Futures Final Project

Context

The residents of Montclair, NJ under a gradual, national shift to an authoritarian government.

Following a world-wide trend towards authoritarianism and documentation of a variety of organizations planning and executing their an attempt to increase the power of the executive branch while decreasing the capabilities of the federal government.

I hope to explore the effects of these changes on the local community and their different demographic groups. I also hope to explore potential community responses to these forces.

Signal Scanning

So called 'thought balloons' (expressed intentions or desires of an organization or group that are easily denied later and are used to gauge possible wider public acceptance)

Foundation Building - Three Horizons

I will create an overview of the transition from current norms to emerging authoritarian practices and then a consolidated authoritarian state.

This will provide a temporal framework and highlight key points of transition.

Time Horizon Selection

6 to 10 years.

Causal Layered Analysis

This exercise will examine the authoritarian shift across four levels.

1. Surface events: Policy changes, election results, protest events
2. Systems and underlying structures: Institutions, media landscape, economic structures, social networks

3. Ideologies: political philosophy, community values, ethics
4. Myths: Community identity, the American dream

Drivers of Change Analysis

Social

Technological

Economic

Environmental

Political

Day in the life

I plan to use AI for creating several fictitious residents of Montclair. Using AI provides more details without my personal preconceptions and is based on its own secondary research. Below is list of data points created by Claude.ai, Claude Sonnet 4. The demographic and marketing details about the fictional residents allows us to envision multiple avenues to be effected by the forces determined by the *STEEP/Driver's of Change* exercises.

Claude.ai example prompt:

Create demographic data about a fictional, upper-middle class resident of Montclair, nj. Something that a political analyst, marketer, or advertiser might use to make decisions. and then provide a 'day in the life' scenario of this person

Montclair Resident

Basic Demographics   Age Gender Ethnicity Marital Status Children Household Size Sexual Orientation Religious Affiliation

Economic Profile   Individual Income Household Income Occupation Spouse Occupation Employment Status Home Ownership Mortgage Property Taxes Investment Portfolio Savings Monthly Discretionary Income

Education   Highest Degree Undergraduate Children's Education Continuing Education

Geographic & Housing   Neighborhood Home Type Commute Transportation Years in Montclair Previous Residence

Political Profile Party Affiliation Political Engagement Key Issues Voting History Civic Involvement Donations

Consumer Behavior **Shopping Patterns** - Grocery - Retail - Dining

Technology Usage - Devices - Streaming - Social Media - News Sources

Spending Priorities - Children's education/activities - Travel - Health/wellness - Home improvement

Lifestyle & Values Core Values Health Consciousness Environmental Awareness Cultural Activities Physical Activity Travel Preferences

Social Network Friend Groups Community Involvement

Professional Networks

Media Consumption News Consumption Entertainment Social Media Podcast Preferences Reading

Decision-Making Influences Purchase Decisions Political Decisions Brand Loyalty Information Sources Risk Tolerance

Psychographic Profile Personality Type Motivations Concerns Aspirations Stress Factors

Day in the Life

Multiple Futures Exploration Scenario Planning

3-4 Detailed descriptions of different ways the effects of authoritarianism may develop and be responded to in the community.

Impact and Assessment Future Wheel

Map the cascading impacts of authoritarian policies. Create multiple Future Wheels using different resident profiles.

Asset Mapping

Speculative Artifact

The form a discursive object or experience could take is heavily dependent on the previous exercises. One could imagine a version of the local paper along with a guided conversation with stakeholders. A local news paper has the advantage of being able to address a wide variety of subjects for the stakeholder conversation.

Stakeholder Engagement Design

The reading of the local paper could be accompanied by a guided conversation. I could also see some kind of *loyalty test* role-play after reading the newspaper.