

Part of a Community

I read a short story yesterday in Sci-Fi collection I have. The story itself tied in with a famous work by another author and looked at the situation from a different angle. What stuck with me was a continued effort of the main character to figure out the origins of society. The whys and hows why we keep certain things and get rid of others. The eventual conclusion was that local communities influence what society, as a whole, deems important. For the Sci-Fi story, this was all scientifically modeled to produce a way to determine the eventual outcome of certain actions.

Now it is interesting to me that sociologists do not yet have an accepted definition of the word community. The standard is a local group with a common interest or location. For sociologists, this doesn't help much. Today it is even more confusing. This is very easy to see, since we now have global communities, cyber communities or online communities. Of course, we still have local communities.

Then I started thinking of all the communities I have been a part of. Some have been a better influence than others. Some I still consider myself to be part of, others not so much. But do we ever really leave a community? I've run into people I grew up with, people who lived just down the street. Even those I don't run into have been influenced, for good or bad, from any interactions with me. And the same thing goes for me. People I've met have changed my life. Those interactions influenced choices I've made. By making those choices, I've influenced others I've been in contact with. Somewhat sobering thought, things I've done may now be influencing people I've never met.

And, I am a part of a few cyber communities. One of those is this blog. I wonder how many people take my words and somehow fit them in there lives. Could it be a movie review that makes

them look up a show? A post about books I've read sends someone to the library? Or maybe a recipe gets someone to the kitchen to make an old family favorite. It is fun just to think about.

Of course, the one part of the communities I belong to where I had the biggest influence was my own family. I spent more time with them than any other part of the community at large. For good or bad, they've had me in their lives. That was some fun.