

Compare and contrast computers essay olivia lamond

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Technology has become integrated into nearly every aspect of our society, and many have come to wonder if that is a good thing or a bad thing. In the dystopian stories *The Veldt*, by Ray Bradbury, and *Mr Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore*, by Robin Sloan, the effects of advanced technology in different circumstances are illustrated through the character's dilemmas in the stories. The two stories contrast each other, debating whether the use of technology is beneficial or not. *The Veldt* is about a family who has a house that does everything for them. The house fulfills the role of the children's parents, and the parents take no part in raising the children.

When the parents eventually try to assert their parental authority, the children use the house to kill them. *Mr Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore* is about a boy named Clay who gets involved with a secret society who call themselves *The Unbroken Spine*. The members of *The Unbroken Spine* have devoted the last 500 years to solving a puzzle that could reveal the secret of eternal life. Using artificial intelligence from Google and his own personal intuition, Clay is able to solve the puzzle in just a matter of weeks. Humanity has the ability to use technology for both great good and great evil. In *The Veldt*, Bradbury argues that over reliance on technology is harmful to society. In the scene where the father, George, tells his son, Peter, that the house is being turned off. Peter replies, ' That sounds terrible! Would i have to tie my own shoes instead of letting the machine do it? And brush my own teeth and comb my hair and give myself a bath?'. The children are so reliant on the technology in the house, they believe they are not able to survive on their own. The children did not learn to do anything for themselves because all of the activities of daily living are being done for them. The idea of a

house that takes care of all of one's basic needs sounds like a good thing, however, there is no replacement for love. Without love from their parents, the children do not form an emotional attachment to them.

A computerized house can not teach children right from wrong. At the end of the book, the parents went to turn off the house. The thought of having to live normally terrifies the children, so they lock their parents in the nursery. Their dad says, ' Open the door!... Why, they've locked it from the outside!'. With their parents trapped inside, the children release creatures of their imagination to kill and devour their parents. They choose to murder their parents rather become self reliant. They think that they are living a better lifestyle with their technology, however, they lose the human aspect of themselves and everyone that loves them. The children choosing technology over their own parents is a scary reflection of what the future might hold. If people continue to get so attached to their devices, they can take the place of loved ones. With time, technology might isolate humans from friends and family. Bradbury wanted his readers to take away that relying too heavily on technology can and will have negative effects in unimaginable ways. In Mr Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore, Sloan presents technology as helpful to society. Clay demonstrates that people are capable of doing things with technology that they wouldn't be able to do otherwise. Clay is using his technological skills to make a 3D model of the bookstore: " To begin, I had to copy the database from Penumbra's old Mac Plus onto my laptop, which was actually not a trivial task, since the Mac Plus uses plastic floppy disks and there's no way to get one of those into a MacBook...but now, with the data in

hand, I'm building my model of the store. Clay's use of technology to reduce the amount of time to build the model shows that technology can be used to make humans more productive. However, he needs to know more than just how to use a technological device, he needs to know how to convert one form of data into another form so that he could use it and move it between two incompatible devices. His ability to do this makes it possible for him to make a 3D model of the bookstore quickly and efficiently. A piece of technology is only as good as the person using it.

Making a manual model of the store would require a lot of work, but through the use of technology, all it takes is the transference of data and use of a software program. Clay points out that technology can not function on its own during his speech to the members of The Unbroken Spine. He says, " ' Nobody in the fellowship's five-hundred-year history thought to look this closely. Neither did any of Google's code-breakers. We were looking at digitized text in a different typeface entirely. We were looking at the sequence, not the shape'. The Google code-breakers had the databases of all the information and the computers they needed to interpret it, but were bound by the two dimensional images that they scanned. The Unbroken Spine dedicated hundreds of years to studying the same information, but could not assemble it effectively enough to solve the riddle. Clay, however, was able to crack the code by having access to all the resources and then looking at it in a way that neither the computers or the Unbroken Spine could on their own. The computers couldn't solve the code on their own, the

humans couldn't solve the code on their own, they both needed someone to intertwine their efforts to solve the problem.

Technology can be extremely helpful if its being used the right way. Sloan wants his readers to take away that when used correctly, by the right people, technology can benefit society. Humans are able to use technology either to benefit humanity or cause it harm. In *The Veldt*, the characters become dependant on technology and use it to cause harm rather than risk losing it. Reliance on technology ultimately caused them to lose their humanity. However, In *Mr Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore*, technology is used to make life easier. Responsible people wield the technology, so it can be used as a labor saving device as opposed to it being a replacement for other humans. Technology itself is neither good or evil. If one is responsible, then technology will help the world, but if one is reckless and self centered, then the use of technology can cause harm.