

Scott Thompson

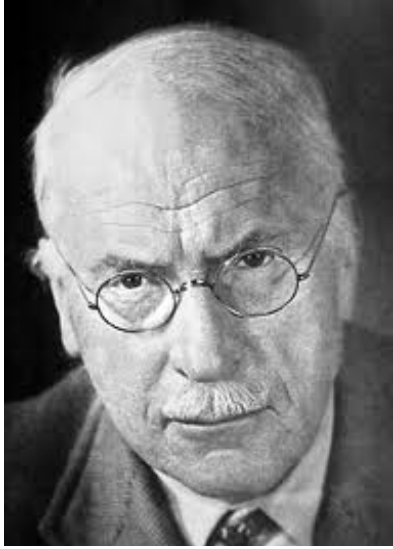
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teenagers by contrast are superior in the creativity and flexibility of their perceptions, giving them a knack for seeing through false and obsolete paradigms that we adults often lose. Teenagers also have a superior adaptation to technology, giving them an unlimited capacity to find out virtually anything.

I think two responses by adolescents to the specter of psychological denial are predictable. First, at some point there will be an explosion of adolescent self-destructive behaviors compared to today. If you think multi-drug abuse, including opiate pain pills, is rife among teenagers now – along with the overdose deaths – just wait awhile.

Much of this first response will shade into an utter indifference to what anyone over age 30 thinks. Teenagers will meet adults' demands for responsible behavior with open contempt.

The second response is psychological adaptation, which I feel is already beginning. It works as follows. About a hundred years ago Carl Jung came to



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The unconscious expresses itself in stories and symbolic images rather than literalistic or rational language. Once you know the difference, popular speculative fiction books and movies, which are loaded with archetypal images, not only tell an entertaining story, but also indicate what the collective unconscious is anticipating. Thus they yield remarkable insights, but on the other hand they are insights that deconstruct rather than bolster psychological denial.

Small wonder they're not more widely sought.

Dystopian romance novels are written for and marketed to teenagers. Hunger Games is the best known but there are many. And they sell. In these novels the protagonist is an adolescent girl, sometimes a boy, struggling to survive in an oppressive, faltering society that is plainly hostile both to her individuality and survival. In these societies the adult leaders are corrupt, oppressive, and deathly destructive. The teenage characters must rely solely on their inner, that is archetypal, resources and each other to begin to build a new world. My picks are *Under the Never Sky*, by Veronica Rossi, and *Yesterday*, by C.K. Kelly Martin, a Canadian.

Given that we're putting our teenagers on the fast track for 4 degrees C, their unconscious seems to be preparing them for what's ahead.

Certainly we're not.

Note: the excerpts by Kevin Anderson are from his lecture, "Real Clothes for the Emperor: Facing the Challenges of Climate Change," which he gave on November 6, 2012. You can find it on YouTube by typing in "Kevin Anderson Annual Cabot Institute Lecture 2012." A transcript can be found at



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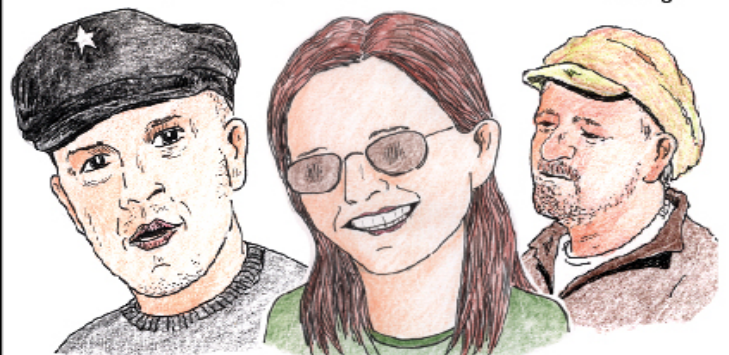
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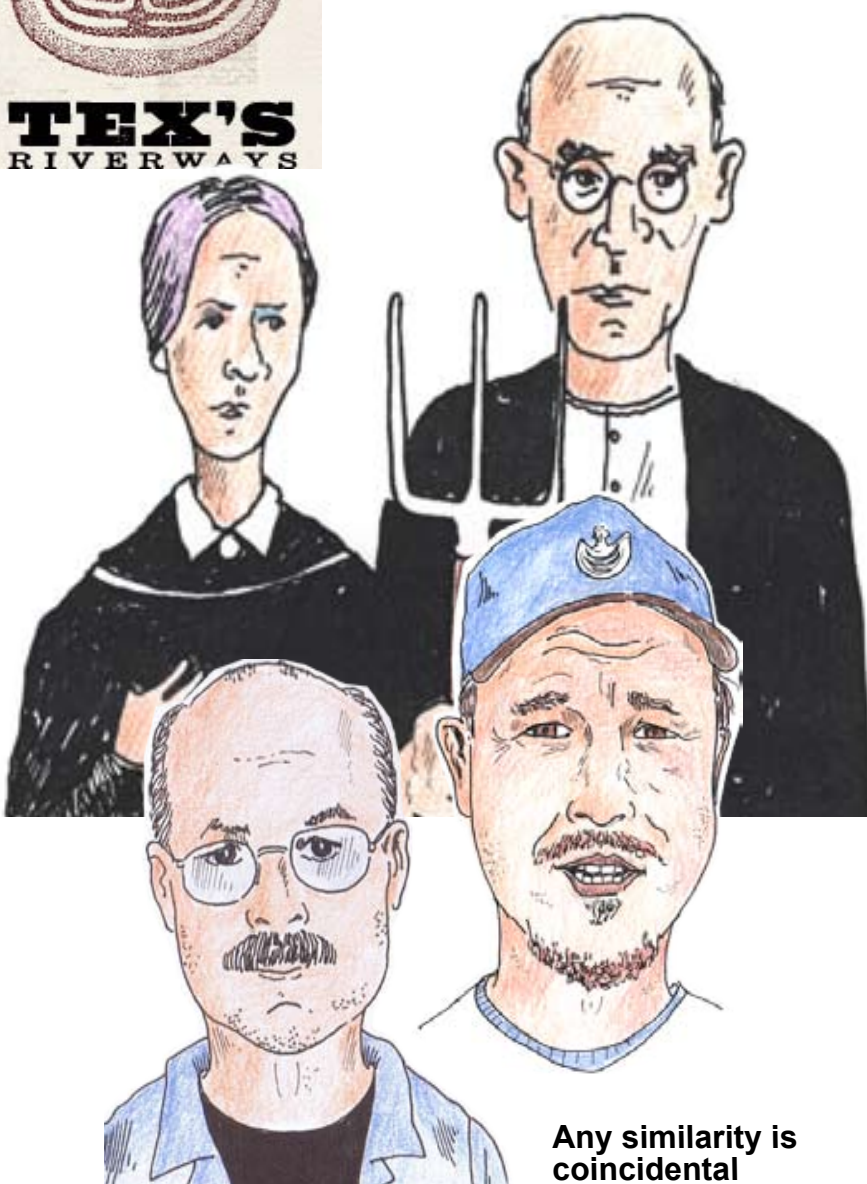
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