

The Unsuspected Influence of Change

IN NO OTHER period of world history did mankind witness as many drastic changes as have been experienced by people now living. These changes influence our lives in more ways than we may realize.

A dozen years ago Alvin Toffler turned out a book called "Future Shock," in which he wrote about shattering stress and disorientation induced in individuals by subjecting them to too much change in too short a time.

Well, the future in which this kind of shock was anticipated has arrived. It's here and people are looking for ways to escape the subtle influences that surround us. That may be why our nation is drowning in alcohol, getting high on dope and moral decay is eroding civilization.

We turn to fads in clothing, automobiles, diets, houses, education, politics and exercise to try to relieve confusion that results from things we may not understand.

What is called "the herd instinct" causes us to swarm after those we

consider to be leaders. Any sports figure, movie or TV star, political hack or special interest demonstrator may qualify in this category. The public isn't careful in selections.

Businessmen also follow the crowd in advertising slogans, computerizing operations and promoting sales.

The communications media report more news, gossip and propaganda in greater detail than ever before, but not always objectively. The founder of Accuracy in Media Inc. recently told the Oklahoma City Rotary Club how certain newspaper and television interests initiated false accusations in order to undermine public confidence in our military establishment.

A survey of national editors and reporters showed an overwhelmingly negative attitude toward religion, which influences what they write.

TV viewers sometimes complain of commercials in bad taste but may be oblivious to program influ-

ences that depict adultery, crime, bigotry, alcohol, drugs and homosexuality as normal living.

As one observer commented, there may be one channel showing "The Ten Commandments" and 10 others showing people breaking most of them.

In a book published this summer titled "Children Without Childhood," Marie Winn writes that the typical fifth grader not only is aware of sex and violence on adult levels, but also has precocious knowledge of injustice, fear of death, adult frailty and cruelty, political corruption and economic instability.

To a greater extent than we may realize, our lives are influenced by what goes on in major political/population centers. Walt Garrison, well-known athlete now promoting the sale of snuff, says: "If you can sell New Yorkers' snuff, it's a piece of cake elsewhere."

We ought to know who and what is influencing us.