

Modern technology is so ingrained into our daily lives that we no longer know how to function without its presence. Not only have our day-to-day lives changed to adapt to the presence of technology but so have our brains. And this adaptation we have made for ourselves as a society has led us down a road of distraction. The link to technology and a distracted society is agreed by multiple authors, however there is disagreement on whether or not technology and its distractions are mainly negative or positive. This distinction can be seen between Nicholas Carr who wrote, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?", and Sam Anderson author of "In Defense of Distraction". Both have strong viewpoints on the matter and their ideas mainly seem to clash with each other. While Carr has a strong negative viewpoint on the effects of distractive technology and the internet, Anderson points out various positives that come with technologies' distractions, and there are even some instances where they are in agreement. However, my viewpoint on the matter is complicated, I am impartial to both sides, as I can see and agree with various points made by both authors.

Nicholas Carr is a Harvard graduate; he is a journalist and writer with many books and articles about technology and its effect on society. In Carr's article "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" He believes that with immediate access to technology and the internet we are no longer focused and have a hard time keeping to one task before trying to jump to the next more interesting things. He talks about how our minds have changed to process information too quickly instead of taking it in and fully digesting what we have read, and to Carr this is a negative. On the opposing side to this is Sam Anderson, the New York Times Magazine writer and author of the article, "In Defense of Distraction". He believes that while yes Technology and the internet have increased our distraction load, we can use it to our advantage and be able to see that there are positives to the addition of technology in our daily lives. Anderson encourages adaptation to the internet and not to run away from the problems it can cause since there are ways to turn it around and make distraction a helping tool.

In my personal experience I can get easily distracted by technology since it is always in arms reach. Whether that be my phone or computer I always have a way to stay connected to the internet. And while I find myself scrolling on my phone for hours as a form of procrastinating my work, I cannot help but feel that we would not be better off if we were to do away with digital technologies and the internet.

In Carr's essay he is very big on how technology distracts us and has begun to change how we think, "we have come to think of [our brains] as operating "like computers". But the changes, neuroscience tells us, go much deeper than metaphor. Thanks to our brain's plasticity, the adaptation occurs also at a biological level." (4). Carr explains that when we

see our brains like computers that they have begun to function like computers, processing information rapidly, jumping from one topic to the next. He believes this may become our downfall should we let it get too far. This point Anderson agrees with this assessment, “when forced to multitask, the overloaded brain shifts its processing from the hippocampus (responsible for memory) to the striatum (responsible for rote tasks), making it hard to learn a task or even recall what you've been doing once you're done.” Anderson gathered this information from neuroscience articles to make his point that the brain functions differently when multitasking. And now with technologies taking over our attention they have begun to make us multitask, trying to do multiple things at once while on the internet which ends up changing the way we think linking back to Carr's point. I can agree with the idea that technology is rapidly changing how we think and function. I have found myself trying to multitask multiple times this week; while doing my calculus homework I am simultaneously trying to send a text to my friends about dinner. I am less focused on the task at hand most times and it will end up taking me longer to fully complete something since I am trying to do multiple things at once.

Carr believe that we should slow down and find quiete spaces away from technology so we can try to reverse the effects it has on our brain. However Anderson belives that we should lean intot he distractions and use them for our benefits and that too much attention to things may be hindering us more than benefitting us.