

PROJECT # 2: *CONSTELLATION*

Now that we're finishing up our reading and discussion of a constellation of essays on the theme of technology, writing, learning, distraction, what that all means for the human experience, and, likely more, think about what connections you can make with these works.

Your Task

In an essay of 1250-1500 words (plus a Works Cited), articulate *your perspective* on the impact of modern technology and the internet on human behavior and potential.

Synthesize the arguments of TWO of the writers we've discussed this term: Carr, Kelley, Turkle, and Anderson. Are there moments of agreement? Disagreement? Complication? Analyze their ideas/concerns/embrace of modern technology and the internet, and how that fits with *your* thinking. What experiences shape or inform your perspective?

As a starter, brainstorm what unifying thought/theory you will construct to discuss your perspective? Work to isolate passages in these works that might be helpful in your discussion. Your thoughts (analysis) on why these passages are important will help to advance and develop your ideas. Be sure to give credit using in-text citations.

To begin: You've already started by composing a semi-Barclay's paragraph placing 2 of these writers' ideas into conversation. Try doing this again: Find the specific passage from two texts that help you explore that idea, quote it, and offer an initial 300-400 word thought on that connection. **No need to send this to me, but use it for your own process.**

In Your Paper, Be Sure To

- Work with JUST TWO of our sources to build and support claims.
- *Briefly* (and appropriately) introduce the sources you work with—in the introduction.
- Use ***at least three quotations*** (NOT SNIPPETS) and explain how they help support a point or idea you're developing. (If your connection work is going well, expand to using ***paraphrases*** as well.)
- Be clear about your perspective or point of view on the issues you engage with.
- Avoid letting "I" dominate your discussion—**this doesn't mean you can't narrate your experiences with I!** However, your goal is to really engage these sources while also including your perspective in the mix of the discussion. Treat your own experiences with technology *as kind of text* to **draw from, extend, push back on, or complicate** the

discussion of Carr, Kelly, Turkle, and Anderson—BUT JUST TWO OF THESE WRITERS.

- Don't "bury" your sources—Carr, Kelly, Turkle, and Anderson are not data fields to simply mine, but writers with perspectives who should be **foregrounded**. Please review *TS/IS* and the templates for assistance setting up or foregrounding these sources.
- Document all sources using MLA style, with in-text parenthetical references and a Works Cited page. (Use *The Little Seagull* or [OWL Purdue](#) to assist you on these pieces.)

Questions to Consider and General Advice:

- Consider this passage from **Kevin Kelly's** "Technophilia": MIT sociologist **Sherry Turkle** calls a particular specimen of technology that is revered by an individual an "evocative object." These bits of the technium are totems that serve as a springboard for identity, or for reflection, or for thinking. A doctor may love his/her stethoscope, as both badge and tool; a writer might cherish a special pen and feel its smooth weight pushing the words on their own; a dispatcher can love his ham radio, relishing its hard-won nuances, as a magical door to other realms that opens to him alone; and a programmer can easily love the root operating code of a computer for its essential logical beauty. Turkle says, **"we think with the objects we love, and we love the objects we think with."** She suspects that most of us have some kind of technology that acts as our touchstone. Do you agree with Turkle? Do you think with the objects you love, and love the objects you think with? How so—be specific. And...what if we love objects that are bad for our health?
- **Carr** brings forward Richard Foreman's fear that we're becoming **"pancake people"** in contrast to **"cathedral-like"** people of **"complex inner density ... who carried inside themselves a personally constructed and unique version of the entire heritage of the West"?** What does Foreman mean? For what purpose does Carr bring Foreman's fear forward? What, for Carr, is the value of this kind of "complex inner density"?

These are just *two* places to dive in...consider what Turkle has to say about empathy...or consider Anderson's "defense" of distraction. Ultimately, go in your own direction by drawing on ideas you've been developing in your last paper. In a sense, this paper assignment really is inviting you to treat our last writing project as a "draft" of your thoughts on these concerns regarding behavior and thinking vis-à-vis modern technology, the internet, adaptation, distraction, education, anxiety, writing, reading, thinking, and being alive.

KEY DATES PAPER 2, SPRING 2025:

WEEK 8: Unpack/begin Project # 2

WEEK 9: Post 400-500 **THOUGHTFUL** words by **TUESDAY, MARCH 10**

WEEK 9: Come to class (*FRIDAY, MARCH 14*) with 800 words. Writing lab—work up to 1200 THOUGHTFUL words in class, exchange drafts.

WEEK 10: Peer review (*TUESDAY, MARCH 25*)

WEEK 11: Final draft due in class (*SUBMISSION DAY, TUESDAY, APRIL 1*)