It Can't Be Like It Used to Be: Informality as a Contagion of Democratization in American Culture

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The authors' purpose is to illustrate that counter cultures follow changes in democracy. While allowing more political freedom for individuals, such freedom is expressed by overtaking those rules, taboos, and mores that previously were followed when the minorities lacked that freedom. Changes occur in such topics as sexual mores, aesthetic appreciation of music, and the media. Beginning in the 1950s, American culture has changed dramatically because of changes in politics and the media. While not suggesting that this is good or bad, the authors profess that it is inevitable.

Keywords: counter-culture, political freedom, Pleasantville, sexual freedom

The United States has had a consistent and re-occurring problem with discrimination from its inception to the present. Given that equality is one of the basic constructs of democracy, the problem is especially troublesome. In terms of solutions, though, changes have been made legally (both formally and informally) to reduce prejudice. The problem has involved black Americans from slavery to the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement (Lockhart, Kamisar, Choper, & Shiffrin, 1970). Constitutional Amendments 14, 15, and 16, between 1865 and 1870 eliminated slavery, granted citizenship, and allowed voting for African-American males (Lockhart et al., 1970, Appendix B, pp. 21-22). However, it was not until *Brown v. Board of Education*, in 1954, that the Supreme Court began implementing equality laws that had been on the books for almost one hundred years (Lockhart et al., 1970, pp. 1157-1161). Even with the Supreme Court case, discrimination prevailed.

The rights of women to vote were delayed until 1920, when the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was passed. Equality in other ways has remained into the 21st century. Today, the questions of equality in a nation claiming to be a democracy remain at issue regarding "illegal aliens" and same-sex marriage.

While the issues of equality in democracy have undergone numerous philosophical discussions, actual changes have taken decades to reach reality. The period of time from 1954 to the early 1970s brought these questions to the forefront of American society. Change took place in an evolutionary manner rather than a revolutionary one. These changes took place because of marches in the streets, including the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Movement, and the Gay Rights Movement. As a result of these informal mechanisms, additional laws were created. As informal and formal legal fights occurred, two distinct groups formed: the establishment and the counter-culture. Lasch (1979) wrote: "The contemporary narcissist bears a superficial resemblance, in his self-absorption and delusions of grandeur, to the 'imperial self' so often celebrated in nineteenth-century American literature" (p. 35). Lasch's purpose was to provide an analysis of the recent past

of America in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, perhaps it was also predictive of society in the 21st century. As such there were two types of narcissism from the two groups. One group wanted to maintain the America of the 1950s and the other preferred a more open, transparent society. These two groups' values are illustrated in Table 1.

The latter group, in an attempt to bring about a more democratic society, created a more informal (and perhaps hedonistic) culture resulting in greater informality and less respect for institutions, laws, rules, rituals, people, and authority in general. During this *cultural revolution*, media have served not only as the observers who report it but also on many occasions as the advocates who promulgate it. The result is that political and cultural change are hardly separate at all.

Table 1

Establishment Values and Counter-Culture Values

Established Culture	Counter-Culture
Conservative	Liberal
Predictable	Unpredictable
Formal	Informal
Elitist	Democratic
Closed	Open

In Karl Marx's terms, a cultural revolution may be considered an adjunctive part of political change. As such, it is the cultural change that maintains and re-emphasizes the political (public) change (Marx, 1977). In a sense, the cultural changes are a constant reminder that political change has taken place, at least in theory. Just as the typical political change brings about a society that offers more to more people, the covert cultural change emphasizes that mores and values of the underlying sub-strata of those previously less vocal minorities that now have a voice.

Establishment Culture as Portrayed in Pleasantville

Such a notion can be exemplified in the film, *Pleasantville*, probably best known by its viewers as a movie about progressing from black-and-white television to color. However, *Pleasantville* is much more than that; it is a blueprint for social and cultural change (Dickinson, 2006). The scene is reminiscent of the late 1950s and early 1960s when "Father Knows Best", "Leave It to Beaver", and the "Andy Griffith Show" invited us into the lives of the white, middle-class everyman. This Middle America constituted an idealized world of the "establishment", perhaps more fanciful than realistic.

The film is reminiscent of the times as portrayed in the movies and on television but it also reflects the culture based in fashion and music, mores, and values. As such, *Pleasantville* starts by illustrating an ideal culture of formality where there are few problems in life while dismissing the real world that was significantly but subtly quite different. In the black-and-white world of the 1950s, rules were rules. There was a formality about the rules and consequent punishment for violating them.

The establishment culture's middle class imitation is hardly known to most citizens except through their eyes as the third person. Establishment culture might be composed of those who read *The New Yorker* and the *New York Times*. Those who inhabit it consider themselves the elite and resist serious violations by the petit bourgeois and the proletarians. This "high culture" possesses values in the arts, intellectual elitism, as well as food and drink. Whereas the high culture includes wine tasting, the popular culture is more about beer

drinking. One would anticipate that high culture followers admire popular writers from New York and those few others who happen to break through the culture ceiling. In high culture it is important to understand the cartoons in the *New Yorker*. For the rest of society, it might be more likely that one has never seen or heard of the magazine.

High society exists in places other than New York City. It can be found in many cities around the country, but it is rarely present in rural areas. Those in high society discuss Rosa Luxembourg and Michel Foucault. They enjoy discussing democracy and equality but rarely take it to action. To some this may be because equality is seen as a zero-sum game. Even the newly rich have trouble being accepted into the fold because these neophytes lack the DNA to do so.

Pleasantville is characteristic of the middle class subservience to that high society world. Coats and ties, dresses, and polished leather shoes were appropriate for meeting with the mayor, going out, attending the prom, going to church, and attending college football games. In fact, fraternities and sororities of the era advocated a life of wine and cheese, despite the fact that they were drinking beer. Middle class boys who joined Sigma Chi would grow up to become corporate officers. The differences in informality can be seen in a picture of before and after the cultural revolution (see Table 2).

Table 2

Cultural Changes 1950-1970

Cultural Concept	ca. 1950	ca. 1970	Event/Counter-Culture
Music	"Pop" music	Rock, rhythm & blues	Elvis; radio stations playing "mixed" formats
	Sinatra, Bennett, Clooney; Paige, Mathis; violins	Drifters; Beatles; Elvis; Rolling Stones; electric guitars; saxophones; Country music	Woodstock; Motor City music
Sex	Marital only; No use of sexual terms; birth control through rhythm method only	Pre-marital; extra-marital; condoms; birth control pills; abortions; homosexuality;	Development and sale of the pill; Kinsey research; Masters & Johnson research; <i>Peyton Place</i> , <i>Playboy</i> ; development of R-ratings in mainstream film
Language	Limited use of slang; no cursing	Increased slang; increased cursing in media	Federal Communications Commission (FCC) lessens restrictions; development of cable television
Fashion	Formal; informal; restrictions on clothing	Ties become less important; short shorts; mini-skirts; less wearing of suits	

These popular television programs omitted the more negative parts of "real" life such as the threat of nuclear annihilation, the impact of the selective service system, and politicians' indiscretions; instead, they portrayed "the best" of America during the time. This idealized, mythic culture provided the backdrop for *real* people and their ideals.

In the real world of the 50s, there were certainly extramarital affairs, alcoholism, and abortions, just as there had been for centuries. This establishment ("real") culture, at the time, appeared willing to, at least, *pretend* that such "anti-social" behaviors were, in fact, anti-social. As a result, these inappropriate behaviors were kept as "hidden" as possible; some might say hypocritically so. Those who engaged in aberrant behaviors tried to keep their transgressions as secretive as possible. Among public figures, sexual situations and alcoholism were kept quiet for decades.

Beginnings of the Sexual Revolution

One of the more obvious concerns of the establishment was sexual behavior. Parents did not want their daughters to have sex until they were married, but more importantly, they did not want their daughters to be known as pregnant until they were married. Among the conservatives, interracial sex may have been considered worse than the other possibilities. Sexual behavior of those in power was kept under cover by journalists and colleagues when they knew it was taking place. Public embarrassment might have been the worst thing that could happen to these government officials.

Wayne Hays, a Democratic Congressman from Ohio, had been in office since 1948. In 1976, the *Washington Post* broke a news report stating that Hays had engaged in an affair with a former secretary, Elizabeth Ray. Hays hired Ray and, according to her, soon after gave her a raise to be a staff member of the House Administration Committee for two years and to serve as his mistress. Perhaps the most damaging part of the story was how Hays described her qualifications for the position in the first place. Ray admitted that she could not type, file, or even answer the telephone. To make matters worse, after the scandal, Ray appeared in *Playboy* magazine several times.

Wilbur Mills, a Democratic Congressman from Arkansas had been a member of the House of Representatives since 1939. Although his drinking habits were well known to his legislative colleagues and to the press, nothing about this behavior had been reported in the media. When the U.S. Park Police stopped him while driving his car in 1974, they found Mills intoxicated. A scuffle erupted between the Congressman and a stripper from Argentina, whose stage name was Fanne Foxe. Nevertheless, Mills was re-elected, but when he later appeared on stage with Foxe, he was forced to resign. In Mills' case, it is doubtful that any of this would have been reported had he not been stopped by the police. During their time in office, neither Franklin Roosevelt nor John F. Kennedy had their indiscretions reported in the national media. In essence, journalists accepted a code of silence on public figures' aberrant behaviors unless it became part of the public record.

In Pleasantville, the topic of sex was taboo. It was a "hush, hush" topic. In Boston, in the real world, John Rock and his colleagues had a vision that would affect procreation and sexual behavior. They invented the birth control pill, and it was approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) in 1960 (Gladwell, 2009, pp. 101-125). From a Pleasantville perspective, the idea of the pill was bad enough, but the technology to produce it was even worse. It was not long before teenage girls and married women could purchase pills on their own, without parental or spousal permission. Of course, religious people were opposed to the new invention. Conservatives anticipated the negative repercussions of technological change. There could also be unintended consequences. Change was a double-edged sword.

In academia, the concept and practice of sex received considerable publicity and controversy after two research teams published books on the topic (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, 1953; Masters & Johnson, 1963).¹ Both the Kinsey Team, at Indiana University, and the Masters and Johnson Team, in St. Louis, wrote that what Pleasantville considered unusual or deviant was much more the norm than had been

¹ Alfred Kinsey (1953), a zoologist at Indiana University, interviewed hundreds of men and women for his books on human sexuality. While his work received substantial criticism, it received less than his successors because it was based solely on interviews. Masters and Johnson began their work at Washington University in St. Louis and later was continued as their independent work. Between 1957 and 1965 they undertook almost 700 observations of laboratory subjects who were engaged in various sexual activities.

previously known, which generated additional controversy. The juxtaposition of the pill in 1960 and Masters and Johnson's work in 1963 were largely part of the beginning of what was known as "sexual revolution". Of course, the women's liberation movement was a significant factor in allowing women to control their own bodies and sexual freedom was part of that ideology.

In society, these academic publications may have had less impact than the upstart popularity of *Playboy* magazine that Hugh Hefner published beginning in 1953. In film, *Peyton Place* began the showing of nudity in mainstream movies. What had been considered deviant was becoming the norm. The "formality of sex" as a church-sanctioned ritual of married couples for procreation was challenged by the new, ambiguous norms arising from academia and popular literature.

Pleasantville, the 50s, and the 60s

Pleasantville was an imaginary suburb that created an ideal type.² The town might be described as a "pre-change" community, that was portrayed in the film as black-and-white, which is no accident. The rules for behavior were established, and there was little room for ambiguity. Perhaps the rules were there to ensure proper behavior, but the rules were also to separate those in "white hats" from those in "black hats". Right was right, and wrong was wrong. For the most part, these rules were axiological, dealing with ethics (morals) and aesthetics. In such a black-and-white world, there are rule makers and rule followers as well as rule breakers.

Although the rules were hypothetically for everyone, they were based on the ideals of those in power. The few in power established and enforced the rules. Without enforcement in each individual case, ambiguity might occur. Those who did not abide by the rules were considered to be in a separate category, and in Pleasantville the categories were mostly based on "class", not necessarily economic but certainly social. As the audience learned throughout the film, the perception of one's class might change with each individual rules violation.

When a rule was violated, the perpetrator could be easily identified, as was the case with Wayne Hays and Wilbur Mills. But in Pleasantville, the rules violators were identified by the violators' worlds changing from black-and-white to full color. In its early stages, this social change took place person-to-person. If violators were not punished, ambiguity spread throughout the community, and it became more and more difficult to identify the rule breakers.

As the 60s burst on the scene, along with color television, there were massive attempts to change the political atmosphere. The women's movement, the civil rights movement, and the anti-war movement all were in the direction of political democratization. There was not only a political democratization but also a *cultural democratization*. What the protests did, in addition to their political repercussions, was to generate more *tolerance* in general. Tolerance was associated with less separation between groups as well as less respect for the authority. There was more informality, more freedom, and fewer restrictions on behavior. Political freedom could be equated with individualism and consequently narcissism.

In this paper, we have presented the idealistic perspective of black-and-white television, the culture that *actually* existed at the time, and the counter-culture that displaced it, largely based on what innovations and

² According to Gould and Cobb (1964) an ideal type is not ideal in an ethical sense nor is it average in a statistical sense nor is it in the sense of a common denominator. Rather it is ideal in a logical sense. It is "an attempt [to make] 'order' reality by isolating, accentuating, and articulating the elements of a recurrent social phenomenon into an internally consistent system of relationships" (p. 311).

media attention precipitated. In the process, we now outline a model of how long-term social change has taken place over the past 60 years. The political movements were taking place in a more obvious fashion, in the streets, in books, in legislation. The cultural revolution needed at least two prerequisites to carry out its mission: transportation and communication.

The Vehicles of Change

In the 50s, there were no interstate highways. A vacation involved driving through community after community, town after town, stop light after stop light, four-way stop sign after stop sign. In some of these more isolated places, the citizens protested interstate highways because the townspeople feared that interstate highways would bring the worst of the worst—new people with new ideas.

In fact, Eisenhower's interstate system did just what the parochials had predicted. Drivers from all over drove from state to state, fairly quickly. The inhabitants of rural towns found themselves meeting and shaking hands with others who spoke with all kinds of accents, American and otherwise. The new transportation system, though, was the mere beginning. The interstate was Eisenhower's "vision".

Once interstate highways were complete, they were supported by franchise service stations and restaurants on the corners of every intersection. They would become the Holiday Inn, McDonald's, Texaco, and Cracker Barrel. In many cases, the businesses were there even *before* the highway was complete. Drivers learned that they could stop at any intersection. "Outsiders" built businesses and moved into towns like Pleasantville. Economically it became less expensive and more efficient to travel because the highways were more efficient.

What the new transportation system did was to provide more information into a black-and-white world. More information meant that rules were more likely to be questioned which created ambiguity. Rule makers were called upon to justify their own behavior. The interstate system was, in many ways, the ground equivalent to television's broadcast system. The on-air broadcast system began providing more information in the fictional world, including "All in the Family", that illustrated weekly the dichotomy of society with Archie Bunker arguing for the establishment and Meathead protesting for the counter culture.

On 50s television, no one cursed. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) opposed the use of "hell", "damn", and many other words that are common on broadcast radio and television today. Rarely was there conflict on these black-and-white programs. The mini-conflicts that did occur illustrated some minor ethical or moral dilemma. Eddie Haskell, the anti-hero of the Cleaver Clan in "Leave It to Beaver" was hardly morally reprehensible. He was just a naughty kid. Otis, the town drunk in "The Andy Griffith Show", was an affable guy who presumably always had good intentions.

The "white hats" were always right in the end. Television's purpose was to make us happy and to give us goals for life. Morally it disposed us to "do the right thing". This was the culture. Pleasantville, in reality, was the culture of the rich and the powerful who were providing the metrics for the middle class, to create what Karl Marx referred to as a false consciousness.

Eventually almost everyone had a television, even the poor. As with the personal computer in the 1980s, television made it seem that inventions and the diffusion of information about them were the driving forces of social change. As Marx wrote in the 19th century, "Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with nature, the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation in his social relations, and the mental conceptions that flow from them" (Marx, 1977, p. 48).

The Established Culture and Pleasantville

In *Pleasantville*, women worked in the home. The “man of the house” came home for lunch hour and returned to work. As the agrarian society was replaced in the new industrial world, the farm bell was replaced by a loud whistle that could be heard all over town—notifying the industrial workers that lunch was over.

The home was a place to eat and sleep. Sex was seen as a method almost exclusively for procreation, and it was only for marital partners *with their own partners*. Even in the media, the husband and wife slept in separate, single beds. Isolation was not only from country to country but even community to community.

In Pleasantville, girls who “got themselves” pregnant in high school were frequently forced to “drop out”. The school system did not want to initiate a contagion of teenage pregnancy. Many school systems refused to hire married women as teachers because they might “get pregnant” [There was virtually no thought that a single woman teacher would get pregnant]. One might think that the advent of the pill would reduce pregnancies, but what it did was to create an argument in favor of premarital sex since the establishment’s primary opposition was that the girl would get pregnant (Ventura, Matthews, & Hamilton, 2001). Initially, the pill encouraged sex. It did not encourage using the pill or marriage. The Pleasantville norms about sex began to shatter.

The answers to teenage pregnancies were adoption (out of town) and illegal abortions. In the case of the highest socio-economic groups, legal abortions were available in other countries.

Media and Community

In Pleasantville, people lived in the same town, even the same house, for decades until retirement or death. They remained in their first job until they retired. They sat on the front porch, and when neighbors walked by on the sidewalks, the neighbors stopped and talked with the porch chair rockers. The discussions were about families and the community. On occasion, the inhabitants of the 1950s world hosted neighborhood barbecues and fish fries for one another. For the most part, entertainment was an outside endeavor.

The children played Little League, and the fathers played softball. There was no alcohol at the games. Friday and Saturday nights were times for such activities. For the children, Saturday was a day for movies in theatres. In many cases, the kids stayed there all day long, from ten in the morning until five o’clock. The films were pro-culture. Westerns and science fiction served as the movies de jour. The good guys in the white hats always won. No blood was shed even after the victim was shot dead as a doornail. Film supported the perfected view of society.

Fashion

Public schools enforced strict dress codes in the 1950s and early 60s. A buttoned shirt and slacks were worn by boys. In addition, the boys had to wear socks, shoes, and a belt. Facial hair and hair length were prescribed by the school as well. Students who wore inappropriate clothing were frequently sent home. In minor cases, such as having one’s shirttail out, the student was allowed to make a correction.

Girls wore dresses. Blue jeans, shorts, backless dresses, low-cut blouses, and short skirts were forbidden. Girls who wore them to school were sent home. Even the “accidental showing” of a bra strap was condemned.

The Counter-Culture: A Model for Change

A counter-culture, rule breaking approach inherently brought about a vision of a more democratic culture. As such the formality of the establishment was replaced by the informality of the new culture. The early 1960s

ushered in a time for informality to replace the formal structures of the establishment. Television receivers quickly became necessities, not a luxuries. The pervasiveness of the visual medium created the television as a vehicle for social change. Viewers talked nearly as much about the soap operas, situation comedies, and quiz shows that they watched as they talked about their neighbors and co-workers. As with most successful technology, television producers realized that their success depended on numbers. While the television business could be operated by the elite, they needed a mass audience. Television was, perhaps, the first in a series of electronic devices that would change the world they people viewed as part of the society.

Conceptualizers and Technologists

Certainly Karl Marx was right about some of the repercussions of industrialization. Many workers moved from the farms to the cities for new employment that previously was non-existent. Producing steel and building railroads became significant aspects of the economy. To some extent, at least in industrial areas, workdays eventually changed to eight-hour days, as opposed to the agrarians' dawn-to-dusk schedule. The decrease in workdays created more leisure time. Virtually no one worked on the weekends. In small town America, many shops also closed on Wednesday afternoons.

Capitalism increased the size of the leisure class, but now leisure itself was becoming more democratized and commodified (Veblen, 1934). Although television was "free", the sales force through commercials was in the house anytime the visual medium was operating. Later, of course, cable television created an opportunity for the media to charge customers for the content as well.

Marshall McLuhan, a communication critic in the middle of the middle 20th century, agreed with Marx that technology was important (McLuhan, 1964). The two agreed that technological change precedes social change. However, McLuhan believed that there was a step before the aforementioned Marxist dialectic. That is, McLuhan felt that artists were the first leaders of social change. By artists, we might consider painters, sculptors, musicians, writers, and the like. But artists were those with vision. For example, President Eisenhower with his interstate plan, could be considered an artist, in the sense of visualizing an idea.

The steps between an idea and its implementation vary in time depending upon such factors as the complexity of the idea, the cost of implementing it, and the acceptance by the public as users of the idea. Some ideas simply do not work. Gas refrigerators were not accepted by consumers, although they still exist. The eight-track audio recorder/player had a short life. In that case, though, the eight-track served as the predecessor to the auto-reversing cassette. Prior to the eight-track, the user had to turn the tape over to play the other side. Eventually music was available in a digital, compact disk. Music was portable. The "boom box" allowed listeners portable their music. Such a notion was the beginning of phases leading to the I-pod.

When the idea works, the time transformation between the concept and reality also varies because of the gap between the conceptualizers and the technologists. The idea people are the *conceptualizers*. Of course, it took centuries for Leonardo's helicopter sketches to be produced by Sikorsky. Sikorsky was the *technologist*, who implemented Da Vinci's helicopter (Rogers, 2003).

Minor changes in ideas hardly affect culture. For example, the move from a "straight stick" automobile transmission to an automatic one changed little else other than simplifying driving. Other inventions and ideas change culture dramatically. The change from a massive room-sized computer to a personal computer was certainly a more dramatic version of technological change.

Technologists to Adopters³

In large measure, the front porch rocker chairs were eliminated because of the inventions and mass acceptance of the television and the air conditioner. Both items were expensive in the beginning. For the middle class, the only air conditioner in the house was a window unit, probably located in the master bedroom and rarely used except to cool the room for sleep. The television was in the den or the living room. What both did, though, was to move people inside the house. With fewer sidewalks, the front porch conversation became virtually extinct.

Additionally, the door-to-door salesperson had seen better days. The 9-to-5 workday created more leisure time, but it also created more jobs. More women joined the workforce. In addition to the traditional jobs of teachers and nurses, women became professors, engineers, lawyers, physicians, retail workers, dentists, and veterinarians. Thus, a typical woman customer was not there when the salesman stopped by during the day. Even the Avon Lady began making appointments to assure that the “lady of the house” would be home.

Consumers are the *adopters*. With each new concept and technical implementation, social changes begin to occur. As with the Pleasantville community, social changes do not occur with the flash of an eye. They occur one person or one family at a time.

Only in cases of healthcare did massive changes occur immediately. Jonas Salk’s polio vaccine was readily accepted by the majority of people. Polio had been the scourge of diseases in the 1950s. In a sense, it was worse than a disease that may cause death because it frequently paralyzed people from six to sixty. The incapacities of individuals and the pictures of iron lungs emphasized the problem. Several of the ideas were trampling on the sexual mores and the aesthetic appreciation of mainstream rule makers. They included music, language, and fashion.

Rock and Roll and Appropriate Behavior

Elvis Presley, that name alone produced negative responses from the older generation in the 1950s. What was there about Elvis that was so bad? His music stimulated his listeners sensually and sexually. The Glen Miller and the Frank Sinatra generation was appalled by the rhythm of the music as well as Elvis’ physical “gyrations” of his hips. In the late 1950s, Elvis represented the counter-culture in music. What Elvis did was to make music less formal. He did the same thing that Sinatra did to Glenn Miller and what Glenn Miller did to the classics of Beethoven and Mozart. From generation to generation, it seems, the *conceptualizers create a new music that democratizes its audience, helps create a counter-culture, and informalizes the previous culture*.

In Elvis’ case, though, he did more. The music that he played and sang was a blend of hillbilly (country and western) and rhythm and blues (African-American). Crossing that line was considered by the establishment as a mixture of lower-class “white” music and lower-class “black” music. It should not be surprising that Elvis created more informality in society. Accepting lower socio-economic values into mainstream society was the beginning of the end of the post-war culture.

Elvis wore open-necked shirts (sometimes with chest hair showing) and his hair appeared greasy. He was exactly the kind of a guy that no father ever wanted his daughter to meet. With Elvis’ ultimate popularity, radio disc jockeys not only began playing Elvis’ mixture of music but also the solid rhythm and blues played and

³ Rogers (2003) wrote that there are five (5) types of adopters, who are essentially the ultimate consumers. They are (1) the innovators (2) the early adopters (3) the early majority (4) the late majority, and (5) The laggards. The categories are based on how early or how late adopters use the innovation.

sung by black artists. These included such notables as James Brown, Little Richard, Otis Redding and slightly later the Motown sound of the Miracles, Marvin Gaye, and the Supremes. Those radio station managers were not as concerned with whether the artists were black, but whether they *sounded* black. Even a station that played little rock music could probably get away with playing the music of Johnny Mathis, Brook Benton, or Nat King Cole.

Television programs like “American Bandstand” hosted guest singers of both races and both sexes. It was not long before there were black and white teenage dancers on the Philadelphia-based television program, which was broadcast nationally just after school was out, five days a week. When blacks and whites began dancing together, all of the concern about Elvis was reinforced in the minds of the conservatives.

Adopters Versus Politics

Just as the mayor of Pleasantville attempted to counteract change, politicians frequently felt obligated to try to block cultural transformations. Politicians, it seems, can either support change with laws or try to prevent the new behaviors by creating laws. In either case, politicians are typically the last to get involved in cultural change.

There are examples of successes and failures in this regard. Since 1923, women have attempted to amend the Constitution of the United States with an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which in some ways might be considered comparable to the set of constitutional amendments created in the middle of the 19th century to equalize the races. The process for doing so has undergone a number of iterations, the most recent of which was in 1979. To this day, there have not been enough state legislatures to pass it so that it becomes part of the Constitution.

There have always been individuals who accepted elements of a counter-culture. Whites owned blues music. Many preferred less-than-classic art forms. But these were the early adopters. The beatnik crowd of artsy individuals wore clothing that was hardly establishment. One could be an early adopter for a significant amount of time before others adopted the same ideas. While the beatnik generation was hardly a generation, the hippie generation later made substantial inroads into the common culture. The later adopters of pop music were enlisted by the popular media. Local AM stations began playing the music all day long for at least six days a week. Some “compromised” by offering rock in the afternoons, even on Sundays. Certainly major radio stations in large urban markets played rock all the time, even at night when teenagers were driving around the local hangouts.

Language

In black-and-white Pleasantville, cursing was seen as inappropriate in public. The extension was that it was inappropriate on radio and television. The first significant changes took place when cable television stations tested the grounds for cursing. Movies on cable were not censored in any way. Step-by-step broadcast stations began testing the language barrier, beginning by “bleeping out” the cursing. The concern for the establishment was that such language was aberrant to society—at least the society of the rule makers. In some ways, of course, the language taboo was associated with the sex taboo. Anti-war groups, in particular, utilized language as a means of gaining attention and forcing the establishment to listen to them, if just to complain.

Fashion

With the counter culture, women started wearing pants suits instead of dresses or skirted suits. It was part of the liberation movement to illustrate that men would no longer determine the dress code for women. Men

also began wearing jeans instead of suits. The concept of apparel being associated with one's socio-economic status or job title was no longer the case.

Millenia: The Extension of the Counter Culture of the 60s and 70s

Incidences of increased informality are numerous. Perhaps one of the most famous such incidents was when members of the Northwestern University women's lacrosse team wore flip-flops to a meeting with President George W. Bush (Orlando, 2005). McConville (1994) noted that, in the 1990s, there was a growing use of casual clothing by workers in major corporations; Mannix (1995) attributed the phenomenon to the popularity of "casual Friday", a feature that gradually expanded to a five-day work week in many organizations.

A similar increase in informality is apparent in modern church services, where congregations (and sometimes the ministers) wear casual clothing (Meltzer, 2011). Some churches offer a "come-as-you-are" service to encourage casual clothing (Henderson & McGough, 1998). Marty (1995) argued that the widespread use of casual dress in religious services has changed the traditional Easter Parade of nice clothing to one of a "grunge parade" (p. 495). Gustafsson (1966) attributed the increased use of casual clothing to increased television viewing on the morning prior to attending the church service, resulting in less time to dress in a more formal manner. Goldman (1991) attributed the phenomenon to an increase in the number of informal worship locations, such meetings held in the homes of individual members.

Still, overuse of casual clothing can be a problem. Maruani et al. (2013) noted the physicians who dress casually degrade their credibility with patients. Similarly, Chung et al. (2012) reported that doctors who dressed in a casual manner were rated as having less empathy for the patient than those dressed in a traditional white coat. Saiki (2013) reported that job seekers who dress casually for an employment interview hurt their chances of landing the job.

One factor influencing the growing use of informality in today's society appears to be the Internet. Manjoo (2014) described in as an increase in "online incivility" (p. B1). Suler (2004) argued that such behavior was a byproduct of what he called the "online disinhibition effect", i.e., the idea that people believe they write messages in cyberspace that they would not say to one another.

Another factor appears to be younger generations. Kati (2014) argued that casual styles are being constantly re-defined by college students. Casual dress seems to be particularly popular among students at historically black universities, leading administrators at such schools to take steps to counter what they view as an excessive wearing of T-shirts, flip-flops, or baggy pants on campus (Bartlett, 2009).

In addition to dress, though, the informality continues with language and inappropriate behavior. In music, inappropriate language began with some protest music during the Viet Nam War but certainly was compounded with the lyrics in rap music. Thus the conservative notion that democracy leads to opening the "flood gates" of social "disorder" appears to be the case. What this disorder means is that there can no longer be a small group of people determining either the politics of a society or its cultural norms. The question might remain as to whether this is a good thing. But in a democracy, we decided a few hundred years ago that it is. In any case, it appears that we cannot return despite the wishes of those who would like to see it. There is no more black-and-white television.

Conclusion

As more and more individuals in society obtain their political rights (voting, running for office, etc.), they

create greater informality in society. Perhaps it is here that we get the term hoi polloi. Although the hoi polloi might irritate the establishment because of their voting ignorance, it is usually the resulting informality that causes greater resistance. Put another way, democracy results in freedom. When people secure the right to vote, they have a wider range in the freedom of speech, the freedom of expression, and the freedom of change. Pleasantville will not be back, at least in our culture, and the color televised version of the later 20th century is likely to lead to even more freedom and faster change. Driving progress in reverse gear seems impossible, at least improbable. Returning to the values, mores, and freedoms of the 1950s is unlikely. There is no more black and white.

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