of my presence and the miracles that I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, but they have tried my patience over and over again and have refused to obey me. They will never enter the land which I promised to their ancestors. None of those who rejected me will ever enter it. (Good News Bible 1976, 146)

The Israelites are condemned to wander for forty years before their descendants can enter the Promised Land. An entire generation must die away and, with them, the slave paradigm of fear and hopelessness will pass into memory. So much of the warrior experience is about facing and conquering fear, about holding on to faith, about sustaining one's energy in the achievement of one's highest goals. These famous words from the King James translation of the Bible summarize the true quality of the warrior archetype.

> Yea, though I walk through the valley of
> the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:
> for thou **art** with me; thy rod and thy
> staff they comfort me.
> Thou preparest a table before me in the
> presence of mine enemies: thou anointest
> my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
> all the days of my life: and I will dwell
> in the house of the LORD for ever. (Holy Bible 1972, 483)

Warriors in myth often face death and, indeed, often walk willingly into the very mouth of hell. Symbolically, contemporary men do the same when they

attempt to heal themselves. Men in therapy and support groups face their wounds, their anger, sometimes their violence. They examine, in a sustained and courageous manner, the darkest contents of the soul. Is this not akin to walking through the valley of death while holding on to the faith that redemption will be the ultimate end?

Hicks (1993) speaks of faith from a Christian viewpoint, but even if one is not a Christian, faith or optimism, qualities contained in the warrior archetype, are clearly identified as necessary to healthy psychological development.

> . . . rather than being something that goes through different developmental stages as in cognitive or moral development, faith is something that is uniquely required at each point on our developmental journey. . . . each stop on the journey is different and consequently calls for a unique expression of faith in order to effect progress. . . . When I am wounded I need to trust Christ with my wounds. I need to believe that healing is possible and there is a way out. (Hicks 1993, 183-4)

Faith is a necessary weapon of the true warrior because his developmental journey requires him to face dark forces from without and within. Faith generates courage and a consistency of effort and these qualities, whether evidenced by a Biblical legend such as Moses, or a young man facing his own frailties, are the psychic weapons that protect us and support us. These weapons, if one has faith in one's potentialities, come as gifts from the warrior archetype. If one is true to oneself, two archetypes combine--the shadow and the warrior. As a man faces his fears and walks with faith through the interior darkness he may, in time, emerge as healthy and self-respecting individual. That is why Lorca says that one must "hear the Assyrian hound howling." Bly translates:

> Wake up. Say nothing. Listen. Sit up
> a little.

The howling
is a long and purple tongue leaving
behind
ants of terror and lilies that make
you drunk.
It's coming near your stone. Don't
stretch out your roots!
Nearer. It's moaning. Do not cry in
your sleep, my friend.
My friend, get up
so you can hear the Assyrian
hound howling. (Lorca 1975, 7)

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study made it possible to provide an initial assumption as to the validity of Mitscherlich/Bly theory. The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether there is a likelihood that the Mitscherlich/Bly theory might be invalid. This would open the way to a number of studies which would examine the issue from a broad variety of perspectives.

The purpose of the study, it should be reiterated, was not to question the existence of that psychological phenomenon referred to by many writers as the **father-wound.** The purpose was to open the debate as to whether the father-wound is a post-industrial phenomenon or a pan-historical phenomenon.

To this end, the study employed the same tool--well established in many literary and psychological studies--often used by writers and theorists who are associated with the Men's Movement. The tool referred to is Jungian or archetypal analysis, sometimes called depth psychology. Six archetypes were identified and the study established that these psycho-literary images were at the center of many of the psychological issues revolving around the father-wound.

This was done by examining books, articles, historical accounts, interviews, and recordings by and about contemporary males. Often, these materials were self-identified as being products of the Men's Movement. Some were not self-identified but clearly fell in line with the theories of the Men's Movement. This was reasonable to conclude because they either shared the central themes found in the Men's Movement literature, or quoted Bly and other established names in the field of men's

studies. Many of these studies were equally as likely to identify themselves as Jungian in nature. Some were not self-identified as Jungian studies but were referred to in the dissertation as pseudo-Jungian because archetypes were mentioned if not labeled as such.

The six archetypes identified in the study were the anima, the prince, the king, the magus, the shadow, and the warrior. The particular issues revolving around these archetypes were described in detail and compared with myths, folktales, Bible stories, poems, and anthropological accounts of the lives of men living in a variety of pre-Industrial societies. What emerged was a similarity among psycho-social issues in the lives of post-Industrial and pre-Industrial men.

While the sample of pre-Industrial sources was limited, enough evidence was provided by this study to establish a doubt as to the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory. It is possible, due to the limits of the dissertation, that the pre-Industrial materials examined were atypical of the vast sum of literary and historical documents. This having been said, it must also be noted that the pre-Industrial materials examined represented a broad spectrum of human cultural experiences. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that further literary and historical studies may possibly yield similar results.

This inquiry succeeded in its purpose which was to establish a valid reason for researchers in men's studies to question the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory. The study has provided an initial collection of documents that fail to cohere with the theories of Mitscherlich, Bly, and their proponents. This having been stated, it becomes clear that the issue of the validity of the Mitscherlich/Bly theory warrants further examination. The present study, then, has established itself as a prolegomenon of future inquiry into the historical nature of the father-wound.

It is vital that historical inquiries continue. It was established, in this study, that none of the theorists examined provided any historical evidence in support of

the Mitscherlich/Bly theory claiming that a qualitative change in father/son relationships has occurred since the Industrial Revolution. This in itself is a valid reason for engaging in a critique of their work.

The present study established several facts about Bly, Mitscherlich, and their followers. First, there is a belief that many contemporary males, abandoned by their fathers and raised by their mothers, have developed into "soft" males. No evidence was provided indicating that such individuals were unknown in pre-Industrial times. The study demonstrated that myths and ancient literature provide evidence that some pre-Industrial men were viewed by their contemporaries as "soft" males. Often, such opinions were evidence of patriarchal and antifeminist thinking; nevertheless, some men were condemned as "soft" long before the first factories were built. Characters such as Achilles, Mamichigane, and Adam were seen as being softened by anima figures. This demonstrates a similarity among contemporary and ancient males.

Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers also speak of a father-wound that further weakens contemporary males. This wound, on the one hand, contributes to the softening of contemporary males and, on the other hand, contributes to their anger. This anger is identified by Mitscherlich and Bly as the cause of much of the anomie in the contemporary Western world. The study demonstrated, however, that various forms of abandonment and wounding were inflicted on pre-Industrial males by their fathers or father-like figures.

The young prince in **Iron John** has a father who is nearly a nonentity. Like contemporary males who seek mentors in the Men's Movement, the young prince felt compelled to seek a mentor in the form of the mysterious and primitive Iron John. The Vietnamese prince Throng Thuy sacrifices his wife and his own life when he gives in to his father's political machinations. The father wound, thus, was present in pre-Industrial cultures in Europe and Asia.

A third belief espoused by Mitscherlich, Bly, and their proponents is the romantic belief in the value of initiation rituals. The study, again, demonstrated a lack of historical data on the true nature of such rituals by gathering anthropological evidence. This evidence demonstrated that such rituals are brutal ordeals with an antifeminist slant that no longer has relevance in the contemporary Western world. Clearly, the study demonstrated great gaps in the historical knowledge of Mitscherlich, Bly, and their followers. These informational gaps have cast a doubtful light on the theory in question.

Writers, group leaders, therapists, and spiritual advisors of various affiliations all espouse a theory for which no documentation has been provided. This is dangerous because it is possible that any therapeutic interventions, if derived from unfounded theories, may fail to succeed either partly or entirely. Since men's psychic healing is at stake, the research community must by vigilant in its examination of all popular theories. How can the Mitscherlich/Bly theory be validated or invalidated? The following recommendations will be of use.

1. The work of the present dissertation should be continued. Further studies of pre-Industrial sources will likely provide additional justification for a questioning of the theory that the father-wound is a panhistorical and pan-cultural problem in human relations.

2. Historians interested in the field of men's studies should seek documents such as eyewitness account, personal diaries, and letters that describe the relationships of fathers and sons who lived before the Industrial Revolution. A variety of such studies, examining individual lives in many premodern cultures, would help to establish the true nature of father/son relationships prior to industrialization.

3. Nonliterary historical materials such as paintings, sculptures, and pottery should be examined. If any should depict mythical or historical tales revolving around the lives of fathers and son it is possible that our knowledge of pre-Industrial relationships may expand.

4. Anthropological evidence should be gathered. Often, small tribal societies continue the traditional roles and practices established centuries earlier. It may be possible to learn more about the presence or absence of the father-wound by observing small, surviving tribal societies.

5. Zoological evidence should be examined. Many behavioral scientists attempt to understand the rudiments of human activities and relationships by examining the behavior of our relatives in the animal kingdom. It is possible that we may learn more about the nature of father/son relationships from such studies. It would be interesting to learn if nonhuman males of any species experience something like a father-wound.

The present dissertation provided evidence for a flaw in the Mitscherlich/Bly theory of father/son relationships. It is no longer reasonable for adherents of the Men's Movement to accept this theory unquestioningly. It is strongly recommended that the research community engage in the studies delineated above. It is hoped that additional explanations for the father-wound will be sought after.

APPENDIX

BLY'S SIBLING SOCIETY

Shortly after the completion of the dissertation, the researcher discovered that Bly had published a new book: **The Sibling Society**. From the title, it was clear that Bly once again had adapted the theories of Mitscherlich for the popular press. The researcher felt obligated--despite the fact that his study was complete--to examine **The Sibling Society** to see if Bly had altered or retracted his previously stated viewpoint regarding father/son relationships. He had not.

It is not necessary, for the purpose of this study, to offer a lengthy analysis of the new book. It is necessary, however, to demonstrate that Bly is consistent in his philosophy; thus, the need for a brief appendix. In **Iron John**, Bly demonstrated an inconsistency in his thinking. He claimed an essential change in father/son relationships since the Industrial Revolution; yet, he used a pre-Industrial folktale to illustrate contemporary male psychology. In **The Sibling Society** he remains consistent in his inconsistency.

Bly claims, as he did in **Iron John**, that we have entered an age of anomie unprecedented in human experience. At the same time, he illustrates the ravages of contemporary life with ancient concepts. For instance, he cites the Muslim concept of **nafs**. This word translates as soul, and Bly informs us that there are, in Muslim tradition, four states of the soul. The worst of these is the **lower nafs**. Bly explains:

> There are four levels of the **nafs**: the lower **nafs**, which is the "bitter soul"; then the blaming **nafs**, which blames itself and others; then the inspired **nafs**, which begins to hear; and finally the **nafs-at-rest**. . . . The lower **nafs**, the

> greedy one, is called the "**al-nafs al-amara**," or the bitter soul. . . . Another phrase used for it is the Commanding Soul, which implies that it is dictatorial and tyrannical. (Bly 1996, 21)

Despite Bly's continuing claim of a change in human development since the Industrial Revolution, this discussion of the **nafs** would indicate a great consistency of human behavior across the centuries. Bly also offers a series of myths and fairy tales--among them **Jack and the Beanstalk**--as illustrations of sibling society. He seems unaware that the use of these myths belies his (and Mitscherlich's) theory.

Bly broadens his discourse, this time, to include women. He did not previously exclude women from his belief in a sibling society, he merely concentrated on men. The author believes that boys and girls, growing up in a fatherless society, have failed to gain a sense of social proprieties and responsibilities. Both young women and young men, having no patriarchy to impose social order (even if that patriarchy is abusive and repressive), have degenerated to a **sibling society** in which we see everyone as our equal. This is not a democratic viewpoint, Bly tells us; rather, people view each other as competitors much as they might view a sibling as a competitor within the family. According to Bly, society is disintegrating because we no longer have a **vertical gaze**, meaning that we recognize no higher authority and value no higher goals. We simply envy those on either side of us and, in a most immature manner, try simultaneously to emulate and to best them.

As to young men, Bly's comments in **Sibling Society** have not deviated from his opinions as expressed in **Iron John**. The following words might have been taken right from the first book but they are, in fact, from **Sibling Society**:

> Sons who have a remote or absent father clearly can receive no modeling on how to deal appropriately with male anger . . . such sons are usually so frightened of anger that they repress it entirely. Others, with no better modeling, become violent. Few sons . . . learn to fuse instinctive aggression with the pleasure of hard physical work. Few sons now share a toolbox with

> their father. The son experiences the father only in the world of longing. (Bly 1996, 51)

Once again, Bly serves up a romantic image of bygone years while failing to provide any historical evidence that the longed-for world every truly existed. Again, he offers no historical documentation in support of his theory. For this reason, the publication of **Sibling Society** adds little to the discussion of father/son relationship and fails to alter, in any way, the conclusions and recommendations offered in this dissertation.

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