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**Introduction**

Cults have existed throughout human history, yet it would seem obvious that with the rise of technology in the Digital Age, they would become a relic of the past. Due to the lack of media attention, one would be likely to assume that cults no longer existed in any large number. Oddly enough, the opposite has happened, cults have flourished with the advancement of technology in ways few could have dreamed possible. Since the invention of computers and the introduction of the internet, cults have sprung up like weeds in an unkempt garden, using e-mail and social networking sites to spread their message. Aum Shinrikyo has become a prime example of the new breed of cult, commonly referred to as “techno-cults”. They have recruited bright, technologically savvy people that enable the group to hack into various databases and steal information that they use to develop weaponry and sell on the black market to generate revenue.

In my proposal, I seek to demonstrate that instead of cults fading into history in the face of technological leaps and bounds, they have excelled in adapting technology to suit their needs and spread their influence, as well as circumstances such as religious liberties in various countries that allow cults to thrive. Recent advances such as the invention of Scientology’s E-meter and the “mind reading” software that analyzes facial movements in order to discern what someone is thinking with relative accuracy, cults have begun to use technology to assert even greater degrees of control over their members.

I will argue that the reasons for cults being successful in the Digital Age include the lack of social exposure by the youth, contributing to increased gullibility, the ability of the cult to use technology to advance their own ends, the decrease in religious exposure which strengthens the need for humans to believe in something greater than themselves, as well as the increase of disenfranchised people as a result of the poor condition of the global economy.