Identifying Cultural Trends: A Sociological Perspective

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ABSTRACT	ARTICLE INFORMATION
This discussion identifies and analyzes various current trends influencing communities, organizations, education, and future workplace experiences. An explanation is presented regarding how these trends may be effective and applicable. The challenges, benefits, and opportunities for change are presented for each trend. **Keywords:** Cultural trends, growing public distrust, independent social and cultural influencers, online communities, peer-to-peer communication structures, communication technology tools, *hate speech, woke, wokism,* fake news, *cancel culture,* content creators, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), social media, Overton window tactics, education, government, corporations, workplace, peer-to-peer educational opportunities.	

Introduction

Aristotle discussed how culture and the arts are invaluable to humanity as these themes have a relationship to virtue and emotion (Kaszynska, 2024). Various important trends are evident today that can be meaningfully directed to elevate people, families, communities, organizations, education, the workplace, and the nation in creative and innovative ways. The following themes are examined: (a) cultural trends influencing communities, organizations, education, and workplace; (b) growing public distrust; (c) independent social and cultural influencers, broadcasters, publishers, researchers, and public journalists; (d) online communities and peer-to-peer communication structures; (e) content creator economy; (f) branding purpose and social activism; (g) trends effecting communities, organizations, education, and future workplace experiences; and (h) challenges, benefits, and opportunities for change.

Cultural Trends Influencing Communities, Organizations, Education, and Workplace

Each of the following trends can be used as tools to reach others and spread truth, facts, real history, real news, and change culture. In addition, each of these trends can be used to raise public consciousness, and support, collaborate, engage, and educate others. Some of the fastest growing trends today include the following:

- Intensified public distrust of corporations, organizations, institutions, and government entities,

- Independent social and cultural influencers, broadcasters, publishers, researchers, and public journalists,

- Online communities and peer-to-peer communication structures,

- Content creator economy, and

- Branding purpose and social activism.

The Internet, online communities, social media, and communication technology tools have affected communities, organizations, education, and the workplace in many ways. In communities, people are able to connect online in a peer-to-peer fashion engaging with like-minded individuals (An et al., 2023; Hoose & Rosenbohm, 2024). In organizations and the workplace, these new technologies aid in more strategic work processes and flows saving time and money. In addition, recruitment and on-boarding processes have been streamlined using many innovative online technologies. In education, many people throughout

the world are able to learn, engage, and collaborate in online platforms while online education has propelled over the last several decades.

Finally, independent individuals are able to create content and disseminate products and services locally, nationally, and globally (An et al., 2023; Hoose & Rosenbohm, 2024). Branding purpose and social activism themes can be more easily advanced using online modalities while independent social and cultural influencers, broadcasters, publishers, researchers, and public journalists are able to come from the public and teach the public about important topics (An et al., 2023; Hoose & Rosenbohm, 2024). With a growing distrust in government, legacy corporate media, and social media *nudging* strategies, the public are filling-the-gap and participating as independent content creators and influencers to provide a voice for their concerns and interests (An et al., 2023; Hoose & Rosenbohm, 2024; Kirk & Schill, 2024).

Growing Public Distrust

Today, many Americans distrust the government and strongly distrust so-called news disseminated via the legacy corporate media and cohorts on social and digital media platforms (Kirk & Schill, 2024). In a paper published by Kirk and Schill (2024), researchers analyzed a new stratagem or deception called *hate speech* as a trick-of-war or an artifice, deployed with substantial effect throughout the 2020 election. The researchers examined how a deception of this nature is utilized to damage the body politic, whereby reducing the people's capacity to engage with disparate points of view and publics, thus, harming constitutional republic rule. Kirk and Schill (2024) posited the public must comprehend how discourse in social media environments is deployed as a weaponized and destabilizing effort within communication environments to block vigorous discussions in the public space, essential for liberty. According to an Axios-Ipsos (2021) poll, Democrats 78% and Republicans 83%, or four fifths of Americans, concur, "America is falling apart."

Independent Social and Cultural Influencers, Broadcasters, Publishers, Researchers, and Public Journalists

The public has a growing concern over the bullying and shaming tactics utilized by agents and operatives on social media platforms, and this factor along with others, have added to the growing public distrust of corporations, organizations, institutions, and government entities. However, these weaponized tactics are cultivating new and innovative communicators in the form of independent social and cultural influencers, broadcasters, publishers, researchers, and public journalists. There is a growing

distrust amongst the people in the United States, and throughout the world, as a corporate and governmental *woke* structure has permeated throughout social media, corporate mainstream media, organizations, institutions, and government entities.

People are feeling attacked, pressured about their constitutional liberties, how they raise their children and families, what their religious beliefs are, and challenges to a traditional moral and cultural way of life are pervasive. People are feeling under attack and the *hate speech* stratagem in use by agents and operatives adds to the growing distrust (Kirk & Schill, 2024). Because of these nefarious and calculated warfare tactics deployed on the American public, and the world, many independent social and cultural influencers, broadcasters, publishers, researchers, and public journalists are engaging the public with admirable and intellectual counter voices and content in contrast to the imposing vociferate multinationalist, corporate media, and government *woke* narratives.

Online Communities and Peer-to-Peer Communication Structures

Another interesting trend resulting from these types of attacks on the public are online communities and peer-to-peer communication structures. People are connecting with others throughout the world in like-minded online communities to share information, report current events happening on the ground-level within their communities, and decoding *wokism* fake news just as fast as the narratives are released. According to Kirk and Schill (2024), misinformation and lies disseminate rapidly throughout the media ecosystem. The researchers examined how a rush to resolve perceived social injustices, may direct the public in misleading ways to look at the wrong thing (Kirk & Schill, 2024). In addition, the researchers posited voters and journalists must become more aware of the drivers, content, and motivations of dis- and misinformation (Kirk & Schill, 2024). Trends such as online communities and peer-to-peer communication structures are enabling people to communicate with others throughout the world and bypass corporate mainstream media's influence over previously controlled narratives.

Although the great purge on many social media platforms continues to occur, whereby people, content, websites, videos, podcasts, livestreams, etc. are being kicked off the Internet or buried, peer-to-peer communication structures are still available to the public and provide space for communication, analysis, and engagement with others. Since these online communities and peer-to-peer structures are still currently available for the public to access, it is important for the content creator economy to address many of the challenges Americans, and the global public,

are experiencing by developing invaluable and accurate content, disseminated via partnerships with independent social and cultural influencers, broadcasters, publishers, researchers, and public journalists. Deplatforming, censoring expression, *woke cancel culture* criminalization of so-called *hate speech*, rewriting social media rules, platform restrictions, and suspensions have actually worked against *wokist* adherents, agents, operatives, and corporate dis-information mainstream narratives (Kirk & Schill, 2024). These *wokist* agendas have aggregated great distrust amongst the public; however, *wokism* has also reunited the national and global public in interesting and informative peer-to-peer communicative and collaborative ways.

Content Creator Economy

Social media and the Internet provides space for content creators to offer entertainment, news, current event discussions and analysis, communication, education, information, and sharing stories about life, education, and work experiences with the public in meaningful ways (Hoose & Rosenbohm, 2024). Skills needed by content creators to be successful include production, interaction, and planning (An et al., 2023). Content creators can be artists, writers, publishers, communicators, influencers, bloggers, web designers, livestreamers, video producers, etc. In addition, content creators can be individuals who come directly from our own communities, cities, towns, states, locally, nationally, and globally. Talent and desire to communicate, educate, and propagate our concerns and interests with others can come from anywhere.

How do we get to integrated sovereigns with decentralized, deglobalized, private ownership in a moral, ethical, virtuous, community-based, family-oriented, locally produced, agrarian, manufacturing national culture? How do we get to a society where valuable educational opportunities are available for all people, usury is abolished, and interest-free nationalized money supports a nation of thriving people, families, and private businesses? Awareness through education is essential. Who can do this type of education? Those who understand the problems Americans and humanity face, and those with talents who can create content others can easily access and understand in a variety of creative ways are greatly needed today.

Content creators can teach the public about many deception tactics agents and operatives use, how to decode past and ongoing current events, decode and present real history, and teach needed discernment skills to help the public navigate the Internet and social media platforms more effectively and skillfully. While innovative communication technology tools are still available to the public without biometric or other canceling or blocking sign-on requirements, at this

time in history, content creators and other independents can create and disseminate learning opportunities to help the public understand the world they live in, and how to construct a new pathway for thriving people, communities, and nation. According to Hoose and Rosenbohm (2024), content creators are in consistent communication with audiences, create spaces where they can be in continuous observation of what is occurring within communities, and are consistently present to answer comments and questions.

Branding Purpose and Social Activism

Private independents can brand social activism promoting and educating others about a decentralized peer-to-peer private ownership model versus *woke* centralized totalitarian corporatism. Branding a peer-to-peer private ownership decentralized model in comparison to government and corporate authoritarian oversight can be a powerful message presented to the public through independent social activism in many creative and intellectual forms. Independents and content creators can promote a brand of integrity, cultural value, and meaning-making through social activism efforts with an entrepreneurial and authenticity spirit (Arriagada & Ibáñez, 2020).

Branded messages with themes important to all human beings can be about freedom, truth, justice, prioritizing families, traditions, culture, a sense of community, human dignity, and moral and ethical values. Independents and like-minded populations can involve themselves in social activism projects promoting these shared purpose concepts. The Internet, social media platforms, innovative communication technology tools, and open source peer-to-peer networking offer many creative ways to develop content for branding and social activism to engage with others locally, nationally, and globally. As *cancel culture* advances to a point where people and content will be removed completely from the Internet, open source peer-to-peer networking may be the solution for these egregious challenges humanity faces.

Trends Effecting Communities, Organizations, Education, and Future Workplace Experiences

A nefarious trend in communicative channels and digital media involves the amplification and exploitation of *nudging*, messaging, and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) by political agents and operatives, whereby opinion leaders and so-called elites incite calculated division techniques amongst the public, while biased weaponized media channels rile up base audiences by depicting others as radicalized caricatures (Hart, 2020; Kirk & Schill, 2024). Throughout digital and social media, algorithms

amplify and reinforce extremity and outrage (Hart, 2020; Kirk & Schill, 2024). Social, digital, and legacy media channels, in collusion, have perfected the art of distrust, paranoia, and monetized anger as an effective stratagem to divide and conquer the public, thus, changing the culture into a radicalized toxic environment (Kirk & Schill, 2024; Taibbi, 2019).

Communities, organizations, education, and the workplace are affected by these deceptive tactics of war, however, many people may not have a clear understanding about how the stratagem is used to divide and conquer the public (Kirk & Schill, 2024; Rectenwald, 2023; Wood, 2018). Hate is used as a political stratagem and these tactics spread throughout every sector locally, nationally, and globally promoting civil unrest, distrust, and psychological and emotional distress for many as a method for achieving political ends (Kirk & Schill, 2024). In addition, these tactics are used to change the culture from a once traditional moral and ethical Christian sensibility to a *woke* corporate dystopia antithetical to the values and principles of many Americans. Thus, many Americans feel their communities, culture, traditions, values, principles, and way of life are under attack.

As hate becomes a weaponized tool in the age of social media, communities, organizations, education, and the workplace are heavily affected by these circumstances instigated to negatively change the culture and move the Overton window toward a dystopian future (Kirk & Schill, 2024). Stages in moving culture using the Overton window technique begins with the 'unthinkable stage,' then moves the public through 'radical,' 'acceptable,' 'sensible,' and 'popular' stages, finally ending in a 'policy' stage. The concept is about moving the public's thinking from what was once viewed as 'unacceptable,' to gradually moving the public through the other stages, then to the 'popular' stage, and then ending in the 'policy' stage as the final effect. Once the public has been moved through these stages, policy is set in the workplace, educational institutions, organizations, and corporations. This technique is used to change cultural norms, taboos, and ways of thinking and living, thus, the Overton window is used as a cultural changing stratagem within a society to get people to change how they think, and to move people in the direction agents and operatives want them to move.

Think tank senior vice president, Joseph Overton developed the technique used to teach political operatives and candidates they counsel the stratagem to change culture and advocate for policy (Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 2019). Americans and humanity are currently being strategically pulled through these Overton window stages, and this stratagem has been iteratively in effect for many generations. People may not understand

this technique of war; however, they are acutely aware of a heightened level of insecurity in their communities, organizations, education, and the workplace as these tactics are strategically changing the culture in each of these areas.

A future that can be realized in communities, organizations, education, and the workplace is independents uniting as organized intellectual capital to foster a decentralized model promoting strength and thriving in communities, decentralized organizations and government, non-corporatized innovative educational opportunities, and future workplace experiences based upon innovative private ownership. Humanity is at a crossroads, whereby two paths can be taken: (a.) moral, decentralized, private ownership, and liberty, or (b.) amoral, immoral, centralized, authoritarian, *woke* corporatism in collusion with governments. The first step in culture change is awareness of the issues and problems that face Americans and humanity. Creating spaces to help the public become more aware is necessary for a changed direction and culture shift to take place. Once understood, people can then more clearly identify the issues, understand tactics, and seek to address the challenges with informed decision-making, collaboration, and participation in communities, organizations, education, and the workplace.

Challenges, Benefits, and Opportunities for Change

Kirk and Schill (2024) advocated for the public's understanding of the *wokism* warfare stratagem and an enhanced awareness of how these techniques and tactics are utilized by agents and operatives wishing to destroy the very communication climate permitting *wokist* agendas. Via exposure, communication settings may recover sensibility and become a space where the public can engage in the meaningful advancement and prosperity of the nation and world (Kirk & Schill, 2024). To change the culture, people with conviction, bravery, creativity, talent, intellect, and various skills can form a decentralized web across the Internet and on social media channels to spread topics, themes, values, and principles important to communities and nation.

New peer-to-peer educational opportunities and structures can be formed via online communities and disseminated through partnerships with like-minded independents. The future can be bright and enlightened for many individuals and families when intellectual capital is harnessed to produce highly creative results for positive cultural change. Principled leaders and educators can come from anywhere throughout the public ranks, as well as anywhere in the world. With online technologies, opportunities to positively change the culture can be facilitated with focus, intention, and initiative.

Conclusion

According to Kirk and Schill (2024), hate stratagems are totalitarianism strategies aiming at controlling choices people make by any means needed to win, whereby this strategy-of-war seeks to control all communication environments with the direct intention of influencing the future decisions and actions of the public. Voltaire infamously posited an alignment between carnage, despotism, and misinformation in "Questions Sur Les Miracles," stating, "whoever can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities" (Kirk & Schill, 2024; Olson, 2020). This discussion identified and analyzed various current cultural trends influencing communities, organizations, education, and future workplace experiences. An explanation was presented regarding how these trends may be effective and applicable. The challenges, benefits, and opportunities for change were presented for each trend.

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