

# Technology

Does it strive to bring us closer together?  
Or is it really driving us apart?

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# Technology Is Tearing Us Apart

While technology has the potential to facilitate connections between individuals, its influence can often lead to isolation, ultimately driving people apart rather than bringing them closer together.

Factors such as excessive screen time, shallow online interactions, and the erosion of face-to-face communication contribute to this widening gap in human connection.



# Technology On The Rise

Technology has made it easier to connect across distances, enabling face-to-face interactions without having to be physically present. The paradox of being “alone together” implicates that we can neglect in person relationships as long as we’re connected online and social media is responsible for that. Social media algorithms can reinforce existing beliefs by showering users content that aligns with their views however, it can also make people less exposed to diverse perspectives. The constant notifications we get from our phones can reduce the quality of face-to-face interactions and diminish connection during conversations.



When discussing technology some questions are left unanswered. Those questions typically pertain to our future selves if we continue to remain immersed in our phones. The long-term societal impacts of pervasive technology use remain under researched and other factors as well. Factors such as economic status, education, and age can impact social connections, making it crucial to understand them. Newer technological advances like VR, AR, and AI are also under-explored making us wonder how they might enhance hinder our connections. Many questions regarding technology will remain unanswered because only time can answer them.

# Divided by Technology

Technology, despite its potential to connect us, is increasingly driving us apart by encouraging social isolation and diminishing the quality of our face-to-face interactions. Several studies have shown increased feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression being strongly linked to heavy social media use. This suggests that meaningful physical interactions are being replaced by virtual connections. Additionally, social media blinds people to distinct viewpoints due to its algorithm that tailors specific content to its users that they are almost guaranteed to agree with/enjoy every time. The fact of the matter is real-world interactions are disrupted by phones and technology, which diminishes real human connection and engagement. In these slides I hope to emphasize these negative impacts and observe how these patterns affect society. My goal is to convincingly argue that technology, is in fact, driving us apart.



# What Is The Internet Doing To Our Brains?

In, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?", Carr claims that having immediate internet access has altered his way of thinking. Post exchanging comments with his friends about the subject he says, "The more they use the web, the more they have to fight to stay focused on long pieces of writing" (Nicholas Carr, 5). This demonstrates how the internet's hold spreads like a virus, stripping away the literacy of all those it manages to infect. Carr then goes to say, "Scott Karp, who writes a blog about online media, recently confessed that he has stopped reading books altogether. [...] He speculates on the answer. 'What if I do all my reading on the web not so much because the way I read has changed, i.e. I'm just seeking convenience, but because the way I THINK has changed?'" (Nicholas Carr, 5). This could be seen as a revelation, to reflect on the way that immediate internet access changes the way we think and contributes to our lack of attention and decreasing literacy.



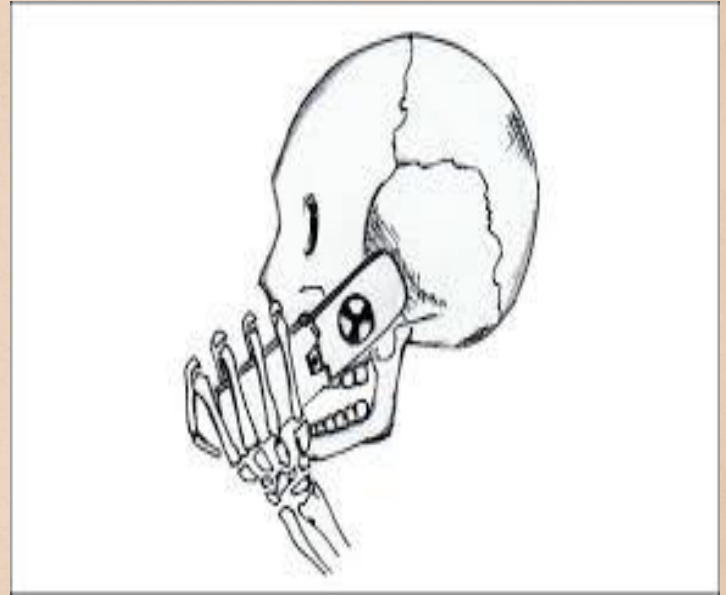
# Who Are We If We Are Bound To Our Phones?



In, "Who Are We Without Our Technology?", CLEO gathers research and statistics to find an explanation for the lack of human interactions recently and the sudden increase in mobile devices. The article says, "A recent study by Oxygen Media and Lightspeed Research showed that one in three women check Facebook first thing after they wake up- before brushing their teeth or going to the bathroom! Nearly 40 percent admit they're 'Facebook addicts', and almost half of all women surveyed (49 percent) felt that it's okay to 'keep tabs' on a boyfriend having access to his account" (CLEO, 6). The information in this article was taken from 2010, but if you thought it was bad then, just imagine now that we have access to so much more online and even more mobile devices (smart watches, iPads, etc).

# Social Media Is Not Beneficial for Kids to Connect

In, "Instagram and Adolescence" adolescent development and its correlation to the features of apps like Instagram and TikTok are studied. They strive to answer what makes these apps so alluring and then how they affect these young minds. The article states, "On Instagram, adolescents can take back that sense of agency and craft their own identity according to how they want to be perceived. They can choose what photos they want to post with editing or filters to create a certain uniqueness or theme to their profile" (The Journal of Social Media in Society, 4). This can be seen as the cute and innocent side of social media however, it lacks any consideration for the bad apples, the parents that don't monitor what their kids are doing or setting bad examples for their kids online, the adults that may pose a threat to them by pretending to be another child their age and the list goes on. The internet is dangerous for so many reasons but allowing kids to have unlimited access to it will never be okay regardless of how much they are monitored or taught safe internet surfing practices.



# Put Your Phone Down

Throughout my research process I've learned some new things, had some things reiterated, and disagreed with others but through it all I stand by my argument. Technology is driving us Apart. No matter how you look at it, technology puts a dent in human connection, hinders our literacy, and isn't even safe for kids to express themselves on. While others may claim that children need that connection to grow into their identities and it's convenience is a medium for writers all of that can be found in books or in person. Walk to a library and spark up a conversation with someone (quietly) looking in the same book aisle as you. That's how I made friends. Say Good Morning to people as you pass them on the street, human connection means so much more than a text. Technology only makes us comfortable being alone because we can say things without ever having to see the other person's face and that's simply wrong. Presence is the best gift you'll ever give.





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