

Chapter 19

Articulating the Paradigm Shift: Serious Games for Psychological Healing of the Collective Persona

Stephen Brock Schafer
Digipen Institute of Technology, USA

ABSTRACT

The author's hypothesis covers the following: neural processes are correlated with archetypal states of the cognitive unconscious, archetypes form a magnetic field and energy center underlying the transformation of the psychic processes into images, as in Jungian dream analysis, images can be used to access dimensions of the cognitive unconscious, and drama-based video games (DBG) constitute a dream analog that can be employed as a cognitive research instrument. Therefore, using a dramatic-metaphorical point of reference, deep states of the psychic unconscious can be interrogated using Jungian principles of dream analysis, the most recent research in the cognitive sciences, and the mathematics of recursion in order to improve understanding of higher order cognitive functions, to apply compensational content patterns to the global media, and to foster sustainable, coherent human values and behaviors.

THE DREAM PARADIGM: COHERENT POTENTIALS OF MEDIA

Carl G. Jung, who is recognized as the father of psychiatry, made this observation long before the media age got underway, "On the whole, I believe I am not exaggerating when I say that modern man has suffered an almost fatal shock, psychologically speaking, and as a result has fallen into profound uncertainty (Jung, p. 200)."

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The magnitude of the paradigm shift into a media age is so great that collective trauma can be predicted to be catastrophic. Indeed, we need not look carefully to read the manifest signs of psychological imbalance in the media dream of the nightly news, film, video games, and the Internet. Much of the imagery confirms that collective humanity is experiencing a psychotic episode. If these mediated images have the same dynamics as dreams, they are projections of unconscious psychic content that, when recognized, have the capacity to "heal" the "patient" by disposing a

state of relative coherence. If their warnings are heeded, they will compensate with a cognitive reframing whereby the unconscious sources of collective pathology are understood and corrected. Jung says, “The belief that man’s essential attitude is that of consciousness is a fallacy, for ‘we spend the greater part of our life in the unconscious: we sleep or daydream....It is undeniable that in every important situation in life our consciousness is *dependent* on the unconscious.’” (Jacoby p. 10: Quoting from Jung’s *Kindertraumseminar*, 1938-1939)

It is self-evident that the planet is in crisis. Human institutions and humanity itself is in crisis. In fact, it was observed long ago that humanity and the planet face a *complex of crises* that seems well beyond the human capacity to resolve. We seem to be sinking deeper and deeper into unprecedented chaos and generalized psychosis that seems—by archaic worldviews and standards of materialistic science—unfixable. On the other hand, in his book on fractals, John Briggs says, “In the twentieth century, we have been overwhelmed by the nearly magical ability of science to understand and control our physical environment.” (p. 13)

Where lies the disconnect? The problem is our failure to realize that the so-called physical reality is an illusion, and the underlying psychic reality of energy and information constitutes a more authentic reality than the “material reality.” (Chopra, et al) Though scientific verification of this fact is massive and interdisciplinary, modern science has not yet prioritized research on the influence of the cognitive unconscious as projected in the media. As with most modern science, our manipulation of its power goes beyond our understanding or sense of responsibility for that power. The emergent media age is more an illusion than ever, but cognitive patterning of human beings since the beginning of the Rational Enlightenment prevents researchers from engaging in a timely and open minded assessment of the reality of illusion. Though we can see the vague outlines of a new-paradigm worldview, we have

not yet discovered a way to prepare for this brave new world of mediated energy and information.

A positive way to look at the emergent paradigm shift is that humanity is experiencing an expansion of consciousness by which it may contemplate a more “conscious” universe. By the term conscious, we do not mean only human consciousness but “that” which is based on an exchange of energy and information—a worldview in tune with myth and quantum physics. Such exchange is possible due to the existence of an infinity of mediating structures that translate energy into information within a *psychecology*—a metaphysical construct that incorporates and synthesizes principles of psychology and physics, alchemy and chemistry. Interestingly, in our modern age of metaphysical science, significant parallels appear to exist between ancient and modern worldviews. For example, the alchemical axiom, “As it is above, so it is below,” might be applied to non-linear phenomena such as the physics of chaos and fractals and the non-local dynamics of psychic synchronicity. Both alchemy and physics are metaphysical sciences that contemplate reality in terms of a vast and shifting set of unique circumstances and a kaleidoscopic interaction of influences within a unified field.

Meanwhile, the latest news is that soon we will be using brain waves to control video games. At the MIT Media Lab Europe, “*Mind Balance*” was demonstrated for the first time using a new wireless headset. There is no doubt that this is a major step in the evolution of our understanding of the psychological influence of the technological media. The technology was developed as a brain-computer interface for those with limited body movement, but researchers agree that the technology could find its way into future video games. Soon after *Mind Balance* came the release of Nintendo’s *Wii* and reports on Microsoft’s *Natal’s Brain*. Research in the areas of artificial intelligence, virtual realities, “serious” games, and the “*Flow*” phenomenon have experienced a quantum leap during the past decade. These are all

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