Chapter 18
The Media–Sphere as Dream
Researching the Contextual Unconscious of Collectives

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ABSTRACT

The psychological nature of the electronic media environment is a virtual reality that—according to Jungian principles—is dreamlike. Perhaps it can be analyzed with Jung's Analytical Psychology. Science is experiencing a paradigm shift into a reality of mediated illusion, and psychological research on this illusion has become the human imperative. It may be stipulated that physics has abolished matter, conceding that "reality is organized mind stuff." If cosmos is structured holographically and the brain is structured holonomically, it is probable that "mind stuff" is structured holographically. The Jungian concept of Psyche is a good place to begin researching the Media-sphere as mind stuff. Cognitive sciences are probing the brain and nervous system in search of the template for cognitive organization, and the salient features have already emerged. It appears that both conscious and unconsciousness cognitive dimensions have dramatic form. This dreamlike structure can be employed to analyze the media dream, and to foster coherent psychological states in contextual collectives.

INTRODUCTION

Carl Jung used symbolic patterns occurring in dreams to promote understanding of contextual meaning residing in a patient's unconscious. Jung equated the patterns of the unconscious with atomic structure and called them archetypes. Dream symbols were understood to be projections from unconscious dimensions, but because they were relatively conscious, Jung called the projections archetypal representations which—as projections—mirrored their source. In this way, discovery of unconscious meaning not only becomes possible, it becomes measurable according to degrees of coherence. Based on a number of correlations between Jungian dreams and media dreams, the hypothesis of this chapter is that the metaverse constitutes a dreamscape, and its holographic images constitute contextual media dreams.

As this chapter will document, according to Jungian depth analysis, a series of dreams will disclose unconscious patterns of meaning of which a patient is unaware. The psychiatrist can use principles of Analytical Psychology to extrapolate the meaning of dream symbols for the purpose of providing feedback to the patient as to the meaning of dream symbols. Given this feedback, the patient is positioned to gain meaningful insight that can have healing affect—much like biofeedback. Though Jung's research was empirically based, more recent cognitive research on heart-rate coherence—to be documented later—has verified that media dreams are susceptible to scientific measurement. Therefore, just as a psychiatrist provides feedback to a patient and as advanced algorithms provide feedback as to a computer user's preferences, research addressed to specific (contextual) target groups could provide mediated feedback designed to foster healing insight to contextual collectives

According to Jung, dream sequences (Jung, 1933, p 14) provide a medium for communication between conscious and unconscious cognitive dimensions:

Dreams give information about the secrets of the inner life and reveal to the dreamer hidden factors of his personality. As long as these are undiscovered, they disturb his waking life and betray themselves only in the form of symptoms. This means that we cannot effectively treat the patient from the side of consciousness alone, but must bring about a change in and through the unconscious. (Jung, 1933, p. 16)

So—in Jungian practice—dreams are not negative. Even if they are nightmares, dreams have a benign function because they hold the keys to meaningful insight that can result in multi-functional (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual) healing. Accordingly, even if the mediated dreams of the metaverse—psychologically multi-functional images—are symbolically saturated with sex, violence, and nightmarish threat, these patterns must be understood as positive, potentially therapeutic messages from the contextual unconscious. If recognized as such, these "dreams" can promote meaningful insight that could lead to unprecedented healing of collective personae. Contextual collectives are much like target groups and come in many formats—great and small—such as Rockets fans, Coca Cola drinkers, stay-at-home-pops, African Americans, white supremacists, environmentalists, Republicans, Buddhists, females, Germans, etc..

It would be safe to say that technological media research in the context of holographic cognitive function—though incipient—is advancing apace. The technological media has long been the prime mover in the creation of modern human reality, but now it becomes clear that using that immense power wisely will not be easy. There can be no doubt that this media power is rooted in the capacity to reach into the *cognitive unconscious* of individuals and demographic groups in order to alter their perceptions of reality by reframing archetypal patterns. The fact that commercial and political motives have skewed the programming of mass media for at least half a century need not be argued.

In advertising, politics, and education, though much is already known about the psychological power of the mass media, proportional efforts to manifest positive potentials for the power of psychological mass media have not been forthcoming. The primary purpose of this chapter is to discuss these potentials in necessarily innovative terms: Dreams, functional coherence, learning, healing, and even transcendence.

Taking a prospective view of benign media purposes, Internet potentials for education, healing, and maintaining coherent states in dimensions of the cognitive unconscious are just beginning to emerge. In *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, (1995) Neil Postman argued that any research on media should recognize that each medium has its own personality, its deficits, and its potentials. In *The Media Equation*, (1996) Stanford researchers Byron Reeves and Clifford Nass concluded that at unconscious levels and in all demographics, people perceive media as "real"—that is to say—unconsciously—all people experience

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