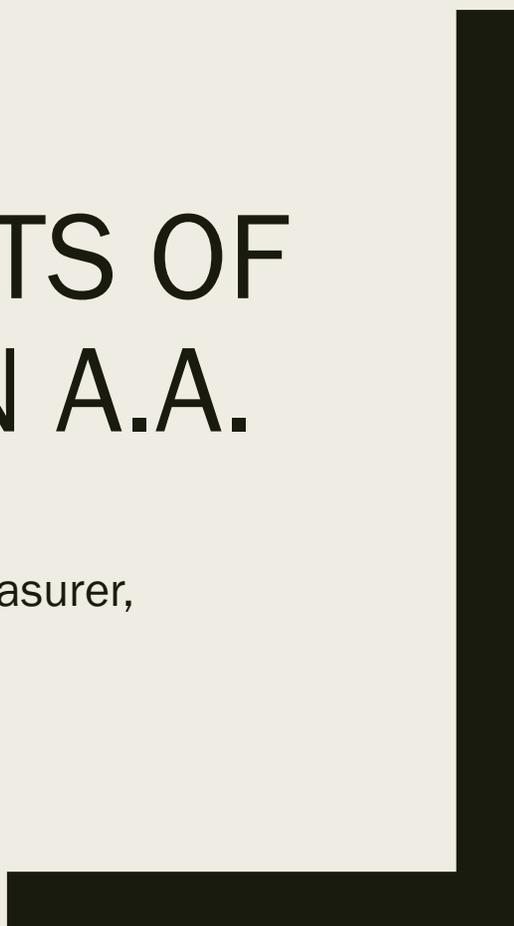




CULTURAL EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY ON A.A.

Brian P.

A.A. Member & Panel 69 Accounts Treasurer,
Area 05 Southern California

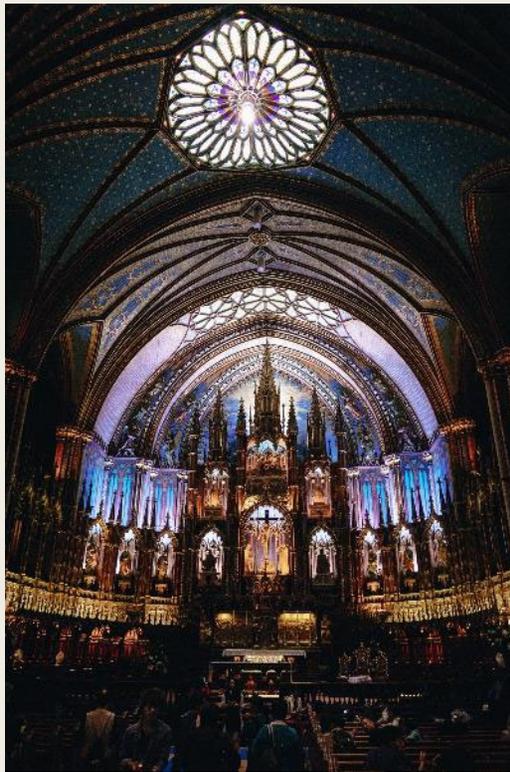


CULTURE



凱旋新橋ステーション御着之図 Illustration of the Arrival of the Emperor at Shinbashi Station Following a Victory (Gaisen Shinbashi stēshon gochaku no zu), 1895, Kobayashi Kiyochika

CULTURE



CULTURE



CULTURE



CULTURE



CULTURE



CULTURE



CULTURE



CULTURE (*classic definition*)

“Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”

- *Sir Edward Tylor, 1871*

CULTURE (*simpler definition*)

“A general definition of culture that can be applied to all cultures is patterns of behavior that are common within a particular population of people.”

http://wikieducator.org/Cultural_Anthropology/Anth_Perspective/Key_Concepts

CULTURE (*uber-simplified*)

“culture... refers to how we live
our daily lives”

Michael Buckland, Information and Society

CULTURAL CHANGE

The last two decades have brought significant changes to our culture:

- Ubiquity of internet-enabled mobile devices
- Technological immersion: deeper embeddedness in technological systems
- An explosion of new ways of doing things:
 - *Conducting business (purchases, transactions, types of services)*
 - *Interacting with each other socially*
 - *Sharing, discovering, and consuming information*

THE QUESTION:

How is _____
A TECHNOLOGY

changing the way that people

_____, and
SOMETHING PEOPLE DO

how might this affect A.A.?

WHY SHOULD WE ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION?

- The advent of new technologies might be creating significant culture gaps between A.A.s of today and A.A.s of the past.
- There might be things that we do in A.A. that do not make sense in the context of today's changed world.
- We might be keeping traditions and/or resisting progress in ways that hinder our effectiveness in reaching the suffering alcoholics of today.
- *Even if these things turn out not to be so, we would be better for having examined this and could feel more confident about the things we are doing and the ways we are doing them.*

WHY SHOULD *WE* ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION?

- Perhaps as A.A. members who are technologists, we are in a good position to better inform and lead our Fellowship in matters of cultural change brought on by technology.



WHY SHOULD **WE** ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION?

- Or maybe, as technologists, we are too close to the action to see the implications of what we are involved with. Maybe we need this exercise more than others to ground ourselves.



WHY SHOULD WE ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION?

“We live in an era of change. Our Twelve Steps probably won’t change; the Traditions not at all likely. But our manner of communication, our manner of organizing ourselves for function, for service – let us hope that this goes on changing for the better, forever. There is a very natural resistance we have towards change. . . . I think we ought to stay open-minded on this matter of change. We reference the past and its lessons for so long as those teachings work. When they don’t, we readapt and we reshift. That has been our history.”

- *Bill W., speaking on the topic “A.A. in an Era of Change” at the General Service Conference, 1960*

HOW SHALL WE PROCEED?

- Let's explore this together – *participate!*
- Let's allow inconsistencies and contradictions to exist; the point of this isn't consensus.
- Let's give ourselves permission:

“My feeling is that the more we insist on strict conformity with these Steps and Traditions, the more resistance against them we create. But if these Steps and Traditions do reflect accurately what our experience is, the alcoholic – no matter whether he be Swedish, Hindu, Chinese or what – will eventually adopt the principles that produce the best result for him and his group. And if these are correctly stated, he will adopt these. And if any improvements are to come, well, who knows? We may get them from anyone”
– *Bill W. speaking on the topic “Variations in the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions” at the General Service Conference, 1953*
- *Let's begin!*

SOCIAL MEDIA & ANONYMITY

How is social media
A TECHNOLOGY

changing the way that people

think about anonymity, and
SOMETHING PEOPLE DO

how might this affect A.A.?

SOCIAL MEDIA & ANONYMITY

Social Media: everyone is doing it...

- 3.2 billion social media users worldwide, representing around 42% of the population
- Use of social media by generation the U.S.:
 - 48.2% of Baby Boomers (ages 55-73)
 - 77.5% of Generation X (ages 39-54)
 - 90.4% of Millennials (ages 23-38)
- Globally, digital consumers are now spending an average of 2 hours and 22 minutes per day on social networks and messaging.

SOCIAL MEDIA & ANONYMITY

Newer generations have never lived without it.

- 81% of children under age two already have some kind of digital profile.
- “...the trend is increasing for a child’s digital birth to coincide or even pre-date their real birth date.”
- In a 2010 study, 1 in 4 babies had sonogram photos posted of themselves online before they were born.

SOCIAL MEDIA & ANONYMITY

- 63rd General Service Conference affirmed that Internet, social media and all forms of public communications are implicit in Tradition 11.
- The internet of today is not the same as press, radio, TV and films (PRTF) of yesterday.
- PRTF was never used as a medium for regular people to connect with each other on a daily (hourly?) basis. In this respect, the internet is more like what the telephone was to past generations.
- Telling a teenager to be anonymous on the internet could be like telling a teen in the '80s to be anonymous on the telephone.
- Anonymity is a bigger challenge and a bigger departure from the mainstream now more than ever before

5G NETWORKS & INTEGRATION

How will 5G networks
A TECHNOLOGY

change the way that people

integrate w/ technology, and
SOMETHING PEOPLE DO

how might this affect A.A.?

5G NETWORKS & INTEGRATION

- 5G is the newest generation of cellular network technology, supplanting 4G LTE
- 5G networks started rolling out in April 2019
- 10 times faster theoretical speeds (vs LTE)
- Latency < 1 millisecond
- Support for 100 times more connected devices and 1000 times bandwidth per unit area
- 90% power consumption reduction
- Better connections & mobility: Beam forming & tracking, better handoffs from system to system

5G NETWORKS & INTEGRATION

Will break through current limitations of mobile connectivity and enable:

- Massive IoT (Internet of Things)
- Tactile internet
- Augmented reality
- Critical communications use cases:
 - Autonomous & remote driving of vehicles
 - Healthcare monitoring systems
 - Industrial robotics & drones

5G NETWORKS & INTEGRATION

The end result:

- More data generated by and collected from our everyday activities.
- Things around us will be more intelligent, predicting our behaviors, and reacting to and guiding our actions.
- We will be even more deeply embedded in technology.
- Who will take interest in our patterns as recovered or active alcoholics? What will Google's Recovery Resource Hub version 2.0 be like?

A.I. & INTERACTION

How is artificial intelligence

A TECHNOLOGY

changing the way that people

interact w/ people, places & things, and

SOMETHING PEOPLE DO

how might this affect A.A.?

A.I. & INTERACTION

A.I. is everywhere, and you're already using it.

- 4 billion devices carrying A.I.-powered voice assistants this year
- Spam filters, predictive text
- Voice recognition, photo recognition
- Curated news feeds, social media, targeted ads
- Suggested purchases, friends, articles...
- Behavior prediction and situational analysis
- Autonomous robots, chatbots, smart assistants

Source: <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/ai-revolution-infographic/>

A.I. & INTERACTION

A.I. is trending towards explosive growth.

- A.I. software market is projected to grow from \$1.4 billion in 2016 to \$59.8 billion in 2025
- 1 billion A.I.-enabled video cameras will monitor cities worldwide by next year
- In the U.S., \$10 billion in venture capital is being invested in A.I.
- Chinese A.I. patents grew by 190% in 5 years
- The U.K. government is financially supporting 1,000 A.I. PhDs

A.I. & INTERACTION

Medical professionals, courts, law enforcement agencies, social services, businesses, entrepreneurs, scammers -

- Who will take interest in helping alcoholics in good faith?
- Who will commoditize and exploit the still-suffering alcoholic, the alcoholic seeking help, the recovered alcoholic?
- What will be invested? What will be created?
- Our Fellowship will need our vigilance to sort out who might be new friends of A.A. and who might do us harm.

DIGITAL MEDIA & LEARNING

How is digital media

A TECHNOLOGY

changing the way that people

learn, and

SOMETHING PEOPLE DO

how might this affect A.A.?

DIGITAL MEDIA & LEARNING

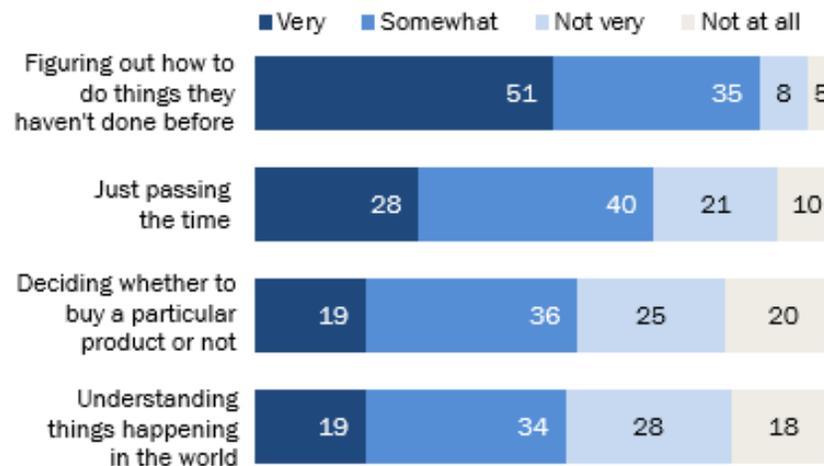
Youtube statistics from 2015:

- Searches related to “how-to” grew 70% yr over yr.
- 67% of millennials agree that they can find a YouTube video on *anything* they want to learn.
- By May 2015, 100M hours of how-to content had been watched in North America in 2015
- Of smartphone users, 91% turn to their devices for ideas while completing a task

DIGITAL MEDIA & LEARNING

One-in-five YouTube users say it is very important for helping them understand things that are happening in the world

% of U.S. adults who use YouTube who say the site is ___ important when it comes to ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 29-June 11, 2018.

"Many Turn to YouTube for Children's Content, News, How-To Lessons"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

DIGITAL MEDIA & LEARNING

- Can we better utilize channels like YouTube for Public Information?
- Video versions of pamphlets
- Detailed information about how A.A. works
- Provide content for deep learning and deep exploration of Alcoholics Anonymous for anyone who wants to know?
- Provide content for A.A. members, e.g. *The 12 Concepts Animated*

OTHER OBSERVED CULTURAL CHANGES

Generation Z...

- prefers mediated interactions over person-to-person interactions.
- are less sociable, experience more social anxiety.
- have more difficulty empathizing.
- *need more love?*

THE QUESTION:

How is _____
A TECHNOLOGY

changing the way that people

_____, and
SOMETHING PEOPLE DO

how might this affect A.A.?

TIMELESSNESS

- Definition of “timeless”: not affected by the passage of time or changes in fashion.

TIMELESSNESS

- All our efforts to reach out, no matter how novel or technological, have the goal of bringing the still-suffering alcoholic into our rooms, so that they can talk in-person to other alcoholics, hear experience, strength, and hope transmitted through oral tradition, and so that they can belong to our group.



- As real and genuine human connection becomes harder and harder to find in larger society, what A.A. has to offer the suffering alcoholic could become increasingly important.

LOVE IS THE ANSWER

- The most timeless of our assets is love.
- “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. . .”
- *In all that we do, let love guide us, and things will be okay, if not great.*



**THANK
YOU!**