

Society's Dependence on Technology

Technology is becoming more and more a part of our lives. We use it everywhere we go and take notice when it's absent. If we need something, "there is an app for that." If we begin to wonder about something, we can Google it with a simple click of a button. The electronics we currently use may be necessities in our daily lives, but deep down inside, we are craving "the next big thing," the new upgrade that makes what we currently own obsolete. As we become more dependent on technology, we are becoming less self-reliant as humans.

Technology provides a "safety net" when doing daily tasks. Instead of doing arithmetic in our heads, we can use a calculator to "double check" what we should already know. If there's something we need to do, we can set reminders or alarms using our handheld devices just in case we forget. But with repetitive use, the safety net can become our only means. We become less independent thinkers. An excellent example of this is the GPS. With the constant use of a GPS to tell us where to go, our own sense of direction diminishes. Perhaps it's unavoidable: would you rather try to figure out your way with the use of maps and memory or to punch in where you need to go into your GPS? People used to be able to get where they needed to go with only the stars to guide them. Now, we abandon all hope when our device cannot competently do the task we asked it to do.

Technology has been most influential in communication. It allows us to interact socially with others across the globe via email, instant message, text, video chats, etc. These forms of communication are so popular because things seem more casual than when you're talking to someone face-to-face. Over the Internet, you can go onto a 'chat roulette,' take on a new persona, become anyone you want. You can completely change your personality and the person you are talking to won't have a clue that's not the "real you." This is a common scenario because

most people find it easier talking to someone knowing that they'll never meet the other person in real life. After all, if things don't go well as you planned, so what? You can disappear from that person's life forever and they will never know who you are. Or you can get a second chance and cover up mean comments up with a "JK" or fill in an empty void in a conversation with a "Lol" when you don't know what to say. Just because we can talk to someone over a computer screen, doesn't mean we necessarily should. I weep for our generation because it's not uncommon now to see two people right across from each other in the same room texting each other. We take for granted the people we have right around us because we assume can always talk to them later using our electronic devices. Our social skills wane when we are isolated by our technology.

While there is now a shortage of face-to-face interaction, there is no lack of using technology as an excuse for our laziness. Many people find technology too much of a distraction from the tasks they need to do. Instead of getting your chores done, you can choose from myriad other easily accessible options thanks to technology. You could get sucked up into the world of the internet, watch your favorite shows and movies on your television, play video games, talk to your friends via text, and so on. These tempting options cause many people to postpone or forget about the task they needed to get done. Sadly, students are able to get away with their procrastination by making convincing excuses that teachers will likely accept, even with a bit of empathy. Instead of the "the dog ate my homework," students are able to say things like "my computer crashed," "my internet was down," or "I was unable to print it." With all these distractions and easily concocted excuses, it's no wonder why so many people procrastinate.

Technology can sidetrack us, but when used properly, it can be very helpful. When used effectively, it can help us be more efficient with our time. Instead of painstakingly taking tedious handwritten notes, we can type away using our keyboards while having the option of making the

font pretty. The internet serves a dual purpose of entertaining and allowing us to express and share our ideas quickly. Technology even helps us study. For example, if we don't understand a concept at school or have more questions about the topic, we can surf the web and find educational sites or videos relevant to our needs. We can get things done faster, and have more time to do the things we like.

Technology can help improve our daily lives, but is it really worth the cost? Yes, it is a very useful asset to our lives, but what if society is overdosing on it? This indulgence causes us to face the negative effects of decreased independent thinking, reduced social interaction, and increased procrastination. With the constant use of technology, we start to rely on it to do tasks that we should already be able to competently do on our own. A common theme in science fiction genre seems to be about technologically advanced robots with artificial intelligence becoming smarter than us and taking over the world. If we keep letting technology think for us, this fiction may become a reality. Technology cannot be a replacement for our independent thoughts and genuine social interactions, nor should it ever be. We are its masters, not its slaves.