

Abstract

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The Initiation Ritual: A Model for Life The article is about the process of acquiring a male-defined and powerful identity through the ritual acts. The author talks about the training that young men would endure in order for them to think and feel like autonomous people. The training is done as a group, rather than as an individual so that they can be emotionally bound to one another, consider group traditions and values to be substantial guides for behavior, inculcated in the rituals and the pledging period. The author tries to figure out that the initiation process and the pledges during the act are what bring about a renovation of consciousness to personalize group attitudes and identity.

A symbolic sacrifice of one's part of the body acts as a covenant between the initiate and the fraternal organization. The covenant, which is reinforced by a vow of secrecy promises superior power and masculinity. He argues that adolescent men can only gain a new self, when they obtain new goals, concerns, values, and become socially constructed. An example is given by the author, to demonstrate the argument, where Sean, a young man joins the initiation process when he felt powerless, but came out as an all-powerful individual. Indeed, the ritual processes he endured strengthened him whenever he felt vulnerable. Sean's honesty and experience taught him how to do away with some issues he would thereafter deny. This is strong evidence that masculine personality is socially negotiated beyond the family setting. Initiates acquire these features as a significant part of their education at higher learning institutions.