CONNECT

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON HUMAN MIND

CONNECT

2019 - 2020
THIRTEENTH EDITION

I.C.T. SOCIETY
LORETO COLLEGE
IN HOUSE JOURNAL

Note from the Principal's Desk

The world has become smaller and sharper with the click of a button, enhancing communication which has become considerably faster; with the advancement of technology, distances have been bridged. One can reach remote places on earth virtually, connectivity permitting. Technology again, has benefited academic growth and research, instrumentation and production; this can be satisfying. It has reduced the time expended in simple and complex routine assignments with an 'apparent' increase in efficiency with multitasking. Technology must enable everybody has to be able to participate in a future that they want to live for (Dean Kamon).

If the balance in the use of technology is tipped, human life and the human mind could be severely affected. Are human beings becoming 'human doings'? Altered human physiology and behaviour caused by loss of memory and the ability to take quick decisions, impatience and irritation; scores of other somatic manifestations such as optic and auditory aberrations; insomnia and changed biological rhythms; emotional imbalance, decrease of efficacy in interpersonal relationships with changed priorities, to name a few, have been reported with advancements in and enhanced use of technology.

Everything can be used to advantage provided there is awareness and consciousness as to the direction that one is taking. Artificial intelligence and all that goes with technology can be either a boon or a bane. The short- and long-term impact on all facets of humankind should be at the fulcrum of progress. Evolution in technology must not disturb peace of mind. The future is still so much bigger than the past (Tim Berners Lee) and human beings matter.

I congratulate the contributors of the articles selected for this edition of 'Connect', and also Ms. Sengupta and Dr. Soumya Dutta who have guided the students in composing the articles for this edition of Connect (2019-2020). May we continue to reflect and share of our critical thinking so as to challenge change brought about by advancement in technology.

Sr. Christine Coutinho

Principal

Note from the Staff Advisor's Desk

We are presently a technology-driven society. The use of technology has eased our day to day communication, business and living. The dependence on technology has changed the way we are interacting with nature. There is a lot of buzzes these days about artificial intelligence. The simulations of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think like humans are being considered our future. We are already witnessing the use of AI in several operations. The mobile phone that we use also has AI-enabled features. The question that arises in such a scenario is the impact that technology has on the human mind. Technology in some way or other affects the human memory, attention and sleep cycles. When we seek any information we google it. There is information pouring in plenty, what is important is how to process the information and use it for a better human living. Over-dependence on technology has its problems. The machines outsmarting humans are the last thing that we desire. However, there is no denying the fact that technology will continue to remain the driving force for humans in the coming days. The need of the hour is to balance between technology and nature. Artificial Intelligence has the potential to revolutionize human activity but it should not drive us into an artificial world which has no connect with nature. This issue of Connect focuses on the impact of technology on the human mind. We like to thank the ICT Society President, Vice President and all the contributors for all the effort they have put in to make this issue a must-read.

Ms. Chandrani Sengupta

Dr. Soumya Dutta

Note from the Editors' Desk

With immense pleasure and gratitude, we write the editorial for this year's annual magazine of the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Society.

The theme chosen for this edition is the impact of technology on the human mind. Given the ever-increasing importance of technology in our daily lives, it is crucial to analyse its impact from a psychological perspective. The aim has been to weigh out both the pros, such as increased access to intellectual information and the cons, such as the negative impact it might have on the mental health of people around the world.

We asked the students to present us with their varied perspectives on the topic and we were delighted to be met with enthusiastic participation, offering us a selection of material for publishing in our journal.

We would like to thank our Principal- Sister Christine Coutinho and our staff advisers- Ms. Chandrani Sengupta, Mr. Soumya Dutta and Mrs. Saberi Goswami for their invaluable guidance in making this magazine a success.

President - Shannon Chatterton

Vice President – Syeda Farkhanda

Treasurer – Anusoma Chatterjee

CONTENTS

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The 21st century is the age of 'digital revolution' and one of the crucial by-products of this revolution is the 'social media'. Social media is essentially a collection of software that enables communities and individuals to communicate, share and gather information. In a more literal sense, the name social media in itself indicates its function as a medium for individuals to socialize with one another. Earlier, it would be immensely difficult for individuals to reach a wider audience but now with the advent of technology any individual can reach a wide range of audience both in terms of demography and culture with just an internet connection. But, is social media all about connecting with people or is there more to it? The answer to this has spurred a huge debate in the global environment specifically pointing to the advantages and disadvantages of social media.

When social media first came into the forefront people realized that this was a great way to bring together communities. Thus, people who live far apart could easily get in touch with one another. But that does not necessarily mean that it is a good thing. Of course, being able to connect with loved ones quickly is a great feat which everyone enjoys. But just like a coin there are two sides of the story. The most commonly talked about risk that social media posits is that of data sensitivity. People making accounts in these social media platforms feed personal information into the softwares of these applications and as a result an uncertainty about the level of security creeps in. Another factor that adds onto the threat of security is the terms and conditions that a consumer agrees to while purchasing an application for use. A study by Jonathan Obar and Anne Oeldorf-Hirsch at the University of Connecticut concluded that individuals often ignore privacy and terms of service policies for social networking services. This behaviour appears to be common both when signing up to new services and when policies change for services individuals are already using. When people do read policies, they often remain on the relevant pages just long enough to scroll to the 'accept' button, and in the few instances where detailed reading takes place, almost all participants demonstrate reading times far below the average reading time needed. Not just that, often these terms and conditions are designed in a way that it's difficult for people to read them, such as having extremely small font or having pages of text without highlighting any of the main points.

Now, coming back to one of the merits of social media is the easy access to information. One does not have to peruse through rows of library books to find a piece of information or wait to reach home to watch the evening news or even wait to get the physical newspapers, instead a quick search on one's phone would easily give access to all the information. Moreover, this has resulted in widespread coverage of news when earlier, often many issues would go unseen. Again, looking at the flip side we find a glaring problem of misinformation. People usually have a habit of looking up something and going with the first link they can find on the internet. This leads to improper research and a high possibility of further circulation of information from improper sources. Further, the media has become massively irresponsible in circulating information. The bias of media houses towards a particular ideology has hampered the

credibility and the ethics of journalism. As mentioned before with the power of social media now many issues which earlier went unseen were being covered but again there has been massive irresponsibility on the part of the media houses to maintain victim anonymity. This has resulted in the lives of the victims and their families often being endangered and as a result the media community has faced backlash from social organisations in these aspects.

The tendency of individuals often taking everything they find on social media at face value has resulted in another dangerous implication. One of them is a major physiological and psychological impact which indicates a reduction in the concentration spans of individuals using too much social media. People want information and they want it quickly. Social media has habituated individuals to watch shorter videos instead of reading more books and just an overall reduction in the concentration span. Moreover the tendency among people to split their concentration between their real and digital life has also become a matter of concern. One article named the psychological repercussions of shifting concentration on different information structure as a pinball effect. It elaborated that the pinball represents the awareness which is "thrown" or "dashed" by enabling social media ("the pinball machine") towards various information clusters that each demand to be made sense of. Concentration, as an item, is bouncing unsystematically between different sets of information. On their own, these sets or spaces are harmless, but in pairing or juxtaposing within the same conscious agent they result in cognitive diffusion which leads to disorientation, confusion and, most literally, de-localisation. Or put simply: inattentiveness and loss of concentration. Another study by Strayer, Drews & Crouch in 2006 concluded that "the impairments associated with using a cell phone while driving can be as profound as those associated with driving while drunk".

Just like social media has endangered some, it has also empowered many. One such example is the role of social media in bringing down autocratic governments. Most autocracy in the 1960's and 1970's were brought down by coups, but fast forward to the 2000's and a different picture emerged. The chain of protests during the Arab Awakening, which toppled four of the world's longest standing rulers, led many political observers to rejoice in the masses ability to unseat autocratic governments. Among these the most widely covered was the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 which overthrew President Hosni Mebarak. The online platform of Facebook empowered the people who knew their rights were being violated. Another movement which empowered a lot of people especially women was the Me-too Movement. People all over the world shared the horrors of being sexually abused at some point of their life. Often victims of sexual assault find it difficult to open up about their stories since they feel that they are alone and therefore no one would understand them. This changed when thousands of people tweeted their story with the hashtag me-too, making victims around the world realize that they are not alone. This also resulted in action being taken against the perpetrators, one of whom was Harvey Weinstein, a powerful personality in the Hollywood industry who had been exploiting young actresses for a long period of time.

Another, crucial aspect of social media is the participatory culture specifically in social media fans and consumers. For example in 2007 Pepsi launched a marketing campaign which allowed consumers to design the look of a Pepsi can that was featured on 500 million cans across the United States. This has enabled individuals to not just communicate with other individuals but be able to participate and communicate with big corporations and become a part of the content creation process. This also sparks the debate of whether these programmes are exploitative in nature in the sense that fans are working without any compensation in return. It is important to understand here that fan culture mostly operates in a way where the fans don't expect any monetary returns instead they receive satisfaction from being a part of the community. In economics it is established that utility maximization is one of the topmost priority of any consumer and therefore their actions would reflect behaviour that gives them satisfaction which is not always in monetary terms. But, yes big corporations often tend to be exploitative in nature since their nature is profit maximization. Take for example Google which has developed a sophisticated targeting advertising system that collects a multitude of data about user interests and activities (demographic, technological, economic and cultural information) to communicate network and collaborations. As mentioned before, consumers are often unaware that their data is being exploited by big corporations such as Google and Facebook, because in reality these highly sensitive data information is not as protected as consumers think they are. To conclude, social media is playing a huge part in the world currently and will most probably continue to do so. While highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of social media it is clear that there are various factors which determine how the two sides will impact or outweigh each other. Therefore it wouldn't be fair to label social media as an absolute boon or bane. What is important is to recognize its achievements in bringing the world closer and at the same time acknowledge the harms it brings with itself in order to spread awareness for the safety and security of our global citizens. Overall, it is neither a black nor a white but rather a grey area of discourse.

Syeda Farkhanda

Economics Honours, 3rd year

A CAPTIVE OF TECHNOLOGY

Peuli Bakshi

English Honours, 1st year

FLIGHT VS. FIGHT

By contrasting the sombre backdrop of a classroom with a much more vivid and interesting looking video game-esque scenery, my digital art piece aims to show how technology, especially video games serves as an escape, or "flight" from our mundane everyday lives. The title of the game (also the title of the poster), "Flight to Fantasia" expresses exactly that: it denotes a "flight" to a world of "fantasy", away from real life.

For many people, the world of video games serves as a break from a reality filled with deadlines, stress, and responsibilities. People play them because they are enjoyable, stimulating, and a way to unwind. Technology in the form of computer and video games are often used as a way for people to turn their minds away from the daunting problems of everyday life, and "lose themselves" in a virtual realm where they can feel the happiness and freedom of being in control, even if just for a while. They can be whoever they wish to be without worrying about how they look or act, and without having to deal with real life issues.

Sutanuka Bag
Political Science Honours, 1st year

WORD SEARCH

A	T	E	C	H	N	O	L	O	G	Y	D
F	H	V	G	E	X	A	I	P	O	P	T
N	F	B	E	E	T	U	G	A	U	P	S
E	H	X	Z	C	E	T	R	W	A	Q	E
T	M	O	T	C	E	N	N	O	C	M	U
W	O	U	J	P	Q	R	E	E	O	F	I
O	U	R	O	E	R	I	B	X	P	H	F
R	F	R	K	M	O	U	S	E	Y	I	I
K	C	V	F	D	D	N	O	M	Y	I	N
I	C	O	N	S	K	I	U	H	I	O	O
N	E	T	F	I	H	T	P	O	P	L	S
G	Z	Q	E	R	F	I	C	A	B	L	E
I	Y	I	N	T	E	R	N	E	T	A	T
E	R	O	L	S	G	F	T	C	P	T	T
M	Q	O	W	P	I	L	D	F	I	S	I
S	D	O	G	G	Y	R	R	K	H	N	N
S	R	I	D	R	A	K	I	O	S	I	G
B	D	B	C	O	L	I	V	E	V	A	S
X	M	A	B	K	H	L	E	W	E	M	E
H	D	Y	I	P	I	Y	R	O	M	E	M
O	E	E	L	I	E	Z	X	B	T	G	H
K	Q	L	A	Y	O	U	T	Y	N	P	O

ARE YOU A TECH SAVY?

Look for the following words in the above jumble:

1. Networking
2. Technology
3. UPS
4. Connect
5. Mouse
6. Icons
7. Cable
8. Settings
9. CPU
10. Drive
11. Keyboard
12. App
13. Copy
14. Crop
15. Save
16. Layout
17. Memory
18. Install
19. Internet
20. Browse

Nandini Das

History Honours, 1st year

MY CYCLICAL WOMAN

Your constant brutality,

Your blood thirst fused with inhumanity,

Revealing avarice ambitions; Through your disguised civility.

My consent? Your humility.

You don't hesitate to breach my purity.

Their pride, my poverty.

Their laugh, my mockery.

Look into me, I'm a woman, but no, they call me their property.

Let me escape this falsity; please give me my opportunity.

Burn me with your rage,

Throw me in your cage;

Turn me into ashes

You can't scare me with your lashes. I'm a figure of consecration, resurrection and age,

I rise from the Sea of Time, and, From your chains, I disengage.

Another call for sacrifice-

The fire in my soul

For freedom it strives.

With your bold moves,

You can't paralyze;

Against your will, when my will collides,

I shall up rise.

Because I'm a phoenix

And I belong in my heavenly paradise.

Monideepa Paul

English Honours, 1st year

NEGATIVE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON HUMAN MIND

Technology is the set of knowledge, skills, experience and techniques through which humans change, transform and use the environment in order to create tools, machines, products and services that meet our needs and desires. Etymologically, the word comes from the Greek word 'technic' (technical, art, skill) and 'logos' (knowledge) . Technology has transformed the way we live, work, communicate and entertain ourselves. At the click of a button, we can conduct transactions, get information, learn new skills and even find love.

Our generation has seen the most drastic jumps in technological advances and this has not only changed the way we perceive the world but also how our brains receive and process information. We seem unable to tear ourselves from our smartphones, tablets and innumerable social networking platforms, going so far as keeping our devices near us all day.

Living in this digital age means that we have come to rely on devices in one way or another. Technology has altered our brains. For example, we now have shorter attention spans and are more distracted. Before the deluge of iPhones, iPads and other devices, the average person had an attention span of about 12 seconds. Now it's believed that we can only concentrate for about 8 seconds on average before moving on to something else. We've become tech addicts.

There's a certain gratification that comes with seeing new notifications and messages which is why some of us compulsively check social media platforms numerous times each day, spending hours blissfully scrolling down those pages. Even worse, some individuals end up suffering from video or mobile game addiction, needing rehabilitation and professional help to detox. The reason for this is simple: technology has built-in gratification that stimulates the pleasure centers of the brain, keeping us coming back for more.

Our face-to-face interactions have been undermined. Have you ever been out with friends and at some point noticed all of you were spending more time staring at your screens than conversing. These days we rely on emoticons to express our feelings and prefer online interactions. As a result, many miss out on major aspects of natural communication. We're becoming more forgetful.

Research has revealed that many millennials are more forgetful than seniors — something that can be attributed to the constant use of technology. In order to remember something, we need to move that information from our working memory (conscious mind) to our long-term memory and this hinges on our attentiveness. But thanks to technology, we are constantly taking in new information, barely having enough time to think about it and commit it to memory before something else grabs our attention. This impacts our memory and makes us more forgetful. Technology might cause anxiety. Anxiety is actually a very natural emotion and is, in part, hardwired into our brains. "Fight-or-flight" triggers helped keep our ancestors alive during encounters with predators and other dangers.

Once anxiety reaches the stage of a disorder, it can interfere with daily function. But is technology contributing to the apparent growth in anxiety problems seen in the modern world. Technology has made our lives inexorably more efficient and easier compared to generations past. It has freed us from many mundane tasks and given us more free time to, in theory, partake in more leisure activities outside of working to live. This would make technology a double-edged sword of types. It has made us more efficient and more time - rich than any generation before use, but it has come at a cost. Many occupations today require at least a fundamental grasp of technologies like computers. Their use may be responsible for an increased rate of depression in the population, especially those how to use them for many hours a day. Whilst correlation does not mean causation, technology may, in part, be contributing to anxiety and depression. Here are three ways in which technology can affect your mental health.

While technology has countless benefits, it also has some drawbacks. The best way to have a balanced life and mitigate some of the negative effects of technology is to commit to setting aside our mobile devices for a few hours each day. Meditation, yoga and exercise can also help us focus on living in the moment. Taking time to put down our phones and consciously contemplate what's in front of us will go a long way towards improving our lives. So, there are some general solutions for healthy technology use like take breaks, both large and small. A tech break can be as small as stepping away from your desk to take a short walk across the room or as large as declaring a technology blackout for an entire day each week. Examine your motivations, try cutting down on the number of posts or status updates you make each day. Ask yourself whether you are posting for narcissistic reasons or with true connection as a goal. Give your work or entertainment space an ergonomic makeover. Why not devote some time to improving the places where you spend so much of your day? A better-placed desk chair or better lighting can make a huge impact on your physical and emotional well-being and turn off the lights—all of them. To avoid disrupting your sleep rhythms, turn off all your screens an hour or two before you go to bed and give your eyes a rest.

While technology has countless benefits, it also has some drawbacks. The best way to have a balanced life and mitigate some of the negative effects of technology is to commit to setting aside our mobile devices for a few hours each day. Meditation, yoga and exercise can also help us focus on living in the moment. Taking time to put down our phones and consciously contemplate what's in front of us will go a long way towards improving our lives.

Zakiya Faisal

Education Honours, 2nd year

"TECHNOLOGY MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO GAIN CONTROL OVER EVERYTHING, EXCEPT OVER TECHNOLOGY." ~ JOHN TUDOR
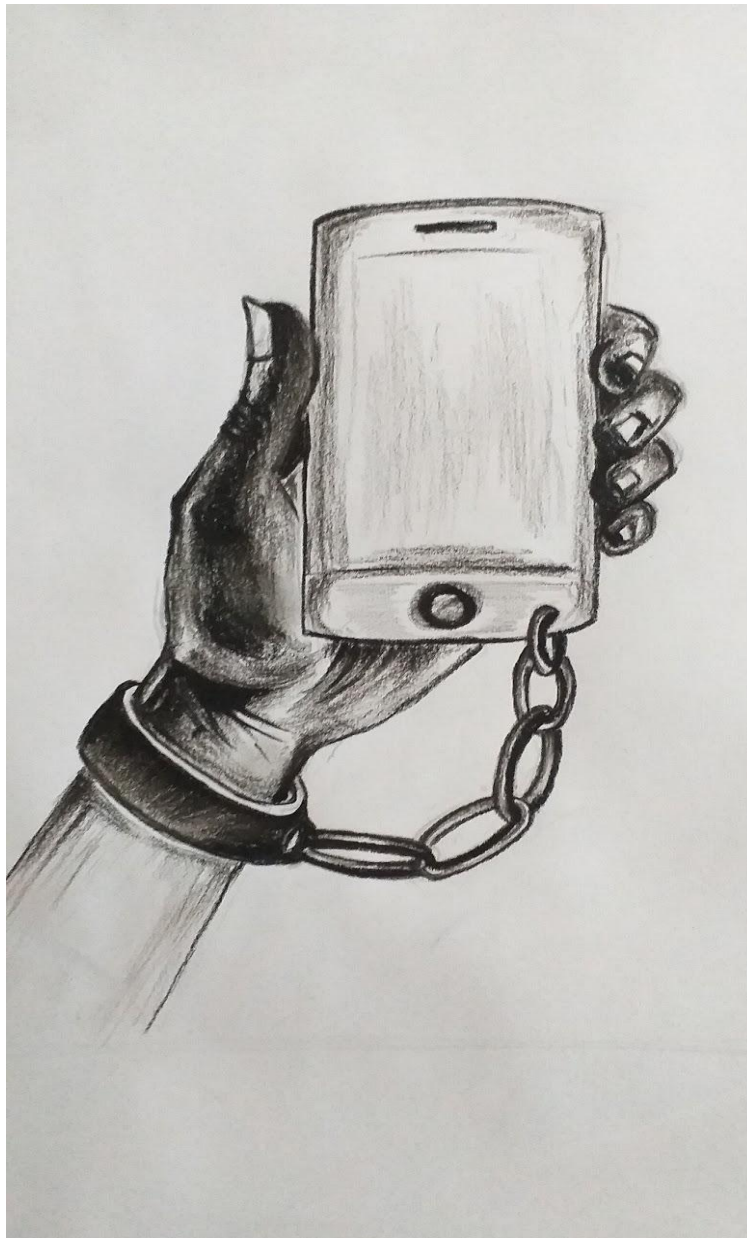

Nandini Das

History Honours, 1st year

CROSSWORD

Across

1. Full form of CHM

2. Fear of being out of Mobile phone contact.

3. Introduced two basic information about the brain.

4. 1st Modern Web Search.

5. A technology required to provide high speed internet access over telephone wiring.

Down

1. Quality of the printer is measured by.

2. World's 1st successful electronic computer.

3. The Technologically advanced humanoid robot ASIMO is made by this car company .

4. Nano, Shuffle, Classic and Touch are variations of .

5. Discussed how technology can impact our anxiety by highlighting our natural need for, and the pressure around constant connectivity.
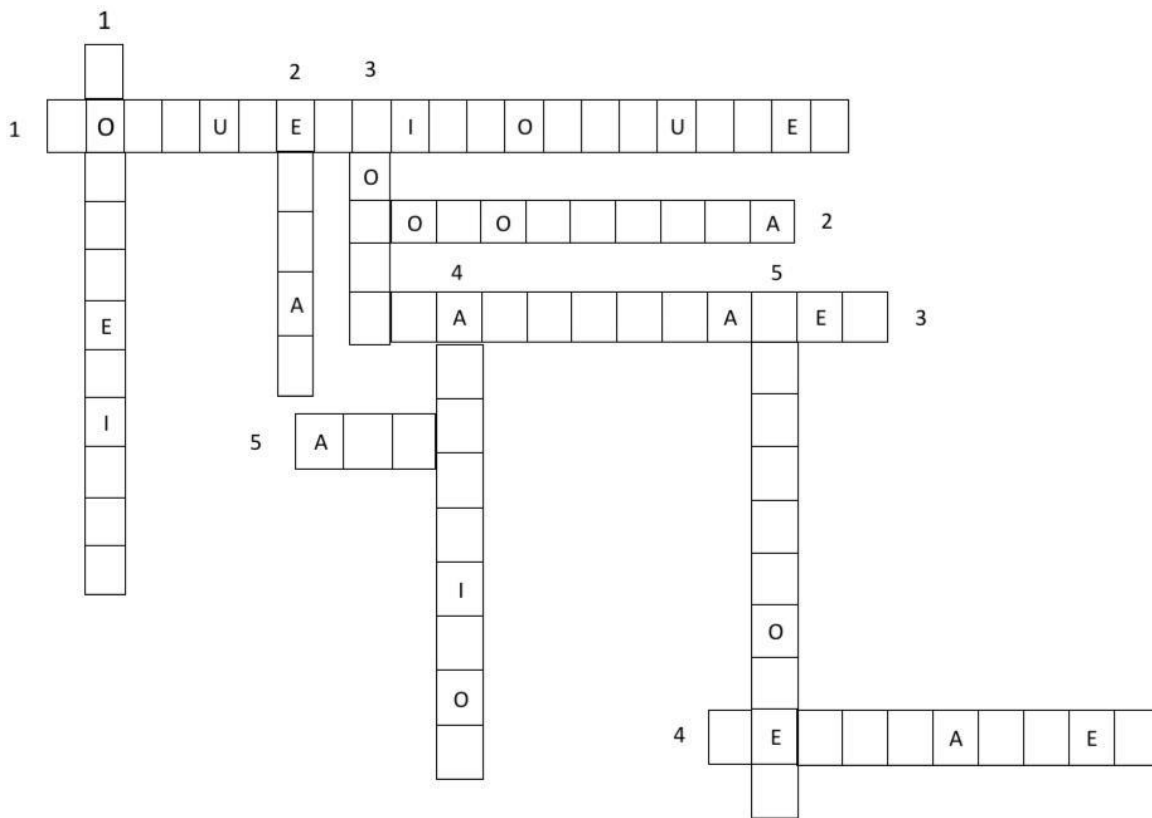
Sharmistha Dey
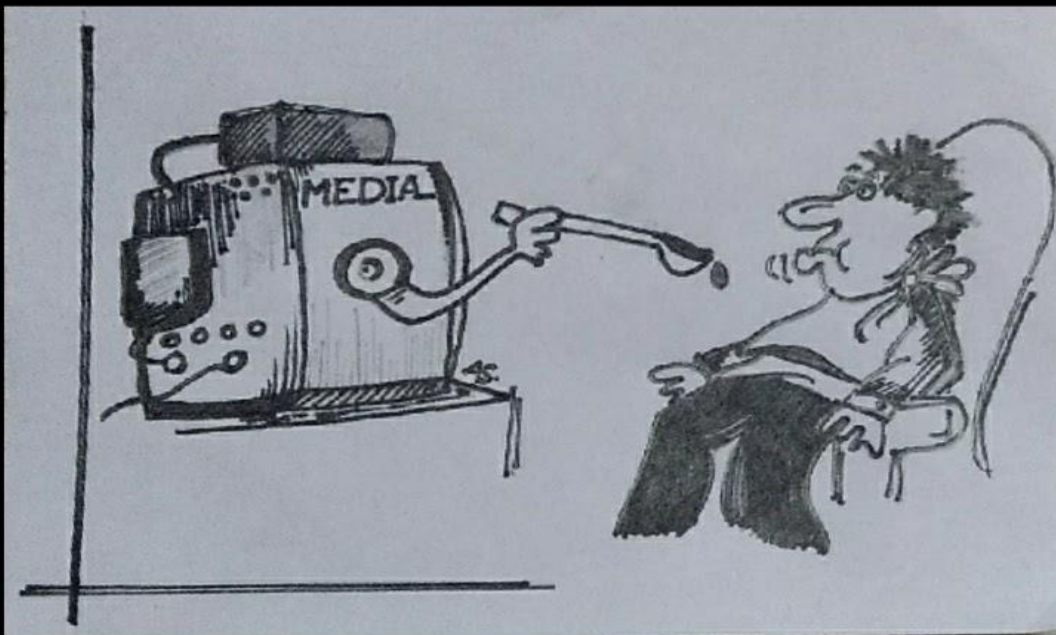
English Honours, 3rd year

TECHNOLOGY: FRIEND OR FOE

Upasana Guha

Economics Honours (1st year)

VIRTUAL REALITY VS. ACTUAL REALITY

Ananya Sarkar

English Honours, 2nd year

SOUL OF DIVINITY

The morning breeze running down your shiny black hair,
The mellow sun kissing your tender lips,
The coarse sand bending down before you,
To absorb the sweetness of your feet !
A twinkle in your eyes that never fades,
Makes me think twice, "You are an angel in disguise."

Your presence makes it worth a while,
You taught me how to walk a mile,
Your spine knows the pain of a pile,
Makes me say twice, "You are a mermaid on an isle."

I owe you the life that you gave me,
I owe you the pain that you bear,
The unspoken scars, the bleeding wounds, for me,
Every day, every minute, every second !
When the sun sets down the horizon,
When darkness outstrips light,
When birds sing a lullaby,
I owe you an air of relief !
I try my best,
To fulfill the vacant,
To undo the wrong,
I try my best,
To put you first,
To be your voice,
To be the colour to your canvas !

I love you is all I want to say,
When the moon shines over the tranquil bay,
I promise, I will make you proud,
Come what may !
Cuz when human touches humanity,
Takes birth a soul of divinity.

Swarnali De

English Honours (1st year)

THE BLUE LIGHT ADDICTION

Technology has shaped the world we live in today. We are blessed to live a life of comfort with every work done with just a click but here comes the most important consequence of technology on the human mind - technology in one word has always affected the brain functioning to a great extent. It has actually resulted in shorter attention or concentration spans. Research has also proven the fact that many people around the world suffer from FOMO or the fear of missing out. People are addicted to the blue light of the phone or the laptop screens. They always feel that our cell phones are vibrating even when they are not. Technology affects our sleep cycle as well.

Technology has always been a great educational tool as the use of audio visual aids are of great help as it makes the learning much easier but at the same time people forget to write letters or read books. Technology has deprived the human brain of the smell and feel of books and handwritten letters. Now, no one likes to remember the facts and figures of a lesson but just remember the folder in which it is stored. No one likes to remember the Preamble of the Constitution when you can just Google it and get the information whenever needed. Technology manifests itself in various ways. Our brain is forced to create a divide between the social and the visual reality, suffering from hallucination. It affects cognitive functioning. Many people can multitask like type out a letter or talk over the phone at the same time which are both gifts of technology. This kind of multitasking affects the brain productivity which in turn makes us sluggish, less creative and impatient. Technology has affected human behaviour and the brain goes through a number of hurdles internally to cope with the changed circumstances as technology has altered the way we express and feel. When the person can just ask Siri about the things taught as a part of the lesson, no one actually cares to memorise data which in turn affects the brain retentivity. Technology has reduced the brain's capability in the sphere of decision making. Technology in one word has made us feel like zombies. There is a common saying that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" so it can also be said that "only clicking and no thinking makes the brain a dull organ." Technology has always interfered with the human brain addressing situations of difficulty. We may often end up Googling for a solution to a problem when the solution lies within ourselves. Technology forces the human brain to even dream in a different way. We dream in colour nowadays as if technology is a coloured glass through which we see the world. We are becoming tech savvy. Our human brain sees this world through screen. Technology transformed the human brain from a rational to irrational. Human brain tends to forget the simple things like someone's birthday or the last date of a project submission and all thanks to technology for making this so-called sugary dream come true. Technology has affected the human brain in a number of ways and the list to it is actually endless but we also need to admit the fact that without technology we cannot move forward. It has made human life on Earth feel like a Paradise but its negative impacts also cannot be ruled out or neglected in any way.

Unnatri Dutta

Political Science Honours, 1st Year

SHACKLES OF TECHNOLOGY

Upasana Guha

Economic Honours, 1st year

TECHNOLOGY - A USEFUL SERVANT BUT A DANGEROUS MASTER

Where is the effort to resist the temptation to check your email or social media notifications the first thing in the morning? Where is the effort to be original in all that you do a - homework, assignment, blog - using your own thoughts instead of plagiarizing every bit of it? Human beings have become lazy by nature and would love for others to do their work- the introduction of technology has done precisely that.

Technology has made us think differently, feel differently and even dream differently. It affects our memory, attention spans and sleep cycles by spoon-feeding us. I cannot fathom the fact that we have to live on a planet where we have multiple apps for everything and so many more technologies that we tend to forget what it feels like to make our body go through a little physical tool to get tasks done. It does not surprise me that we live in a world where obesity rates and social anxiety related issues could not have been higher. Productivity rates have been the lowest. It is so ironic to hear people say that we live in an extremely "social" era, but the truth is a billion miles far from it. We live in an extremely anti-social world where we are slowly stripping ourselves off the basic fabric of our humane selves. Nowadays, the trend of wishing 'happy birthday' on Whatsapp is more trending than visiting friends' houses on their birthdays. People prefer to isolate themselves so that they can engage themselves in online activities. Children keep sitting in front of their computers for long hours, tired, to play games online. In this generation, we rarely find children playing outdoors. Technology can give you an addict's brain. The blue light which is emitted from the screens of televisions, computers and phones adversely affect the sleep-wake cycles of the human. This largely affects the health of the person. Teenagers are the biggest victims and addicts of technologies. They are desperate to stay connected. They fear the feeling of being left out. This has increased social stress. Automobiles have increased pollution by modern technologies and thereby increased global warming. New hacking techniques are being developed to invade someone else's privacy. This is a matter of social tension. It has even reduced our memory and brain capacity. We look up everything that we want to know about online and figure it out in seconds. So where is the effort? The effort to go to a park and start a conversation with a stranger, the effort to be able to develop mind in a way that we do not have to use a phone as an alarm clock, the effort to put pen into paper and make simple calculations instead of using a calculator has become unknown. It has indeed made us sick and lazy.

We cannot deny the fact that technology has indeed increased overall efficiency in every field and has brought in more entertainment and a better quality of life. It has increased the quality of communication and promoted better police response by bringing in GPS, surveillance and cameras. Everything has its own pros and cons. Every coin has 2 sides. Technology is important but it is high time that human beings draw a line. Technology has been highly misused by humans. Technology doesn't make Man. Man makes technology. Science has gifted us the super technology and we should use it constructively so that it would be more boon than bane.

Farah Taggala
History Honours, 1st Year

REALITY

"I wanna sleep cuz dreams
Are better than reality"- I often hear people say!
For You, "Fantasy", For me, "Escapism". Isn't Reality a gift of God? "I wanna sleep"- you say!
Why fear Death? - because that,
Is Reality.
Isn't your Reality a Dream to others? An orphan? He wants to Sleep! SLEEP to death,
An eternal Sleep,
For the World is too "Real", too "Dreamy" to bear with!

You Breathe, A blessing,
You See the world with it's limitations, it's aspirations, it's endless "Dreams", You are Real!
You are Reality !
"Wanna escape life?"- Escape it wholeheartedly !

Life isn't easy!
It never meant to be!
Don't escape, ACCEPT.
It lessens the pain,
It brightens the day,
It soothes the soul!

Be Real,
Let the World know You for who You are,
An Ocean is as real as a Pond!
A Moon is as real as a Sun!
Live and let Live!
When life puts you in Rains,
Play with the puddles😊

Swarnali De

English Honours (1st year)

TECHNOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH
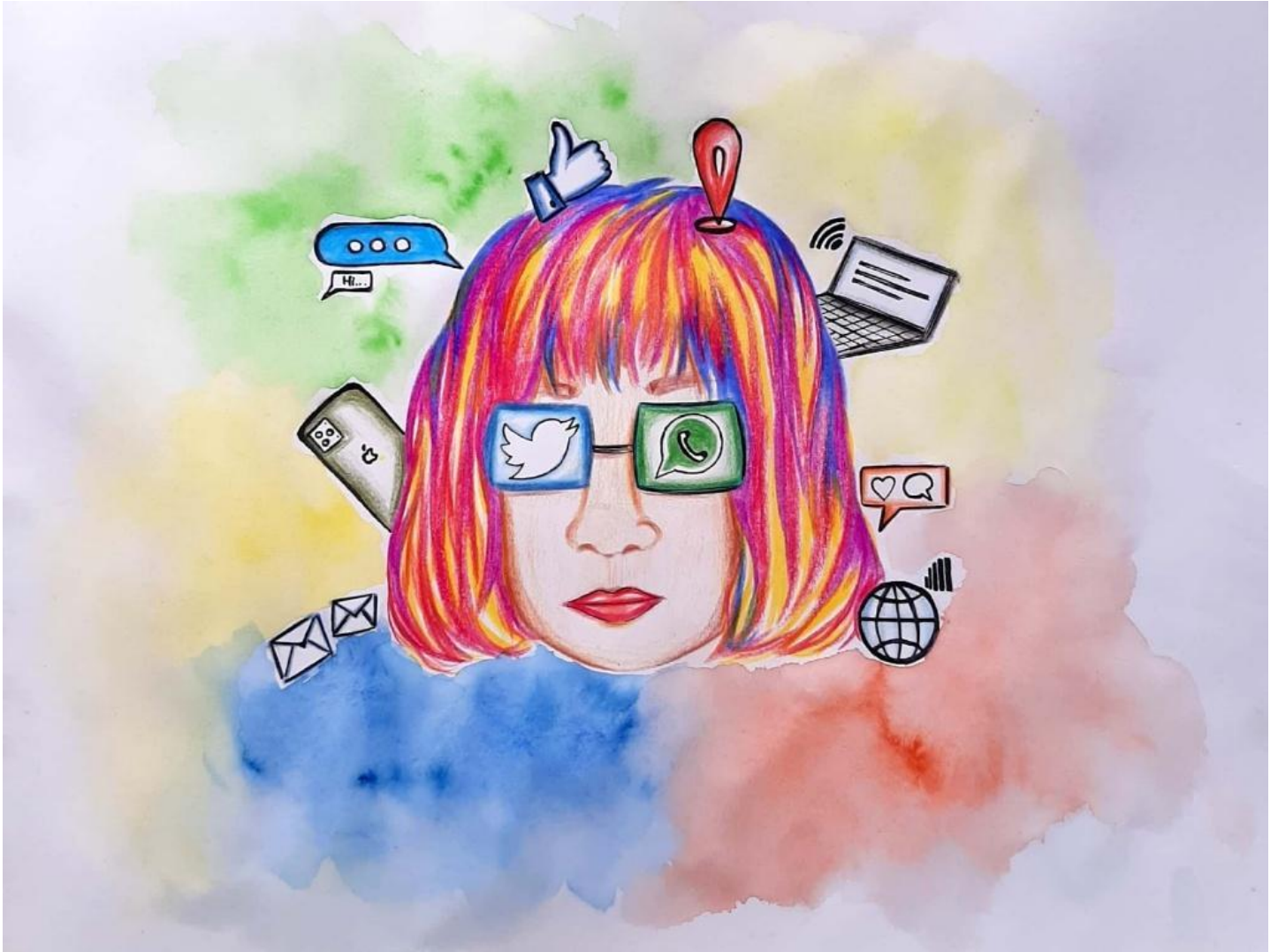
Adrija Chakraborty

English Honours, 1st year

THE MIND AND TECHNOLOGY - WHO IS THE ONE IN CONTROL?

"It's not that we use technology, we live technology.", as the American director Godfrey Reggio justifiably put it, life without technology is unimaginable today. Right from waking up to the sound of a phoned alarm and checking messages on WhatsApp before brushing our teeth, to setting the alarm for the next day before going to sleep, we are incorrigibly dependent on technology at every step of our everyday life. This dependence has had an impact on our minds and continues to do so with every passing day.

Social media is one of the most impactful technological interventions that changed our lives since its inception. This has far reaching effects, both positive and negative on our minds. We live in a virtual world, getting to know what others are eating, where they are going, whom they are going with, etc at the touch of a fingertip. As much it helps us to keep updated about people around us and maintain connectivity irrespective of distance and time, it leads us to fall into a trap of comparison- we experience what is popularly known as "FOMO", or fear of missing out, as well as a sense of inferiority as we feel that others have achieved much more than ourselves and we aren't living life as it should be lived. Constant Facebook updates and Instagram stories make us feel the need to deliberately show our lives in a filtered manner, which eventually turns out to be a superficial portrayal and creates a divide between our real selves and our virtual selves. The number of likes and comments on posts can also have an effect on one's self esteem and desire for attention.

One of the important processes by which the human brain learns is through observational learning. This is where video gaming comes into play in shaping the personality of an individual. There are a lot of controversies about the harmful impact of violent video games on the behaviour of children as well as teenagers. Violence in video games can increase the tendency of aggressive behaviour- as much as this is true, it is also true that video games have helped develop visuospatial abilities and decision making skills in gamers as they operate in a 3D environment and have to navigate through a lot of visual and cognitive stimuli in order to reach the goal of a game. One of the reasons why video games like PUBG have gained immense popularity is because they have been a channel of venting out frustration from everyday life schedules. This goes in accordance with a hypothesis in social psychology, known as frustration-aggression hypothesis, only that instead of expressing aggression in reality, it gets catharsized in a virtual environment. Role playing games like MUDs (Multi-User Dungeons), for instance, Dungeons and Dragons, Call of Duty, etc help individuals engage in experimenting with different roles and may help them resolve identity issues (most importantly during the identity vs identity confusion stage as in Erik Erikson's personality theory of psychosocial development).

Technological dependence has had a significant impact on our memory, attention span and sleep cycles. In the age of having every bit of information available at our fingertips, we have lost our capacity of retention to a great extent, as we prefer to look up relevant information on

Google as and when necessary, instead of taking the trouble to remember them. The excessive use of calculators have made us too dependent on them, and we tend to use them even for basic calculations which taints our mathematical abilities as well. GPS helps us reach any destination with ease, so we prefer to look up GoogleMaps for assistance to find a location every time instead of trying to remember the routes, which mars the directional abilities of our mind. Prolonged exposure to digital media has taken a toll on our attention spans, as it becomes difficult to concentrate for long while reading a book or doing regular work, without looking into our phones at regular intervals, or being distracted by other irrelevant things easily. It seems easier to skim through online articles rather than reading the entire script, so the habit of reading is also interfered with. Neuroscientists claim that exposure to screen lights of laptops or smartphones before sleeping interfere with our internal cues and hormones- the brain can be fooled into believing that it is still daytime and thereby disrupt the circadian clock of the body and lead to insufficient sleep or insomnia.

Apart from a number of negative impacts, technology has also given a platform for unlimited creativity and sharing of talents. Anyone can share their own songs, writings, pictures and any other form of art online, and can open their form of expression to appreciation as well as criticism. The virtual world often proves to be a safe haven for people who find it difficult to connect to people or their surroundings in real life, and helps people curb harmful implications of social isolation or loneliness. Many people often seek refuge in their AI friends like Google Assistant, Alexa, etc whenever they perceive the lack of real people to talk to. As this may help people by being a temporary remedy to serious mental health issues, it might also have severe ill effects like promoting suicidal ideation and self-harm if misused, as in the case of games like Blue Whale.

Hence, it can be inferred that technology has both positive and negative impacts on the human mind. It is important to acknowledge that technology has become an integral part of our lives and we cannot do away with it, but we must also ensure that while turning machines man-like, man doesn't become machine-like. At the end of the day, technology is our creation and we should be able to exercise enough control over it so as to ensure that we don't end up being controlled by it. The over dependence on technology has high chances of taking away that control from our minds. But whether we will let technology remain our friend or let it turn into Frankenstein's monster- the choice is still ours.

Pragya Saha

Psychology Honours, 1st Year

A LETTER TO MY NORTH STAR

A violent storm was raging. The sky was black, all too silent. The thunderstorms, the flashes of lightning penetrated the ground to the underworld. Meanwhile, the sailor was horrified by the ghastly appearance nature can endure. In her mind, she understood that she is a human, too little to fight against the ravages of time. Her blood red eyes were tired, her limbs were aching. She has tread miles of straights and meanders. She has been ripped apart by the thorns of life. There was an uncanny feeling in her heart. In spite of the viscous winds blowing through her, she was suffocating, perhaps because of the continuous failures, the constant rejections. Then the storm pacified a bit. She looked towards the dauntless sky, she admired it's beauty. Suddenly, she discovered that she had lost her way, the compass? She couldn't find that too. What was she to do? Succumb to the mysteries that life has planned for her? Leave her dream unfulfilled? She remembered her mother saying - "Whenever you are lost in the jigsaw of life, just look up in the sky, you will find me waving at you, showing you the right path to walk on." She again looked up in the sky, it was of a pinkish blue hue. Somewhere, it redefined the vacuum in her life. Then, she noticed the north star. It's sparkle adorned the sky. It seemed too far yet too close to her heart as if it was smiling at her, throwing it's arms across to hug her the tightest way possible. She was waiting for a reply and she heard - " I know the pain in your heart. Think this sea as the sea of life. It is tough, it's going to be tougher and every time you should listen to your heart. The soul that lives inside you, what does she want? Just remember, You are not Alone. "

In this way, she regained her confidence, she steered the wheel of her fragile boat and sailed through the enormous sea and finally, she reached the island she wanted to discover.
You must be wondering, who is this sailor? It is me and my north star is my mother. Why will I have to be a boy to be a sailor? We are born of the same creator. We are equal. That's what my mother has always taught me. She said - "Respect yourself and the world is at your feet." Thank you mom for always being there for me, for being the cushion to my aching spine, for being the shoulder to rely on, for being my best friend, for being You. I might sometimes be insensitive, but I love you, more than myself. I know I don't deserve you, but I try my best to be me. However you are, you are unique, you are the best. You are my northstar. You are my #Shero.

From,
Your secret admirer.

Swarnali De

English Honours (1st year)

কে সাদা, কে কালো

এক যে ছিল ছোট্ট ভূত, তার গায়ের রং ছিল বেজায় কালো। তবে তোমরা ভূতেদের ব্যাপারে যা শুনে এসেছ; যেমন তাদের থাকে কুলোর মত কান, আর মূলোর মত দাঁত, তার সাথে কিন্তু আমাদের ছোট্ট ভূতের কোনো মিল-ই নেই। তার আওয়াজ-টা একটু খোনা বটে - মা'কে লুকিয়ে বন্ধুদের সাথে আস্ত শুঁটকি মাছ খেতে গিয়ে গলায় মাছের আঁশ-কাঁটা আটকে হয়েছে; তাছাড়া, তাকে দিব্যি মিষ্টি দেখতে।

তবে, আজ তার মনে ভারি দুঃখ। ওই যে বেড়ার ওধারে শ্মশান-টা পেরিয়ে, সাদা ভূতের দল থাকে তারা ভারি দেমাকি। এদের মতো গাছের কোটরে কোটরে থাকতে হয় না তাদের। তাদের মধ্যে কে এক গুণী ভূত একবার পাক্কা দশ-দশটি দিন এক মানুষের ঘাড়ে ভর করে থেকে শিখে এসেছিল মানুষের আদব-কায়দা। তারপর থেকে তারা ডাল-পালা-পাতা, কখনো বা মানুষের লোকালয় থেকে চুরি করে আনা ইঁট-পাথর দিয়ে বানানো বাড়িতে থাকে। তারা কখনো শ্মশানঘাটের ক্যাওড়া গাছে নিজেদের মুণ্ডু ঝুলিয়ে রেখে আসেনা, বা মড়া ছোঁওয়া এঁটোকাঁটা খায় না। ভূত সমাজে তাদের রীতিমতো সাহেবী সম্মান। কালো ভূতেদের তারা ভূত বলে গ্রাহ্য-ই করেনা।

তা আজ হয়েছিল কি, বেচারা ছোট্ট ভূত বেড়ার ধারে ছোট্ট একটা মড়ার খুলি নিয়ে ফুটবল খেলার চেষ্টা করছিল। খেলতে খেলতে তার বল তো বেড়া পেরিয়ে রাস্তায় গিয়ে পড়েছে। আর তখন-ই সেখান দিয়ে যাচ্ছিল এক মোটা সাদা ভূত সাদা একটা কাগজে কিসব হিসেব-নিকেষ করতে করতে। ব্যাস, ছোট্ট ভূতের বল তো লেগেছে গিয়ে তার গায়ে। আর সে তো তাকে ন্-ভূতো-না-ভবিষ্যতি করে ছেড়েছে। আহারে, কালো তো কি হয়েছে, ছোটো তো! কালো বলে কি একটু ভালো করে কথা বলতে নেই!

"ও দাদু, দাদু!" বলে নাকি স্বরে কাঁদতে কাঁদতে বাড়ি ঢুকল কালো ভূত, আর সবিস্তারে বলল দাদুকে সব ঘটনা। সব শুনে বুড়ো দাদু ভূত শিং নাড়িয়ে বলল, "আরে খেলে যা! বাচ্চা-গুলো সবসময়ে গোল পাকায়। ডাকো এখন বৈঠক!"

বৈঠকে বসে তো আরও গোল পাকল কালো ভূতেদের মধ্যে। বুড়োরা বলে, সব কালো-রা মিলে একমাস সবার মুণ্ডুগুলো জমা রাখা হবে সাদা-দের কাছে, কারণ কালো ছোটো ভূতের জন্যে তাদের মাথা তো লজ্জায় কাটা-ই গেছে! আর সাথে, প্রাণ হাতে করে মানুষের বাড়ি থেকে চুরি

করে আনা ছেঁড়া কোট-প্যান্ট উপহার দেওয়া হবে। নইলে ওরা যদি আবার মারামারি করতে আসে!

এদিকে জোয়ানরা বলে, আসলে আসবে! আমরাও লড়তে জানি। আমরাও সাদাদের কাছে মাথা নামাব না। এই নিয়ে যখন একটা চরম গোল পেকে উঠেছে, খোনা আর নাকি স্বরের আওয়াজে আকাশ ফাটছে, তখন-ই একজন রোগা মতো কালো ভূত ছুটে এসে খবর দিল; ছোটো, বড়ো, রোগা, মোটা, উড়ন্ত, দুরন্ত - সব সাদা ভূত যে বাক্স-প্যাঁটরা নিয়ে এদিকেই ছুটে আসছে! সে তো

এক হই-হই রই-রই কাণ্ড! বুড়ো দাদু ভূত বলল, "সব্বাই চুপটি করে দাঁড়িয়ে থাকো! দেখি কি হয়। সাদা ভূতেরা সবাই যখন এসে পড়েছে, তাদের দলনেতা, মুখে পাইপ গোঁজা লম্বা-চওড়া এক ভূত বুড়ো দাদু ভূতের সাথে হাত মিলিয়ে বলল, "মানুষদের কি-সব কাজে যেন ফাঁকা জায়গার প্রয়োজন হয়েছে। ওরা সব আমাদের ঘর-বাড়ি পুড়িয়ে দিচ্ছে! আমরা এখানে আশ্রয় চাইতে এসেছি। এতদিন তোমাদের ভূত বলে গ্রাহ্যই করিনি। আমাদের ক্ষমা করো!

বুড়ো দাদু ভূত খানিক-ক্ষণ চুপ করে দাঁড়িয়ে রইল দলনেতা সাদা ভূতের হাত ধরে। তারপর তাকে হাড়-খটখটে বুকে জড়িয়ে নিয়ে বলল, " ভেদাভেদ নিপাত যাক, জাতপাত নিপাত যাক, আজ থেকে তবে সাদা-কালো এক হল!"

Soonrita Das

Economics Honours, 1st year

WHAT WE WANT VS. WHAT WE NEED

Can you feast your eyes on me for a little while more?
The tree cried out like a voice coming from a heart's core.
Can I expect a few minutes from you for a while?
A mother cried out,
To her child of this generation in a shout.

We are so well absorbed within our own limit,
Mind is where we get to feel that hit.
That hit which pushes us to sit back,
And there's the point we seem to lack.
Trying is no more a will to try,
I wish one day we never have to lay our hands on our forehead to cry.
The MORE we WANT the MORE we get.
Stretching hands and brains to GOOGLE where everything is set?
I wished if this generation would think on their own.
Instead of resting hands on mobile phone.
I wish we grew up like childs playing in field,
At least their minds get a fair chance to build.

Let me escape and breathe my mind out.
Let my mind speak what it wishes to- without any doubt.
Let my mind step forward before you proceed.
Let me try before you feed.
Now, let me distinguish between what we WANT and what we NEED!

Srilekha Mondal

English Honours, 2nd year

THE DIGITAL DRUG AND ITS ADDICTION AND EFFECT ON THE HUMAN MIND

" It has become appallingly obvious that the technology has exceeded the human mind."

– Albert Einstein.

Standing in the 21st century, it is indeed very difficult to sustain life without the enigmatic effect of technology. People are so dependent on technology and the power of it, that they hardly want to think anything beyond it or without it. But the mighty power of technology has affected the structure and biochemistry of the brain a lot. According to some scientists, the frontal cortex of the brain of the tech addicts looks like that of a cocaine addicted person. The "digital drug" has actually put a set back on our creativity and thinking capability. We are so dependent on Wikipedia, Google and other social media that we hardly go back to our brain's ability to think and nurture in a variety of fields.

Technology in today's world has helped us a lot but its misuse and overuse may degrade a person. This has actually raised up due to many parents' faults. More than 90% of parents do give the digital world onto the laps of their children at a very tender age. The mobile phones, games, videos act as intensives for many children. The devoted game lovers tend to see the world via the screen of their virtual games. The games are so addictive and silent killers in nature that children and students tend to forget the reality and often they remain asleep in that virtual world.

We have reached such a tech zone that, the essence of newspapers, news channels have lost their significance. It's until and unless anything has been posted on social media like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube, people are absolutely unaware of it. Technology has given route to certain illicit sites which pave the way for intimate and erotic videos. They harm the human mind and brain so much that people tend to imitate such actions which often lead to violent and unforgivable crimes like rapes and the brutality after it.

The power of technology has also an efficient effect on our cognitive behaviour, our overt and covert reactions, our sleep, our attitude, our response and even our dream. Technology has a magical effect of subverting a truth to a lie and vice versa. Often people post something very irrelevant and fake on social media and people tend to believe it blindly without even knowing the actual fact. This is the effect of technology. Technology has drawn us to such an extent that we have given a back seat to our culture, tradition and age-old practices. We hardly see the exchange of letters, telegrams, visiting friends and relatives physically to invite them and many more.

Often technology can guide us to the wrong path. Even if any factual information has been presented wrongly in the tech arena, we blindly copy it without cross checking. The intimate relationship with the books and the library has almost eradicated. Human beings have created

technology but now it seems technology has given birth to all of us and it nurtures us throughout. Artificial Intelligence also has positive effects and should not be coloured always.

It has its own apocalyptic world. Technology and its impact on the human mind have become like a wild serpent which always keeps an eye on us like hidden cameras.

Technology indeed affects our brain, and meanwhile the entire physiology. We keep our eyes widely open on the virtual screen for such a long time that it affects the retina of our eyes. Lights off in the room and the only light of the screen forces our eye to exert more pressure, meanwhile raising the power of our eyesight. Not only the eyes, the heat and rays of gadgets harm our skin.

Therefore, technology has been benevolent and beneficial in today's world. But at the same time, it has affected the brain and its thinking capability to a great extent. Often the brain cannot adapt to this heavy neuroplasticity (the ability of the brain to adapt to the new changes and experiences). Let technology guide human beings, let technology usher its positive essence, but at the same its heat should not affect the huge and brilliant brain with the negativities.

Sharmistha Dey

English Honours, 1st Year

ESCAPIST MENTALITY
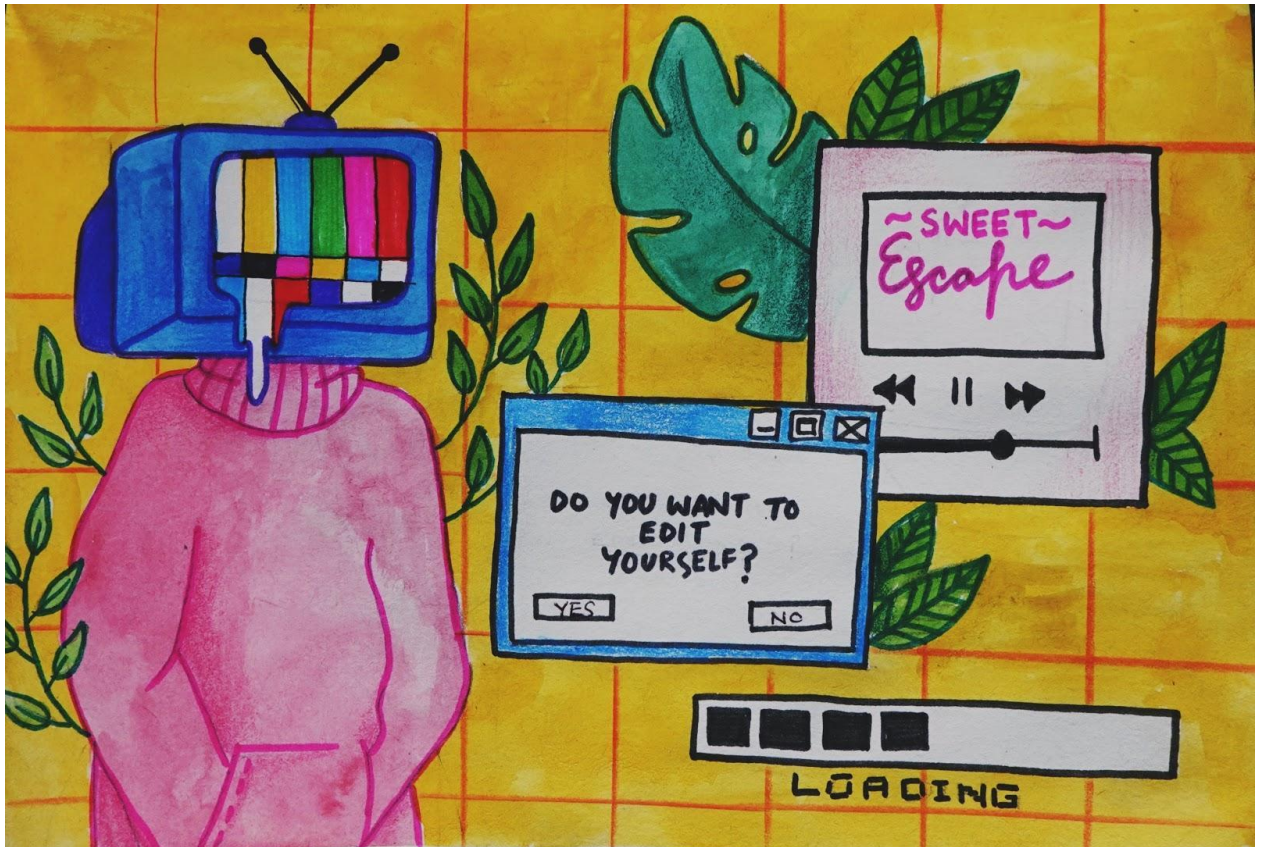
Bidisha Boral

English Honours, 1st year

TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMAN MIND

Our Minds are nothing but Tabula Rasa,
They are moulded, softened and directed in this Technical era.
Addiction, Dependence, are heavy on the Tech,
Our Minds are technically handled now, and we must check.
Where are Dictionaries ? Where are Thesauruses ?
Not a minute to search from them, Internet and Technology are our Moses.
We are the Kings and Queens of our own Minds,
Can't we subvert the dominance of Tech from us and shatter its Shine ?
Technology has taken a shape of a wide serpent inside our Minds,
Its bite is dangerous and permanent, and the effect is Tined .

Sharmistha Dey

English Honours, 3rd year

WHAT'S THIS NEW FAMILIARITY?

Our fingers have lost the familiarity,
Familiarity of that crisp sensation
as we inhale the smell of freshly inked pages,
Now it only knows of hard surfaces and white lights,
No more pecks, hugs or claps,
But clicks, swipes and taps.
We found a new familiarity.

From blue skies to blue ticks,
Last goodbyes to last seens,
What's this new familiarity?

Where's that little wildflower we picked up?
No more of those beautiful smelling roses,
Flower filter has taken their long abandoned places
What's this new familiarity?

Of stories and shares
And likes and posts,
Of unfamiliar faces
and familiar memories ,
Of empty days
and filled up DMs,
Where is my old familiarity?
What's this new familiarity?

Adrija Chakraborty

English Honours, 1st year

TECHNOLOGY LEADING TO MENTAL SICKNESS

Zakiya Faisal

Education Honours, 2nd year

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON HUMAN MIND

Technological advancements have been occurring in leaps and bounds. Currently, in the 21st century, it would be impossible to find a single individual that has not embraced the technological tide that has taken over the world. For most people, a life without social media, the ability to send a text and get an immediate response or even the power to video-call to near and dear ones whenever desired is almost unimaginable. That which used to be a privilege for the older generations has now become a necessity for the current one.

While the role of technology plays an important part in all aspects of human life, the greatest impact of this technological advancement can be found in its psychological effects on individuals. In a study conducted by Scotland Dundee University, it was discovered that those individuals who grew up in a house with a black and white television, had dreams in black and white, while those individuals with a coloured television, had vivid and colourful dreams.

The most notable and relatable impact experienced by most individuals today, is the detrimental effect of technology on ones circadian rhythm, as known as the internal sleep clock. Research suggests that exposure to the bright screen lights can trick the brain into believing it is still daytime, effecting the secretion of sleep-inducing hormones.

While technology has helped the world become more interconnected via social media platforms, it could also have a negative impact on individuals' self-confidence and self-esteem. In a generation where an individual's self-worth is defined by their social media popularity and influence, the constant comparisons with other people and attempts to look perfect can result in a negative self-image that is detrimental to the person's mental health.

Amongst other things, technology also has a negative impact on the attention span and memory of individuals. Research has shown a decrease in a younger individual's ability to remember even general information such as a relative's birthday as well as a decreased attention span which results in an individual's reduced ability to concentrate on specific tasks such as reading a book.

However, the positive changes brought about by the development of technology must be acknowledged and appreciated, as it has improved the quality of life. Technological advancements have made it possible for information on every sphere to be available to us with ease. It has allowed for advancement in the educational field enabling students to obtain an educational experience from different parts of the world.

There is an improvement in the decision making as well as visual ability of people. Video games such as Call of Duty and Fortnite, which call for a quick response for the player have led to increased speed in their quick decision-making skills as well as their tact.

Regardless of whether one condemns the incessant use of technology or one wholly embraces it, the huge role played by technology in our lives, either directly or indirectly cannot be denied. Thus, to truly maximize the benefit of technology in our lives, it is important to strike a balance between embracing the benefits offered by technology without allowing ourselves to fall into the pit of addiction and dependency.

Shannon Chatterton

Psychology Honours, 3rd Year

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EDITORS

Anusoma Chatterjee

English Honours, 2nd year

Shweta Tiwari

Political Science Honours, 2nd year

COVER DESIGNED BY

Bidipta Khasnobis

English Honours, 2nd year

Iqra Jamal

Political Science Honours, 2nd year