

Chapter 3

MEDIA AND YOUTH CULTURE— LES ENFANTS TERRIBLE

In every society in every collectivity, there exists—must exist—a channel, an outlet through which the forces accumulated in the form of aggression can be released. This is the purpose of games in children's institutions, of psychodramas in group therapy and, in a more general way, of illustrated magazines for children—each type of society, of course, requiring its own specific catharsis.⁸²

—DR. FRANTZ FANON

For those of us within the social framework of Euro-America, the collective catharsis that Fanon speaks of manifests itself not only in comic books and magazines, but television, radio and movies, in effect, the mass media.

It is through the collective catharsis that the concepts of racism and machismo are taught to youth. Within the comic books, we have characters, such as Archie and Jughead, who are presented (in comic form) as typical middle-class white youth. Archie's greatest problem is which girl will he go out with on Saturday night. He is given at least two women to choose from: Betty or Veronica. At no time within the Archie series do we see Betty, Veronica or any woman, for that matter, presented as intelli-