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**Carl Jung's Collective Unconscious Theory**

Carl Gustav Jung was a psychologist and psychiatrist born on July 26, 1875 in Kesswil, Switzerland.  He is the father analytic psychology, itself a response to Freud’s psychoanalysis. Jung went to university in Basel and later Zurich.  He spent many years collaborating with Sigmund Freud until his views and theories began to differ from that of Freud’s.  Carl Jung was elected president of the International Psychoanalytic Society in 1911, however he shortly resigned in 1914. His main goal in therapy was to make the unconscious, conscious. Due to a short illness, Jung passed away on June 6 1961 in Küsnacht Switzerland.

Jung's most well known and controversial theory is his collective unconscious theory.  He proposed that the human psyche is composed of three elements, the ego, the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious.  The personal unconscious differs from the collective unconscious in that it comes from the personal experience of the individual, whereas the collective unconscious is inherited.  It is a product of ancestral experience.  The collective unconscious is shared among all members of the species, and Jung believed that all cultures have common symbols, patterns and ideas in their dreams, called Archetypes.

 The collective unconscious theory states that a new born baby is not a clean slate.  From the moment of their birth, the baby is already wired to recognize certain archetypes. This would explain why babies fantasize so much.  It is because they have not lived and experienced reality long enough to satisfy their minds enjoyment of archetypal images. These archetypes Carl Jung proposes, directly influence our thoughts and behaviors.  He stated that one’s religious feelings and instincts also come from the collective unconscious.

The twelve common archetypes are, the innocent, the orphan, the hero, the caregiver, the explorer, the rebel, the lover, the creator, the jester, the sage, the magician, and the ruler.  These archetypes are very much like the images we see in Tarot cards.  Archetypes motivate us. They seep into our unconscious.  They help us to understand the world and our perception. This theory has been very controversial because of its mystic elements and scientists say it can’t been tested correctly.  However, Jung argued that the common shared archetypes were proof of his collective unconscious theory. He stated that all of mythology could be taken as a snapshot of the collective unconscious.

Jung's collective unconscious theory can help us better understand today’s Canadian society.  No matter what religion one practices in the free state of Canada, no matter what background/intelligence one possesses; Jung's collective unconscious theory transcends all. Humans are greatly influenced by the media.  Jung's archetypes are at the core of every tale, and movie character.  In the movies and television shows we watch, these archetypes keep showing up again and again.  The old wise man, the gambler etc.  We are just a projection of our thoughts which in turn are a projection of our collective unconscious.  Archetype symbols are used in modern literature.  In society we recognize the hero role, the mother role and we try and find our own role, our own niche in the universe, and dreams, which contain archetypes, help us understand our role, if we take the time to understand and record our dreams.   The collective unconscious is shared universally among humans and shapes the way we think and behave.

**3 questions:**

Question 1:  Of the 12 most common Archetypes mentioned in my research, which one would you associate yourself with most?

Question 2:  How does the collective unconscious shape our thoughts and behaviors?

Question 3:  Some say that Jung's collective unconscious theory is hogwash because of its ties to metaphysics.  Do you believe that his theory still holds strong today?

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Conversations with Ms. Rizutti.