

Canadian Co-dependency is treatable

It could only have been made in Canada. The movie combined the effects of multiculturalism, that Canadian answer to the U.S. melting pot, with our ability to laugh at ourselves. The film was born in Winnipeg, but was filmed in Toronto financed by the Ontario Film Corporation. But the opening scene was emblazoned with the word "Chicago", and U.S. American flags flew from schools, businesses and even private residences. How Canadian!

"My Big Fat Greek Wedding" is the perfect Canadian movie. It draws on our culture and our talent and it pretends it is all happening in the United States. It captures the Canadian psyche completely.

Okay, we can all understand the economics. Film distributors have decided that there is no Canadian market (we are part of a North American market) and any government that legislates a Canadian market will face retaliation from Big Brother down there. This means that a Canadian movie must do well in the U.S. part of the North American market to be shown widely up here. Yankees will not watch much that is not based in their country; heck, they even remade classics like "The Time Machine" and "War of the Worlds" pretending they were based in the good ole' U.S.A. All of this speaks to the mind of Uncle Sam, but "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" speaks to the Canadian mind.

I should say "Canadian minds" because we are not one nation but several, each living in its own solitude. But if there is one thing that unites us all, it is that we never gave up being a colony. The colonial mind is co-dependant. When the sun finally set on the British empire we simply traded one master who was addicted to power for another. Even now there are Canadians fretting that we did not send our boys to potentially die for Uncle Sam in Iraq as we have done in other conflicts (although, we did send our ships to patrol the Persian Gulf even while our Prime Minister was stating our independence from George's war).

National co-dependency means that Uncle Sam will beat us up over softwood lumber, the west coast fishery, prairie grain, textiles, the east coast fishery, and arctic sovereignty and we will still consider him to be our best friend. The playing field seems perpetually tilted in Uncle Sam's favor, but when we are unable to compete we will blame ourselves. We will thank the Yankees for their "protection". We will fly their flags from our businesses. Canadians will still shop at businesses flying those flags.

"Co-dependency" as part of our country's mass culture is bound to affect the minds of the communities, families and individuals that make up that culture. We have descended into a kind of self-defeating tribalism where our first loyalty is to the racial, religious, ethnic or gender-based group with whom we choose to identify. We don't reach out to other Canadians. We don't know or understand them. Fundamentally, we don't trust those not part of our group. And thru it all we maintain an irritating stance of moral superiority with respect to our neighbour to the south because, after all, we are not as abusive, and we have medicare.

We may not be able to do much about Canada's economic status as a colony, at least not

immediately, but we can control our own minds. We can resist our descent into tribalism, and we can dialogue with groups not our own. We can reach out to our neighbors and find commonality. We can build community. We can build a country.

Change to enough individual minds will result in change to the mass mind. We will be co-dependant no more. We will no longer schizophrenic-like define ourselves as a country by how we are not like them while at the same time assuming that if it is done that way in the United States it must be better.

The change begins with you and me.