

The internet: bringing people closer worldwide essay example

[Technology](#), [Internet](#)



Picture a future where the world is full of people sitting in front of computers or smartphones, staring for hours at visions on their screens, never speaking to other people in person. This vision is dark, and it is the kind of thing people speaking of the dangers of the Internet fear. Like any new media, the Internet has a group of critics that warn people of how it will be divisive to society. A £3m study presented in the spring of 2000 concluded, "The internet is reinforcing divisions in society and will not be a panacea for social ills" ("Internet"). However, in the year 2000 social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter were not yet founded. Instant messaging as people know it today was only in its infant stages. While it may be true that the Internet is not a "panacea" for social ills and that problems exist, in recent years the advent of social media's and other software's popularity has brought the people of the world closer together in ways that could not be imagined even a decade ago.

One of the big problems that people, especially young people, encounter today is bullying. The Internet has brought bullying to a new level in some cases. Harassment has moved from a school-only situation to one that follows kids home on social network sites like Facebook. According to some statistics, about 43% of kids reported they have been bullied online, with a quarter of these having had it happen more than once ("11 Facts"). This problem has the potential to be very divisive for society. At the same time, the Internet offers unprecedented research potential as well as the opportunity to talk with people from all over the world. In the past, if someone was interested in a subject such as what it's like to be a kid in Thailand, it would take a trip to the library or luck in finding a TV show about

it to get any information about the topic. Now, a quick Internet search opens the world for young people.

Social networking, email, photo sharing sites, video conference software like Skype, and instant messaging are also Internet innovations that bring people closer together. People have found husbands and wives through Internet dating. Families who have a member deployed overseas with the military can keep in touch on a frequent basis by many of these methods and know that everyone is safe and sound. Many people are obligated to move far away from home while looking for work, and these methods can help grandparents, aunts, uncles, and others know the latest about what's happening. With the Internet, it's just as easy to talk to and even see video of a family member in Australia as it is to talk to them if they are only a mile away. This sort of use of the Internet is important to many people and brings them closer together every day.

A new study lends evidence to the idea that the Internet brings people closer together, unlike the study done in 2000 that claimed the Internet was socially divisive. According to a recent Pew Internet and American Life Project survey, " US internet users are more apt to get help on health care, financial and other decisions because they have a larger set of people to which to turn" (Grohol). Also according to the study and its analysts, the Internet helps people to maintain their communities by offering new ways of networking, people who email their closest relatives often are more likely to speak on the phone as well, and Internet users tend to have more significant and close contacts (Grohol).

The effects of the Internet have had, in some cases, the effect of beginning

revolutions. In the case of the Arab Spring, or the revolutions occurring across the Middle East in places like Egypt and Syria, the desire to work for change came only after people had access to the Internet. Arab bloggers such as Al Omran said they began blogging as a way to practice English, but once he started doing that, “ he met bloggers outside Saudi Arabia, learned about politics, and developed an interest in human rights” (Saletan). In Egypt, although many citizens desired to see former president Hosni Mubarak ousted, it was only when they went online and saw the great numbers of other Egyptians who agreed with the cause that people dared to speak out (Saletan). The multitude of means of transmission of data facilitated by the Internet offer opportunities for better communication as well in cases like the Arab Spring. Sascha Meinrath, who directs New America’s Open Technology Initiative stressed the importance of having a “ distributed infrastructure” to connect data sources to spread information. For example, “ You don't have to link every device to the Internet; you just have to transfer your photo of the government thugs' latest atrocity to somebody else's device before your phone gets confiscated” (Saletan). It is easy to see how the Internet and its sharing of ideas like human rights can lead to better things for groups of people, with worldwide support.

A new vision has already emerged. As day breaks, from all different sections of the city of Cairo, people read the message on the Internet and pass it on to friends and family. One by one, they leave their homes, forming small groups that merge into a much larger group descending on Tahrir Square in Egypt to begin a revolution. The message continues to be passed around the world, and people of the globe send their support to topple a dictator. As

Martin Luther King Jr. said, " As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back." Although there are problems with the way some people use the Internet, there is much evidence that it can be used for the greater good of the world. The Internet is here to stay, and it is up to people everywhere to make the best use of it as a connective and not as a divisive device.

Works Cited

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