

The Broken Circle and Integration of Youthful Narrative Perspectives in Mainstream Media

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Abstract: *In recent years, the rapid development of technology has provided a powerful impetus for the deep integration of media. The Internet wave has pushed young people to the forefront of the digital age, leading the narrative system of mainstream media to adopt a more youthful approach. From the perspective of youth narratives, this paper explores the disruption and integration paths of mainstream media cultural communication. By using people as mediums to break down discourse barriers within information cocoons, we aim to dissolve cultural and communication barriers. Rooted deeply in the excellent traditional Chinese culture, we leverage technology to lead the breakthrough out of isolation. Defensively, we soften the macro-narrative to avoid confrontational interpretations. By forging the soul with literature, we strive to achieve the modern awakening and restoration of traditional culture. Utilizing the virtual to harness the real, we break physical space limitations through technology, creating a fusion of virtual and reality. By generating beauty through harmony, we promote civilizational exchanges and mutual understanding, incorporating metaphorical culture to resonate with the pulse of the times.*

Keywords: *mainstream media; youth station; breaking the circle; convergence*

1. Introduction

In recent years, the rapid development of Internet technology in the information age has propelled the media field toward a new communication paradigm characterized by multiple convergence paths, multi-dimensional parallelism, and the synergy of various subjects. Mainstream media disseminates core values through youthful expression. It contributes to constructing mainstream communication platforms by leveraging the strengths of youth. Through resonant content, it connects with young audiences. It leads the development of new trends in youth communication with youthful ideals. It also promotes the construction of a new public opinion environment centered on disseminating mainstream values.

2. The Construction and Innovation of Youthful Narratives in Mainstream Media

Media convergence has emerged in the digital era of diversified communication methods and channels, gradually forming a fusion of traditional and new media. This fusion realizes the interoperability and integration of different media, allowing them to complement and coexist, providing a richer cultural exchange platform for youth groups.

2.1. Creating for building: trends in innovation in youth-orientated narrative systems

As early as the establishment of the capitalist factory system, young people, as "growing workers," were assigned a political significance that transcended mere age representation.^[1] They became a political force uniquely revolutionary, transitional, and futuristic, as well as a romantic, pioneering, and inheriting social force.^[2] Nowadays, the rise of the Internet has provided a powerful impetus for the deep integration of media, pushing young people to the forefront of the digital age. The power of youth should be considered, and the narrative system of mainstream media is gradually evolving towards a youthful trend.

The national mainstream media have consistently adhered to innovation while maintaining correctness in their communication efforts, constantly pushing forward and keeping pace with the times, resonating with contemporary characteristics. For example, the theme of the latest CCTV host competition is "Struggle for Me, New Voice Blooming." Mainstream media focus on creating youthful media communication, expanding youthful international perspectives, and elaborating on how

individuals should contribute to the construction and development of the times from innovative perspectives. The presenter serves as the people's voice, and by engaging directly with the public and experiencing their realities, they can effectively tell grounded Chinese stories.

Under the youth narrative system, contestants have demonstrated strong abilities to express mainstream discourse and emphasize the main theme of "innovation." They have adapted to changes in the context of the times, effectively promoting the program's comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and integrated innovative development. This has led to continuously creating the program's depth of value, humanity, and precision in filming.

Regardless of changes in communication modes and media forms, the audience's demand for both the warmth and height of film viewing remains constant. Media professionals in the new era must stay current, understand media changes, and raise social awareness. They must continuously innovate the paradigm of content expression, adapt functions to different roles, and embark on a youthful path of high-quality development.

2.2. Practising to go far: Mainstream value communication in the context of youthful narratives

With the advancement of digital media technology and the continuous expansion of public discourse space, mainstream media must focus on narrative space architecture, narrative discourse reform, narrative mode innovation, and narrative logic closure. This will help build a new context of the youth narrative where young people are actively present and influential, promoting the convergence and reconstruction of the new ecological pattern of the mainstream public opinion arena.

Media discourse plays a crucial and decisive role in shaping public opinion, and the value orientation of the presenter, as the main carrier of media discourse, directly affects the direction of information and public sentiment. Therefore, it is essential to remove falsehoods, prioritize truth, and properly position information to enhance the dissemination and deep penetration of mainstream values in the information age. By allowing the "new youth" to lead new trends of thought and innovate new language, communicators can guide the audience's thinking through positive engagement in the mainstream ideological and public opinion arena constructed by the media. This will unite people's hearts and efforts, leading to resonance between the transmitter and receiver.

Furthermore, layered profiling and precise policy across different areas of material selection can form a comprehensive chain, pointing to the narrative context. Therefore, by adhering to mainstream value leadership, programs can construct a long-term communication mechanism that truly stands, spreads, and endures.

2.3. Knowing by the Microcosm: Multiple Styles of Expression in the Narrative Architecture of Youthisation

Western journalism categorizes news content into "soft news," which includes human interest stories, social events, cultural and entertainment news, and "hard news," which encompasses more serious topics like politics, economics, and science and technology. As the primary audience for various programs, young people who are active in thought and trend-oriented drive mainstream media to innovate youthful expressions continuously. Through diverse language styles and expressions by hosts, major mainstream programs find small incision paths in grand narratives, enabling "hard news" to achieve a "soft landing." Concurrently, they refine the emotional depth within entertainment news, giving "soft news" a "hard treatment," thereby creating a refreshing youth narrative structure.

The narrative expression styles of mainstream station hosts can be broadly categorized into three types: empathetic expression that moves people emotionally and shortens the distance, heartwarming story-type expression that sets up suspense and attracts attention, and witty, humorous expressions that enliven the atmosphere and increase engagement. This multi-style youth narrative communication uses small cuts to explore big narratives, unlocking the "internet celebrity traffic" genetic code. This approach brings in traffic while resonating emotionally with the audience and utilizes the host's coding function to deliver profound information, elevating the subject matter. This effectively enhances the media's influence and guiding power, transforming "internet celebrity traffic" into long-lasting audience retention.

The transformation of mainstream media from "traditional" to "new" is arduous. The construction of new mainstream media must continually adapt to the communication model iterations brought about by the new technological revolution and maintain a sense of "youthfulness."^[3] By employing the "big narrative - small incision - big feelings" approach, the media can overcome communication dilemmas

and shape a new pattern of mainstream public opinion.

3. Breaking out of the circle of youthful narrative expression in the mainstream court of public opinion

From the perspective of youth in mainstream media, breaking the circle involves softening macro-narratives to avoid confrontational decoding. This technique also aims for physical presence and emotional resonance with the audience. The mainstream voice is articulated, the mainstream narrative is constructed, and the information cocoon is broken through multi-dimensional themes to promote comprehensive identification of youth from different circles with mainstream ideology.

3.1. Matchmaking with People: Circle Barriers to Youthful Narrative Expression

Although China's Internet users have a diversified age structure, the overall trend is toward youthfulness. Individuals form a complex communication network through social relations in digital communication channels. Through interactive communication, they transform from simple audiences to intermediaries of information dissemination, becoming core nodes in the communication process. Consequently, people have become the central focus of media forms.^[4] Therefore, under the "people as media" communication model, mainstream media should use youthful narrative expression to accelerate spontaneous and multi-level communication among youth groups.

The information cocoon effect confines people within narrow, closed information circles, raising discourse barriers between circles and leading to cultural and communication barriers. Additionally, this stratification has given rise to diverse subcultural forms. While youth subcultures can enrich culture, they also create cultural exchange and dissemination barriers, leading to communication isolation. Hence, it is urgent to break down information barriers, dissolve cultural barriers, unblock channels for cultural merging, and overcome communication isolation mechanisms. However, for some young people who prefer to keep the boundaries between mainstream culture and subculture peaceful, traditional media efforts to break into these circles might instead alienate them.^[5]

Therefore, the media's communication narrative mode and expression strategy are crucial. The narrative expression of youth should be based on understanding and incorporating subcultural forms while actively breaking the circle to embrace various subcultures. While respecting the personalized expression of youth groups, mainstream media should maintain the core dominance of mainstream ideology, root programs in excellent traditional Chinese culture, and infuse them with the spirit of the Chinese nation. This approach ensures that mainstream core values with an international outlook penetrate the minds of young people.

3.2. Roots-based: Out-of-the-loop strategies for youthful narrative expression

In recent years, the station has focused on "youth" as a form of communication, transforming itself into a youthful and innovative organization. With the advent of the "multimodal communication era," multimodal and flexible discourse have become the core modes of the innovative youth-oriented narrative system. "Multimodal discourse" refers to composite discourse that includes images, diagrams, and other elements besides text.^[6] Due to the richness and diversity of the elements and symbols it encompasses, this mode has become popular among contemporary youth groups. Mainstream media use literary elements as the medium and technological innovation as the driving force to lead trends in the right direction.

Multiple interactive elements, like images and music, create a new immersive narrative space, effectively enhancing the audience's sense of participation and further promoting the innovative development of mainstream media's audiovisual presentation. The use of fresh, internet-savvy language revitalizes the traditional narrative structure, and the aesthetic resonance of multiple literary mash-ups showcases the unique vitality of the youth perspective of the times.

Mainstream media views the Chinese excellent traditional culture as the nation's foundation, emphasizing its inheritance and promotion. This approach aims to carry forward historical essence while adapting to contemporary needs. CCTV, guided by the principles of reverence and innovation in its major programs, deeply roots itself in traditional culture. It stimulates emotional engagement through dialectical thinking, seeks resonance in values, and constructs a discourse system for youthful narrative expression.

Building on this foundation, mainstream media innovates youth narrative expression across different content levels, ages, and geography. By analyzing young audiences' thought processes and leveraging network dynamics, content breaks traditional circles. Youthful thinking shapes program themes with rigorous yet accessible language, effectively bridging generational divides. Moreover, by delving into regional histories and cultures, media cross geographical boundaries, anchoring new developmental coordinates.

The mainstream media's strategy for expressing youth perspectives primarily focuses on content. In an environment where youth dominate as the primary audience, the traditional serious tone of media no longer suffices. Youthful narrative expression incorporates internet buzzwords to reshape discourse styles and innovate content. Highlights introduce new topics, and humor engages audiences, resolving cultural and communication barriers between mainstream media and young viewers.

Additionally, mainstream media shapes presenter images with pro-people, exclusive, and youthful qualities. Creating a relatable persona enhances narrative allure and bridges audience-content gaps, facilitating content's ability to "break the circle." Presenters' branding aligns with media characteristics, positioning them as novel yet mainstream personalities that resonate with youth perspectives and uphold mainstream values.

Technological empowerment also plays a pivotal role, leveraging digital stage technologies to transcend physical limitations. Multi-screen, multi-perspective communication immerses audiences in narrative environments, delivering impactful audiovisual experiences. Furthermore, integrated closed-loop processes—from information gathering to diverse content production and comprehensive dissemination—ensure high-quality "out of the circle" works that resonate widely.

3.3. Defending as Attacking: The Breaking Principle of Youthful Narrative Expression

Overly politicized discourse styles can diminish young people's interest in and willingness to engage with information. To mitigate widening discourse gaps, mainstream media must differentiate between "theoretical" and "political" tones while enhancing systematic discourse construction and appropriately elevating cultural depth.

However, the media must remain vigilant against overemphasizing entertainment and superficial interpretations that could compromise narrative rigor and positive guidance. By understanding audience preferences and contemporary trends, media can refine internet buzzword styles tailored to maximize their benefits without crossing boundaries, maintaining the principle of innovative discourse forms while preserving integrity.

Simultaneously, embracing diversified and innovative narrative expressions is essential. Effective engagement with youth requires a deep understanding of their diverse dynamics, facilitating more efficient dismantling of circle-level barriers.

4. Harmonization and symbiosis of youth-oriented narrative communication in the fusion media matrix

Cross-border integration acts as the "gas pedal" for breaking down barriers while breaking out of these barriers serves as the "preservative" for integration. Both are complementary and essential. In cultural exchange and communication, achieving the fusion of civilizations moves from addition to fusion and further to deep integration, fostering significant development leaps.^[7] The mainstream media's youth-oriented narrative system is built on a robust foundation, combining breadth, depth, strength, and integration. It features diverse content and a unified power structure, facilitating cohesive and integrated storytelling across various domains.

4.1. Casting the Soul with Literature: The Modern Awakening and Rehabilitation of Traditional Culture

In the narrative communication system aimed at youth, traditional Chinese culture is integrated with contemporary characteristics, artistic elements, and cutting-edge technology to create discourse representations that resonate with youthful aesthetics. For instance, the Cultural Variety Show of China National Radio has pioneered a path of cultural fusion termed "national tide," blending oriental aesthetics with traditional culture and integrating scientific and technological effects. This approach reconnects with national essence while embracing modern life, reflecting a rising interest in national trends and the

resurgence of oriental aesthetics among contemporary youth.

Mainstream media adeptly combines the vibrancy of youth with the weight of historical significance through youthful narrative expressions. By awakening aesthetic resonance in traditional culture among today's youth, media not only guides their attention and meets their needs but also fully leverages traditional culture's influence on young minds. This synthesis of "mainstream narrative" with "youth narrative" fosters communion, resonance, and empathy among youth groups, fostering a sense of national identity and historical memory.

The innovative approach to expressing traditional culture youthfully involves creatively adapting traditional elements in contemporary contexts, deeply integrating cultural origins with modern advancements, and constructing communication frameworks where tradition and modernity coexist harmoniously alongside science and civilization. Across various CCTV variety shows, mash-up art forms such as "music + host," "opera + host," and "musical instruments + host" are emerging. These combine poetry, non-heritage performances, rap, opera, folk music, and cultural symbols like the Terracotta Warriors, the five-star Red Flag, and calligraphy. Such combinations inject new vitality into traditional classics, making them relevant for today's era.

4.2. Using the virtual to harness the real: the mingling of reality and immersion in technology-created environments

Advanced technology serves as the "power engine" of information dissemination, and mainstream media should fully leverage virtual reality (VR), 5G, artificial intelligence (AI), big data, the metaverse, and other advanced tools to enrich their dissemination capabilities. By embracing integrated development, media can establish a seamless connection, capitalize on complementary strengths, and foster synergistic growth between traditional and emerging media forms. This approach enables the construction of an integrated media communication system.

Numerous instances in major mainstream program stages showcase the use of VR, augmented reality (AR), extended reality (XR), and other intelligent technologies to enhance on-site creation. This integration of virtual and reality effectively merges technological scenography with live hosting, creating immersive virtual narrative spaces that deeply engage audiences with a heightened sense of immersion.

4.3. Harmony for beauty: civilizational exchanges and mutual understanding in cultural communication

The new mainstream media serves as a dynamic "carrier," driving innovative development focusing on diversified integration for stability and long-term impact. Integrated development within the international media communication chain fosters an international outlook and strengthens the mainstream media's pivotal role in global communication.

Integration spans the discourse system, content logic, and ideological core of narrative communication from a youth perspective. Emotions and content harmonize at the discourse system level, elevating narrative richness and constructing a media communication framework that blends emotional resonance with rationality. In terms of content logic, theory and practice converge, breadth and depth intertwine, fostering collaborative cultural communication across multiple subjects. At the core thought level, individual and societal interests converge, balancing tradition with innovation to embody the essence of Chinese culture and achieve cross-cultural empathy.

Youthful narrative communication effectively facilitates the integration of central and local governance through diverse regional expressions. While prioritizing national interests and promoting cultural integration based on international and global perspectives, it also values regional characteristics, engages closely with people's lives, and uncovers unique local news that impacts livelihoods.

5. Conclusions

The mainstream media, immersed in the post-metaphor culture, has effectively harnessed the youthful vitality of youth groups. This transformation not only showcases the modern style of mainstream media in tune with contemporary trends but also revitalizes national cultural communication. It narrates China's story through youthful narrative perspectives, amplifies mainstream voices, evokes emotional resonance, fosters innovative initiatives, and weaves a global network for civilizational exchange and mutual understanding. Through these exchanges, mutual understanding among civilizations promotes the spirit

of the times, shares beauty, and fosters harmonious coexistence on a global scale.

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