

The Arts of My Life

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Asian cultures tend to thrive upon the idea of logic and sustainability, honoring the importance of being successful. However, I differ from the rest of my dominant culture for which I value more about my passion and my creativity. The term “co-culture,” explained by Samovar, Porter, and McDaniel (2007), describes these particular “groups or social communities exhibiting communication characteristics, perceptions, values, beliefs, and practices that are sufficiently different to distinguish them from the other groups, communities, and the dominant culture” (p. 11). In this particular case, my “co-culture” reveals to be the art of filmmaking while existing under the “dominant” regime of logic.

Being a visionary filmmaker, there are a lot of values I cherish when I dive deep into the fundamentals of filmmaking. Out of all the values that make a filmmaker, creativity and originality are the big parts of it all. Without the ability to imagine a vivid world with complex characters, I would not be able to craft such driven and impactful narratives. Although filmmakers have the tendency to follow the overused existing formula of making a movie, passion is the key factor of how everything ties in with each other. Removing any pathos in a filmmaker, all the viewers are going to get is a simple Lifetime movie. Stemming from passion, personality is a blood brother to it; it’s also the heart of a filmmaker. Before any production takes place, I must subjectively look into myself to see what kind of a person I am. Thus, the outcome displays an emotion exerting onto everything that I perform during and after the production.

Besides the values, there are beliefs and norms that filmmakers usually partake in. One of the colossal beliefs that filmmakers have is the concept of telling one’s story. Whether the story is personal, political, or even fantasized, a filmmaker’s duty is to bring out a narrative that either transpires people to think or feel. In my case, all of my stories are connected with each other

through the theme of humility. Through all the philosophies imprinted in my films, the thoughts of being human and being empathetic towards life are prevalent. Hence, my stories trigger people to think about life and consequently, have an understanding and feeling about what it actually means to be human in this gigantic universe. Contrary to the complexity of a filmmaker's beliefs, our norms are somewhat simple and straightforward to an outsider. All filmmakers are required to experience cinema, good or bad; however, we take a deep insight into why those particular films are made or what is the hidden message the creators are trying to convey. Reading books are part of the norms as well for it being a tool for the filmmakers to learn about storytelling and character's development. More importantly, watching cinema and reading books create another life, another perspective for us to live as well as experience the escapism or realism of the narratives.

In the filmmaker's club, there is a unique communication pattern that we all share: the referencing lingo. Being a part of this community, I am able to recite an event from a movie to fascinate a conversation while adding my own humor and personality. Referencing is the most fun part of communicating with another filmmaker because the reference explains how one feels, thinks, or just explains the situation itself. Although, there is a down side of this lingo since everyday people are not experts in films or pop cultures. Sometimes, we speak with technical terms about movies as well, such as: cinematography, lighting, editing, score, etc.

From a few people I have spoken to, there are not a lot of distinguishable traits that separate us from the rest of society. The only thing that makes the filmmakers' brand so unique is that we are better acquitted with awareness. With being immersive in another filmmaker's vision, my community always surmises about the relevance and the history of how that story's world is formed as well as uncovering the hidden social commentary. From my standpoint, the only

explanation that justifies that mentality is that filmmakers often converse multiple insights to everyday folk about what they think as well as how they feel about a movie; additionally, they contribute those insights into the current world while pointing out its flaws. In other words, my community is filled with scholars studying films like they are studying literature.

On the contrary, filmmakers are associated with many stereotypes that have already become outdated. Most common false recognition we have is that we are somewhat pretentious and too obnoxious to listen to. Since filmmakers are cultured in understanding the current problems of the world, we are constantly marked as too pretentious or higher to a common man. Granted, there is still that kind of stereotype that exists somewhere across the globe, but nowadays, it slowly fades into extinction. As to giving an explanation to this existing flaw of ours, the reason could lie underneath our knowledge of inexperienced circumstances that some of us have not yet lived, yet we explain the situation like we have already muscled through that part of life. Ironically, at the same time, the thinking makes us a little bit unaware of other people's history and situations. The other false recognition in people's minds about filmmakers is that we all are located in California. Because Hollywood is located in California, many people tend to jump to the fact that most filmmakers originated from there.

Above all of the characteristics of being a filmmaker, internally, I view this culture being more valuable than the dominant culture that is currently pressed upon me. With being a full-bred Asian, the idea of being anything but success is frowned upon. Most Asian cultures always push the importance of being well-financial towards the younger generations. In my own opinion, the importance of being successful sanitizes one's emotion and passion. A while back in life, I had encountered a couple of Asians who have plans to either be a scientist, a lawyer, or a doctor. Barely in my life, I have yet met another Asian who devotes his or her life to arts or

something other than the listed careers. Furthermore, when some people first ask me about my occupation in life, they always assume my pursuing field revolves around logic. Sometimes, the feeling is so frustrating since the stereotype is hard to overcome in people's minds. Additionally, emotions and feelings are almost taboo in some Asian families; however, arts demonstrate the concept of empathy and understanding towards society. Art—my filmmaking art in this case—is my significance in life because art reveals an emotion and passion behind one's heart.

Overall, filmmaking is an essential part of my life; it is my “co-culture” according to intercultural communication experts. Being under the dominance of logic is hard for me to overcome cultural barriers. Although, I am proud of being an Asian filmmaker, because it rewards me with a chance to be something different from the rest of the Asian community. Somebody wise tells me something true about the nature of storytelling in any medium—that when we read something, or watch something, we basically live more than a thousand lives before we die. We get to embody different people, different perspectives, to see how amazing life is while acknowledging the awareness of oneself. With arts, we get to appeal more to our morality and eliminate ignorance in the world, and that, my friend, is a priceless privilege to have.

### References

Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., & McDaniel, Edwin. R. (2007). *Communication between culture*.

Belmont, CA: Thomas Wadsworth.