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WILDMEN, WARRIORS, AND LOVERS: REACHING BOYS THROUGH ARCHETYPAL LITERATURE

The authors propose that teachers look to current and classic literature as a way to motivate adolescent boys to read and to provide them with positive male role models. Ten male archetypes are defined, and examples of literature that illustrate each archetype are included.

We need to respect our sisters, stop using drugs, take care of our families. Do right!

A family needs a father. Never run out. You shouldn't fight with your hands, fight with your mind ... control your mouth and respect everybody around you.

God, give us real men!

These words, spoken by participants at the "Million Man March" in September 1995 in Washington, DC, USA, cry out for a positive example of what it means to be a man. They are a plea for the hero deep within men to emerge. The need for the goodness within men has never seemed more urgent given the findings of many researchers and social scientists investigating the effects of poor male role models on society as a whole and on young boys in particular.

A host of social problems have been attributed to a lack of good male role models (Arnold, 1992). Drive-by shootings, violence against women and children, sexual abuse, teen pregnancy, child poverty, and economic insecurity have all been cogently argued by Lykken (1995) and Blankenhorn (1995) as resulting from either nonexistent or maladaptive male role models.

Holland (1994) argues in his well-documented report on male role models in public schools that too many teen and preteen boys are regularly exposed to images and experiences that reflect the most negative characteristics of maleness. For instance, males are often portrayed in popular culture as selfishly egocentric (Bergen & Williams, 1991), as philanderers (Lueptow, Garovich, & Lueptow, 1995), and as murderers and buffoons (Childs, 1995; Kolbe, 1985).

Even professional male athletes, who were once admired by young boys for their character, perseverance, strength, and honesty, often no longer reflect these traits. Instead, we have come to learn that many of them are greedy, selfish, disrespectful of women, and use drugs (DeFord, 1995). Social critics, such as Robert Hughes (1993), have asserted that the entertainment and music industries are rife with deplorable role models for today's youth. Unfortunately, in the everyday experiences of far too many young boys, especially in urban ghetto communities (Pitts, 1993; Traxler, 1993), there is little to balance these detestable images of men (Jencks, 1992).

This article raises concerns about the literacy behavior of boys. In it, we briefly discuss possible connections between male identity and literacy attitudes and achievement. Further, we offer instructional possibilities for appealing to boys' creative imaginations through the power of literature. We also suggest that through careful instruction with classic stories and current young adult literature boys might develop a realistic idea of what it means to be a man. This literature can help boys appreciate honored character traits of males while they learn how authentic adult men and adolescent boys deal with themselves, other males and females, and difficult ethical and physical situations. We believe that boys will become regular and engaged readers motivated by exposure to literature that speaks to traditional male interests and archetypes that lay deep within the unconscious (Moore & Gillette, 1992).

The literacy-gender connection

Our concern for boys' literacy development is based on clear gender differences in verbal abilities that have been documented over the past few decades. Flynn and Rahbar (1993) report that boys of all ages fail in reading more often than girls. U.S. test results in reading (Mullis, Dossey, Foertsch, Jones, & Gentile, 1991) and writing (Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1990; Rubin & Greene, 1992) consistently show superior achievement for girls. A related phenomenon is that boys (especially those of color) populate remedial reading (Vogel, 1990), lower track classrooms (Page, 1991), and learning disabilities programs (Shaywitz, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1990) far more than do girls.

Why do boys exhibit lower achievement on verbal tasks than girls? One possible explanation might come from recent explorations of the gendered social practice of literacy teaching and learning (Orellana, 1995) in the U.S. It is nearly axiomatic that boys will be taught to read in school by females (Apple, 1986). Spring (1997) estimated that 85% to 95% of all teachers in U.S. elementary and middle schools are female. While there are no hard data to suggest that this fact alone has an inimical effect on boys' reading achievement, it may have an insidious effect on their perceptions of and attitudes toward reading.

Early on in school, boys may begin associating reading as an activity that is inconsistent

with the image of boyhood and maleness as it is stereotypically portrayed in the popular culture (Childs, 1995). Indeed, there is evidence that this stereotype influences the perceptions and instruction of teachers, both male and female (Orellana, 1995). Orellana argues that "We need to consider gender's salience over an even wider range of [reading and writing] practices within a greater array of contexts, settings, and situations" (p. 705).

In summary, researchers and social critics have asserted that dominant images of males in the popular culture and in the direct experience of many young boys are far from ideal (Traxler, 1993). Furthermore, studies of gender differences in verbal abilities have verified that boys' reading and writing achievement is likely to be lower than that for girls (Shaywitz, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1990). We believe it is productive, therefore, for those of us concerned with the literacy development and the healthy psychological growth of boys to explore instructional possibilities that combine quality literature with positive male images.

Will this approach make a difference?

While we have no hard data to verify that exposure to literature with positive male archetypes alone will prompt literacy growth for boys, there is plenty of pertinent research evidence to suggest that this is a realistic expectation. First, we know a great deal about how to motivate students to read through the use of interesting books (Allington, 1991; Elley, 1992; Gambrell, 1996) and how this motivation can translate into significant improvement in reading achievement (Taylor, Frye, & Maruyama, 1990).

Second, we've known for some time that boys have strong preferences for stories with male protagonists (Johnson & Peer, 1984; Langerman, 1990; Ollmann, 1993; Samuels, 1989). Furthermore, we know when preferences and interests are matched with books, depth of processing and learning are enhanced (Alexander, Kulikowich, & Hetton, 1994; Hidi, 1990); this may be especially true for boys (Osmont, 1987).

We make no claims that the approach we advocate will, on its own, transform boys into high-achieving readers. Nevertheless, we might reasonably expect that when boys are taught through the use of stories with positive male archetypes, their interest and motivation will increase and could lead to literacy growth.

Rediscovering positive male archetypes

Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, was one of the first to scientifically investigate the uniqueness of male psyches (1968). In our common human memory (collective unconscious), Jung proposed that there are archetypal or generalizable models of maleness. According to Jung, these archetypal models are inherent within the psyche of all men. In support of Jung's theory, contemporary psychologists and sociologists (Arnold, 1992; Johnson, 1989; Moore & Gillette, 1992) have discovered that the qualities most cultures consider masculine are remarkably consistent.

Cultures as diverse as those of North America, the Mediterranean, South and East Asia, Truk Island in the South Pacific, the Mehinaku Indians of South America, the Samburu of Africa, the Samina of New Guinea, and many others have a common understanding of what it means to be a mature man. For example, the "big man" of New Guinea, the "muy hombre" of Spain, and the "worthy man" of the Samburu are all protectors, providers, and procreators. All show courage in the face of danger, are thoughtful risk takers when

necessary, protect their families or community, and exhibit extraordinary endurance to achieve laudable goals. They embrace these roles in order to nurture their families and build their communities (Gilmore, 1990).

The following list of 10 common male archetypes (Jung, 1933) includes a few of their trademark qualities derived from the work of Arnold (1992). In using the archetypes identified by Arnold in our approach, we chose not to include additional types described by Jung (e.g., wiseman, savior, god) and others (e.g., Joseph Campbell's hero, Campbell & Moyers, 1988). Nevertheless, we agree with Arnold's analysis that the list is highly representative of the most salient and positive examples within Jung's pantheon of male archetypes. In parentheses are past and present figures believed to have embodied the characteristics of these positive male archetypes.

Pilgrim--hopeful, faithful, change agent (Abraham)

Patriarch--caring, noble, self-sacrificing (Robert E. Lee)

Warrior--brave, edifying, honorable (Colin Powell)

Magician--evokes amazement, intuitive, clever (Jonas Salk)

King--trustworthy, generative, wise (Winston Churchill)

Wildman--lustful, unpredictable, independent (John Steinbeck)

Healer--mystical, brings wholeness, spiritual (Chief Seattle)

Prophet--confrontative, piques consciousness (Mahatma Gandhi)

Trickster--irreverent, funny, satirical (Will Rogers)

Lover--giving, caring, intimate (Albert Schweitzer)

It is important to note that each archetype includes more descriptors than are listed here and that many other men from the past and present could have been given as examples of the archetypes. Furthermore, men almost always exhibit more than one archetype, although one may predominate in a given situation (Johnson, 1989).

Achieving a language curriculum with positive male archetypes

In the Sidebar is a list of titles from classic and 20th-century Western literature as well as from contemporary adolescent fiction that we recommend for helping young boys develop a positive sense of maleness. Each title is grouped according to the most salient archetype in the story. Titles are further grouped into three categories: Classic/20th-century literature, Adolescent novels, and Easy reading.

Achieving a language curriculum with positive male archetypes is similar to using literature for the purpose of developing other themes and literacy skills. The following guidelines may be useful in teaching with books and stories similar to those listed.

Identify literature that is most appropriate for your students. Obviously, the list of books and stories with positive male archetypes we suggest is by no means exhaustive, nor are

all the books and stories necessary or appropriate for all students. Classic literature and literature by vaunted authors of the past may be regarded by us as important for students to read but pose special challenges for teaching. At the same time, we would not recommend forsaking literature from the past for that written exclusively by young adult writers for today's youth.

A sensible approach would be to combine selections from the past with current adolescent literature. Bridging works of fiction (Brown & Stephens, 1995; Herz & Gallo, 1996) makes it possible for students to develop foundational knowledge of important literary themes by first reading contemporary adolescent works before moving on to more challenging prose from the past with similar themes. For example, students who are being exposed to the Patriarch archetype might read Chris Lynch's *Shadow Boxer* as a prelude to reading Anton Chekhov's "A Day in the Country." In this way, students can become familiar with aspects of a Patriarch by reading a story about young men in today's society who are examples of that archetype before reading classic literature that develops the same archetype.

Another consideration of appropriateness is the match between particular students and the specific kind of literature that develops positive male archetypes. For example, a teacher of Mexican American students who is trying to develop the Pilgrim or Warrior archetype might have success using Gary Soto's *Pacific Crossing* or Kevin McColley's *The Walls of Pedro Garcia* because these books are filled with culturally relevant characters and content.

A third aspect of appropriateness has to do with finding the right story for students with less reading ability. Brozo and Simpson (1995) describe an approach of using multiple trade books that are all related to the topic being studied. The advantage of this approach is that a teacher can be sure that students of all abilities can read about and explore the archetype under consideration. For example, when studying the Patriarch archetype, the teacher could assign easier reads, such as Neil Shulman's *The Backyard Tribe*, to those students for whom it would be appropriate, without sacrificing information and ideas about the archetype.

Develop themes and units around male archetypes. Within the context of the reading or English classroom, teachers can use books and stories similar to those suggested in the Sidebar to focus on positive male archetypes. Using a theme or unit approach, teachers might select one of the archetypes to explore in depth over 2, 3, or 4 weeks. Unit- and theme-based teaching allow for the integration of many related learning experiences as well as content domains. For example, a class investigating the Prophet archetype could read John Updike's "Lifeguard" and Norman Silver's *An Eye for Color* while developing cross-cultural and historical perspectives on race relations in South Africa and the United States.

Offer special reading/English courses on literature explorations of positive male archetypes. We recommend that a special reading or English course that explores male archetypes through literature be made available to middle and senior high school students. The course could be designed as an elective to be taken by interested boys and girls, since both genders could benefit from the outcomes. The goal of the course should be to promote positive images of males as well as explore the important cross-cultural values

associated with being a man.

A final word

Researchers into the sociocultural and gender dynamics of literacy (Gilbert, 1992; Moss, 1993; Walkerdine, 1990) have argued that classroom literacy practices may provide the critical location for the construction of gender roles in society. Orellana (1995) asserts that "we also need to look at what students are reading and writing ... with an eye to gendered dynamics" (p. 681).

In this article we have suggested that special scrutiny needs to be given to what adolescent boys are reading as it affects their gender identities, their perceptions of maleness and manhood, and their perceptions of themselves as readers. If, as we have claimed, literacy plays a major role in the construction of gender, then literacy can also become a tool for reinforcing positive perceptions of students' gender identities (Kilpatrick, Wolfe, & Wolfe, 1994).

Educators and social scientists such as Childs (1995), Holland (1994), and Lykken (1995) have each asserted that positive images of maleness are on the decline, making the need for such male role models in boys' home and school lives critical to their psychological and personal growth. As literacy professionals we believe the need for literacy practices that help reacquaint boys with the goodness of manhood would never seem more urgent. These literacy practices could well begin with a skillful and imaginative exploration of past and current literature with main characters who embody all that is good in archetypal Wildmen, Warriors, and Lovers.

Literature with positive male archetypes

Pilgrim

Classic/20th-century literature

- "The Verger" (William Somerset Maugham)
- "Contents of the Dead Man's Pocket" (Jack Finney)
- "The Two Brothers" (Leo Nikolayavich Tolstoy)
- "A Summer Tragedy" (Arna Bontemps)
- "Hard to Be Good" (Bill Barich)

Adolescent novels

- The Fields and the Hills (Harold Bakken)
- Pacific Crossing (Gary Soto)
- One Fat Summer (Robert Lipsyte)
- The Snake Stone (Berlie Doherty)

Easy reading

- Crow and Weasel (Tom Pohrt)
- Children of Bach (Ellis Dillon)

Patriarch

Classic/20th-century literature

"Gentleman of Rio en Medio" (Enrique Sedillo)
"A Day in the Country" (Anton Chekhov)
"The Father" (Bjornstjerne Bjornson)
"The Great Adventure" (Charles G. Hall)
"The Leader of the People" (John Steinbeck)
"The Outcasts of Poker Flat" (Bret Harte)
"The Last Leaf" (O. Henry)

Adolescent novels

Emmy (Connie J. Green)
The Fool's War (Lee R. Kisling)
Shadow Boxer (Chris Lynch)
California Blue (David Klass)

Easy reading

The Backyard Tribe (Neil Shulman)
Too Long a Stranger (Janette Oke)

Warrior

Classic/20th-century literature

"The Killers" (Ernest Hemingway)
"The Man in the Water" (Roger Rosenblatt)
"The Bet" (Anton Chekhov)
"The Town Where No One Got Off" (Jack London)
"War" (John Steinbeck)
"A Mild Attack of Locusts" (Doris Lessing)
"The Open Boat" (Stephen Crane)

Adolescent novels

The Proving Ground (Elaine Alphin)
The Walls of Pedro Garcia (Kevin McColley)
Against the Storm (Gaye Hicyilmaz)
When the Mountain Sings (John MacLean)
Scorpions (Walter Dean Myers)

Easy reading

On My Honor (Marion D. Bauer)
Backfield Package (Thomas Dygard)

Magician

Classic/20th-century literature

"The Boy Who Sailed Around the World Alone" (Robin L. Graham)
"The Death Trap" (Paul Gallico)
"Science vs. Luck" (Mark Twain)
"The Rocking Horse Winner" (D.H. Lawrence)

Adolescent novels

Dither Farm (Sid Hite)
Escape From Exile (Robert Levy)
Striking Out (Will Weaver)
Cyclops (Olive Cussler)
The Shark Callers (Eric Campbell)

Easy reading

The Gift-Giver (Joyce Hansen)
Mutation (Robin Cook)

King

Classic/20th-century literature

"Lifeguard" (John Updike)
"The Great Adventure" (Charles G. Hall)
"The Lady or the Tiger" (Frank Stockton)
"Leiningen Versus the Ants" (Robert Louis Stevenson)

Adolescent novels

Walker of Time (H.H. Vick)
When Heroes Die (Penny R. Durant)
The Car (Gary Paulsen)

Easy reading

Invitation to the Game (Monica Hughes)
A Little Bit Dead (Chap Reaver)

Wildman

Classic/20th-century literature

"Catbird Seat" (James Thurber)
"To Build a Fire" (Jack London)
"The Landlady" (Roald Dahl)

Adolescent novels

Danny Ain't (Joe Cottonwood)
Lockie Leonard, Human Torpedo (Tim Winton)
Angels of the Swamp (Dorothy Whittaker)
We Are All Guilty (Kingsley Amis)
The River (Gary Paulsen)
Wilderness Peril (Skip Morrow)

Easy reading

Antar and the Eagles (William Mayne)
Hugh Glass, Mountain Man: Left for Dead (Robert McClung)

Healer

Classic/20th-century literature

"A Summer Tragedy" (Arna Wendell Bontemps)
"The Rescue of the Perishing" (William Saroyan)
My Friend Flicka (Mary O'Hara)
"Many Moons" (James Thurber)

Adolescent novels

Blue Skin of the Sea (Graham Salisbury)
Just Like Martin (Ossie Davis)
Midget (Tim Bowler)
The Trumpet Sounds (William Hill)
Night of Fear (Peg Kehret)
Twelve Days in August (Liza Ketchum Murrow)

Easy reading

Sticks (Joan Bauer)
Keeper of the Universe (Louis Lawrence)

Prophet

Classic/20th-century literature

"Lifeguard" (John Updike)
"The Great Adventure" (Charles G. Hall)
"The Lady or the Tiger" (Frank Stockton)
"Hammerman" (Adrian Stoutenburg)

Adolescent novels

An Eye for Color (Norman Silver)
S'Gana the Black Whale (Sue Stauffacher)
The Postman (David Brin)
Seventh Son (Orson Scott Card)

Easy reading

Rudy (James Ellison)
California Blue (David Klass)

Trickster

Classic/20th-century literature

"Charles" (Shirley Jackson)
"Ransom of Red Chief" (O. Henry)

Adolescent novels

Someone Was Watching (David Patneaude)
There's No Surf in Cleveland (Stephanie Buehler)
Me, Duncan, and the Great Hippopotamus Scandal (Jan Dean)
Rama: A Legend (Jamake Highwater)

Easy reading

Attaboy Sam (Lois Lowry)
Jumper (Steven Gould)

Lover

Classic/20th-century literature

"Lies" (Ethan Canin)
"Christmas Day in the Morning" (Pearl S. Buck)
"The Gift of the Magi" (O. Henry)

Adolescent novels

Heart of a Champion (Carl Deuker)
The One Who Came Back (Joann Mazzio)
A Solitary Blue (Cynthia Voight)
Phoenix Rising (Karen Hesse)

Easy reading

A Couple of Kooks and Other Stories About Love (Cynthia Rylant)
Shiloh (Phyllis Reynolds Naylor)
Shadow Like a Leopard (Myron Levoy)

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