

The story the machine stops relevancy to today



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The story the Machine Stops written by E. M. Forster is a very imaginative story about a society that depends on a machine for its everyday survival. The details of the story are quite amazing considering the writer wrote the story in 1909. The story does not explain why, but it seems that there is been a major disaster on earth which force people to live in airships controlled by the machine. The airships are equipped with the latest technology. There are bottoms inside the rooms that provide the people with everything they need including food, music, and literature. Some of the systems of the machine has are things that are currently part of the society of the 21st century. Vashti, the main character of the story, made a phone call to her son Kuno in which she could see the image of the son while they talked. In today's society such a phone call is possible though video chat such as Skype or with the assistance of a smart phone. The machine in the story had impacted the way people lived so much that human had become isolated from each other. " People never touch one another" (Forster, 1909). Due to the fact that people lived in an airship most of humans never had visited earth. The machine provided people with everything they need which ended up taking away part of the humanity of people. In today's society the technological advance that has changed a lot the way people interact with each other is the computer with internet capabilities. The internet has changed the way people do things. For example people nowadays shop a lot online instead of going to regular stores. In 2010 in the United States there was \$151. 1 billion worth of e-commerce transactions (Plunkett Research, 2010). People use the computer for their socializing needs through popular friendship websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace. At the end of the first chapter of the story Vashti traveled outside the airship in a flying car

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that was in route to earth. Flying cars are not a figment our imagination in the 21st century. An innovative company called Moller International developed a car with the capabilities of traveling through the air. The flying car is called the M400 Skycar. The M400 Skycar can travel at speeds of up to 275 miles per hour through the air giving a fuel efficiency rating of 20 miles per gallon (Moller, 2011). In the story the author mentioned that the rooms where people lived were completely identical due to the fact the machine need consistency in the design for maximum efficiency. The logic behind the functionality of the machine makes sense from a industrial production perspective. In manufacturing having parts that are similar and compatible is a technique that is used by a lot of corporations. The Machine Stops is a great fictional story that was written by a true genius in literature. E. M. Forster was able to imagine technologies and things that would not appear in the marketplace until a century later. I did not like that in the story people had lost their humanity. For example public gatherings had been abandoned. Up in the air ships neither day nor night existed and people kept to themselves in their private rooms. Despite having control over people's lives the machine did not transmit any nuances of expression. The same was occurring with human soul in this society as people became fully depend on the machine. The setting of people living in the sky is something that our society is working on through the efforts of NASA for the development of a space station. I hope that I live to see that day in which human colonize space. Hopefully when this occurs it will be because humanity wants to expand its horizon, not because the earth has become uninhabitable due to a natural disaster or a man made war. It would be great if E. M. Forster was alive today and he could write a futuristic story of how the world would look

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in the year 2109. Work Cited Page E. M. Forster. 1909. "The Machine Stops"
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