

Two generations ago, Karen Hornay's **THE ANOMIC PERSONALITY OF OUR TIME** spread wide the description of the lawless personality-syndrome & its roots & fruits --which now at a later stage of the rot, we can see in the deification of the autonomous individual with the attendant breakdown of civility & flight from citizen responsibilities. On this model, this Thinksheet worries about the fruits of an educational philosophy that has produced the horrorless personality of our time; & in hope of reform, looks at some of the roots....Would the dictionary help you on "adeimic"? Nope. It's too recent to be in the dictionary, as is "aphobic," which means fearless (elatively, as of Jesus in the hymn "O young and fearless prophet"; pejoratively, as of teenagers who mash themselves in cars). Adeimic is deeper, as horror is deeper than fear; it is fear intensified, engendered, engined....Some random thoughts & applications:

1 I have a learned horror of sex outside the marriage of one male & one female. The horror is so effective that all male bodies are sexually repulsive to me & no female body has ever come anywhere near leading me to fornicate or commit adultery. Think about **learned**. Biologically ("naturally"), the uncivilized human animal has neither of my horrors. The horrors were engrained in me, by teachers & self, to wall me off from influences that would rob me of the joys of virginal marriage, marital faithfulness, & loving-loyal fatherhood.

2 Recently a bi, preaching bisexuality unto me as the sexual ideal, claimed that I was secretly attracted to his body. The shock made me laugh & say, "Man, if you could only know how repulsive your body is to me!" He was speechless. Whatever homoerotic feelings I may have had as a child (& some theorists say I had them, everybody has) were so long ago **repressed** that I have no memory of them, thank God.

3 Too, my learned sexual horrors cut me off, thank God, from pederasty-pedophilia & incest--both now factors in the high incidence of child abuse.

4 To continue this catalog of my sexual righteousness, I am not "entertained" by the dreary parade of miserable creatures who've made stupid uses of their genitals. I love sex & hate abuses thereof. But while I'm sexually righteous, I'm not self-righteous: the righteousness is of my heritage, not of me. And the righteousness includes the **sex-control** horrors I was taught as prophylaxis against the horrors of uncivilized sexual activity...."Uncivilized": My use here is as in Freud's **CIVILIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS**: Repression (the narrowing of sexual activity) correlates with the broadening of culture to include a wide range of nonbiological activities. The Freudian notion that the narrowing correlates with "mental illness" (1) is overread & (2) fails to factor in the correlation of sexual looseness with "mental illness" & social anarchy.

5 Deeper & wider than television news is National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" & evening "All Things Considered." Today some immigrant Dominican mothers were complaining about the public schools' cultural imperialism in canceling their disciplinary influence on their children. A 15-year-old girl refused to show her mother her reportcard; the mother threatened to spank her; the daughter yelled "Child abuse!" & phoned 911 & the police came with drawn guns &, without the mother's presence, interviewed the girl, who when the police had left was surly to her mother & lectured her about child empowerment (meaning child power over against parents). Said the mothers, "We believe in sex only after marriage, but our children are into sex from puberty on." Note the death of two horrors: (1) The horror of corporal punishment, & (2) the horror of nonmarital sex (i.e., coitus). And behind both, a third: The horror of divine punishment, which the mothers acknowledged has no force now that their families live in America & attend American public schools, which designedly make no use of God for either promise or threat.

America's public school children are adeimic personalities. A child growing up without cosmic, historical, familial horror-threat will "normally" be anomic, a law only to the self ("doing your thing"). To counter this, some schools are adding to reading, 'riting, & 'rithmetic a second set: rights, responsibilities, respect. No problem with "rights": said child just phoned 911. But fear is a necessary component in responsibilities, & horror in respect.

6 Why does my point sound like antediluvian nonsense? Because through-

out this century, from John Dewey onward, the dominant pedagogy (educational philosophy) has been based on a romantic view of human nature according to which negative sanctions are unnecessary & therefore unacceptable (first morally, then legally). Positive thinking: promises without threats, rewards without punishments. By midcentury, behaviorists had begun to question the adequacy of positive reinforcement & added **aversion** pedagogy-&-therapy--in B.F. Skinner's case, by an ethological leap from pigeon behavior. But this negative behavior-modification did not rise from the level of technique to the level of theory requiring modification of the paradigmatic romantic view of human nature as basically either good or tabula-rasa neutral: it did not reach "the ground of our beseeching" (T.S. Eliot), where the human being mis/handles guilt, shame, jealousy-envy, addiction, horror, & hate as well as love & goodwill. (It's beyond this Thinksheet's scope to display the interconnections of the three underlined.)

7 Religion deals with the (inherently) **holy** & the (functionally, designated) sacred. R. Otto almost a century ago spelled out the **horror** response ("tremendum," trembling) to a person's experiencing especially the former, holiness. In the Bible we have not love-reductionism (as in the whole development of positive thinking in religion & education) but, as the UCC Statement of Faith has it, the "holy love" in which God "seeks" us--God's kind of love, which includes his character & the actions flowing therefrom: creation, providence, promises/threats, retribution (rewards/punishments), demands (worship, conformity to his nature ["Be holy, for I am holy"], forgiveness, justice, etc.). Love & justice are both expressions & demands of his holiness, which includes his mystery-majesty-glory-power-purity-love-righteousness-justice-eternity-changelessness-wisdom. No one note or mark of God's character has priority over, or even equal billing with, his holiness. Karl Barth is often quoted thus on God's holiness in action toward humanity (CD 2[1].363): "The holiness of God consists in the unity of His judgment with His grace. God is holy because His grace judges and His judgment is gracious." Jesus taught the horror of offending God's holiness as well as the peace & joy of obedience to God's holiness. (A Barthian trinitarian distribution for meditation, not theology proper: holy Father, merciful Son, loving Spirit.)

8 Princeton Seminary's Max Stackhouse, also on NPR this morning, stated, but did not detail, his opposition to **homosexual "marriage"**--which stretches the word "marriage" as "family" is stretched to include any nonmarital living arrangement. I agree with Max, & do so on the basis of civilization's need for homodeimia, i.e. horror (not just homophobia, fear) at the thought of homo-sex (not homosexuals, who in a civilized society will have rights, but homosexual genital behavior). Why society's **need** for this horror? Because the horror provides repression-power (1) for tilting pubescents away from homosexual temptations/behavior as they are forming their sexual identity, & (2) for providing said sexual control throughout life.

To be avoided are (1) homophobia (fear of homosexuals), (2) homomisia (hatred of homosexuals), (3) shunning (avoiding social contact with homosexuals), (4) impairment of homosexuals' civil or economic rights, (5) acceptance of homosexuality as biologically "normal" (in denial of the reality that it's an instance of arrested development), (6) acceptance of homosexual praxis as societally "normal" (with, accordingly, "full equality," including homo-"marriage"), (7) promotion of "full equality," as in the UCC's push to enlist "open & affirming churches." Church membership? Yes, of course. Ordination? Only with attendant vow of homosexual celibacy, violation of the vow annulling the ordination.

9 Marcus Borg says Christianity must be redesigned to exclude guilt, since "people no longer feel guilty." Our society, by default of moral wall-maintenance, has redesigned itself to exclude shame. And horror as a religious, moral, educational, & corrective force was long ago excluded. While we Christians must not agree with all of the Bible's behavior-differentia (details of action), we should recognize the social health of its vigorous horror-guilt-shame sanctions. In a meeting yesterday I heard someone ask "Does Christianity any longer have any business trying to change the world?" Horror is a civilizing force, & we try to keep it alive by Holocaust Remembrance Day, by meditating on the oncoming consequences of 80% bastardy in some of our inner cities, by observing the environmental deterioration from uncontrolled "development," & by teaching horror to the children.