

The Internet:  
Today's Evolution or Tomorrow's Menace?

499 Words

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Computers are taking over the world. No, we are not living in an Isaac Asimov novel or a science fiction film where our spaceship's computer operating system refuses to open the pod bay doors, but today's world is under the control of computer technology. The internet has revolutionized every aspect of life in today's world; everything from business to communication to entertainment now centers on the internet. The internet, like any other advancement in technology, has advantages and drawbacks. It has brought us great advances in communication and information, but it has also brought changes to social behavior and has broken down traditional communication. The degree of society's dependence on the internet will determine whether the internet will become a positive or negative influence on the world.

The internet functions for two main purposes: providing the public with faster access to information and creating more convenient forms of long-distance communications. While both of these services have been successful in today's world, too much dependence on the internet could develop a problem for the future. With the internet's provision of easy access to information, traditional resources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, and newspapers are becoming obsolete. Information has now become incredibly easier to obtain, destroying traditional theories of building knowledge through learning and experience. "Technology is so much fun, but we can drown in our technology," wrote early twentieth century historian Daniel Boorstin. "The fog of information can drive out knowledge." While the internet's provision of information is

considerably more convenient than text books or newspapers, society must be careful to not allow the internet to become the only source of information. The internet is unreliable, and there is false information for every piece of accurate information written on the internet. The internet is a quick and easy alternative to older ways of obtaining information, but it must not be promoted as the only way to obtain information.

The internet's most evident impact on today's world has been the new forms of communication it has introduced. Negative effects of internet communication can already been seen today, foreshadowing a dismal future for social communication. The internet has achieved its purpose of creating a "global village". This term, coined by *Understanding Media* author Marshall McLuhan, represents the way in which the internet makes communication with anyone anywhere in the world possible. Internet communication, however, has also affected modern social communications. Personal conversations have become almost obsolete, and cyber language has greatly altered the English language. While these are merely signs of changing times, events that have happened many times before, these changes must be monitored. The internet could easily destroy all traditional forms of communication if allowed.

Technology is indeed taking over the world. This is not a completely horrible event; the internet has made life easier for everyone. Too much of a good thing can turn bad, though. The internet must be monitored and prevented from permeating too deep into society. The gift of internet today can easily turn into a curse tomorrow.