

How technology is splitting up the family

Sociology



7 Aug., Analysis of Alone Together In the present age, man's interaction with technology has increased to dangerous levels. "The average U. S. adult watches more than 4 hours of television a day" (Stibich). People develop personalities while interacting with technology that are way off what they would develop while interacting with real people. In her book Alone Together, (Turkle) has fundamentally emphasized that over-dependence of humans on technology has negatively transformed their social identities and social relationships.

Communication via email or phone is unnatural in that one can not see the person at the other end of the line. Texting makes communication even more unnatural because one can not even assess the tone of speech. Many girls doubt the sincerity of their boyfriends in their relationships when they are not able to pick up the phone simply because of uncharged battery. Thus, different forms of technology are ruining relations in different ways. In the last decade, people have become increasingly dependent on robots. Although dependence upon a robot does not cause an individual any harm, yet it has a significant impact on the individual's social relations. It makes an individual accustomed to such a companionship that comes without demands. In the capacity of a human being, every individual has certain rights along with duties. The other person has to respect the individual's rights in order to acquire the duties that he/she desires. Thus, becoming accustomed to the companionship of a robot makes the individual repulsive of acknowledging others' rights and respecting them. This essentially isolates him/her from the society and puts him/her into social exclusion. Nevertheless, despite all the bad impacts of dependence on technology on an individual's social life, it does do much good to the individual in many

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ways. It regulates stress and provides one with an opportunity to improve oneself as a human being. " There are men for who attaining a real woman is impossible ... This isn't simply a matter of preference ... In the real world, sometimes second best is all they can get" (Turkle 66). Turkle discusses the case of a 64 year old man in her book who is divorced thrice and knows that he is psychologically distressed and may not be able to keep a real woman happy with him. He acquires satisfaction he is looking for by living with a robot who would listen to his cries and bear his madness and would not speak a word in retort, thus giving him a chance to compose himself that real women don't do.

Humans' over-dependence on technology is also creating class difference and gender inequality. Where a man is able to satisfy his sexual cravings with sex dolls, a woman may not feel quite as free to do the same for her sexual satisfaction. Likewise, technology has increased the disparity between the rich and the poor, with the latter living a more natural lifestyle as compared to the former that are under the influence of technology.

Concluding, I second Turkle in saying that human over-reliance on technology is the root cause of many social problems of the contemporary age.

Works Cited:

Stibich, Mark. " Top 10 Reasons to Turn Off Your TV." 21 Apr. 2008. Web. 7 Aug. 2011.

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Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. New York: Basic Books, 2011. Print.

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