

Is technology the necessary evil of today's society, unknowingly undermining our struggle for world peace? In this age, new and advanced technology is becoming increasingly promoted as the answer for our problems on both a personal and global level. A problem which affects all our lives in some manner, from the condition of our country to the condition of our homes, is our struggle in advancing towards world peace. We are all familiar with technology to some degree, wither it be technology which we use in day to day life or technology which a skilled scientist might use in a lab. What we are not generally aware of however, is that technology is, by definition, "the practical application of knowledge especially in a particular area," thus technology does not advance world peace, for it in itself is neutral, neither undermining our advancement towards world peace nor helping it; not-with-standing, some of the uses that technology is applied to is potentially harming our progress towards world peace, technology such as the internet, nuclear technology and the television.

Technology is, in itself, neutral, an object which has been created through the practical application of knowledge in a particular area, wither it be a simple tool or a complex device. You lay a knife on a table and then stand back and observe it. The knife will not move, nor will it solve or hinder your goals. Once you pick the knife up however, you have the choice of wither it will be used to advance your goals or hinder another's, to help you do a task or to do harm. The same principles apply to more complex devices, one of which would be, a satellite. A satellite is a neutral piece of technology doing nothing to help or hinder man's goals. While not meaning to undermine the wonder of it, the satellite is merely an object with vast possibilities. Once man puts his hand to it, to make it do his will, it can be determined wither it will help advance world peace or harm

it. Consequently the question turns from regarding the neutrality of technology, to how we utilize technology.

The practical application of knowledge in the area of world wide networking has given us the internet which is in itself neutral regarding world peace, however, how we use this tool, and the purposes which we design for it, will determine whether it will advance world peace or undermine it. The internet was originally designed for the main purposes of knowledge and communication. Ultimately, such a use of the internet would assist our advancement of world peace, as individuals would learn more about other places, cultures, and environments, and become more knowledgeable about the world we live in. To our own detriment however, the uses of the internet have not remained solely thus, for in today's world it is being commonly used and programmed for purposes which are, often unknowingly, deterring our struggle towards world peace.

Facebook and MySpace are the two most popular social networking devices on the internet and a misuse of these devices is a factor which destroys world peace. You can not have peace on a global level when there is not peace on a personal level. When technology is used for programs like Facebook and MySpace it hinders the progress of world peace as these programs are a factor in destroying peace on a personal level. One way though which peace on a personal level is destroyed through these programs is seen in cyber bullying. According to The National Center for Social Research, cyber-bullying was the most common type of bullying among secondary school pupils at the age of fourteen; 41% of the 10,000 interviewed admitted to being cyber-bullied; Facebook and MySpace being the most common source where cyber bullying begins. Through internet programs such as Facebook, and MySpace, we have put a very powerful and potentially

dangerous tool in the hands of young people, who are still developing emotionally, with very little limits or restrictions. These uses of technology have provided an easily accessible avenue through which people can hurt, damage, and bully other people with little consequence, thus inciting feelings of hatred and anger between people leading to the breaking down of relationships. World peace can not come about through the destruction of relationships between people, through feelings of fear, anger and hatred. Instead, to gain world peace, we need to build relationships, strengthen them. Peace will not happen on a global level if there is hurt, anger and hatred being generated on a personal level through the use of technology such as the internet. While the internet may be neutral in itself, how individual's use this tool determines whether it will help advance us towards our goal of world peace, or hinder us. As seen in the above example, it is not advancing us towards world peace.

Our advancement towards world peace is not only being affected negatively on a personal level, but also on a global level through the uses of nuclear technology. The study of nuclear technology is neutral regarding world peace, how we apply nuclear technology in different areas is what is going to affect the advancement of world peace. Nuclear technology is a very powerful field of study and it has benefited us positively in areas such as our food, industry, the medical field, space exploration, and electricity. However nuclear technology, as seen in reactor plants and nuclear weapons is a rising issue, and a very real threat to world peace. In order for world peace to be a reality nations must be able to trust each other and this can not be done if one nation knows that another nation has the means to create, or has in its possession, nuclear weapons, which

could lead to an arms race. The threat of nuclear weapons, especially in the hands of a terrorist, is an unacceptable use of technology and a risk to global peace.

Hiroshima, and Nagasaki in Japan, were the first, and currently, the only times nuclear technology was used purposefully in a destructive manner, and the results were devastating. The death toll is estimated anywhere from 50'000 to 70'000, mainly civilians, plus the added deaths of those who suffered through the after affects of radiation. Nuclear technology in the form of weapons is still an issue today as "nations around the world are developing ...nuclear weapons." A nation living in fear of its neighbor, or trying to compete by creating their own nuclear weapons, is neither the answer nor the advancement of the issue of world peace. As was shown on the personal, individual level, technology which incites hatred, anger and the breaking of relationships is detrimental to world peace, especially when done through power-giving, potentially dangerous, technology.

The television is another neutral piece of technology, but what the television is being used for, as in what is portrayed on it, is harming our struggle towards world peace. Ninety-nine percent of American households own a television, and on average each household has two TV's. The average American youth watches television for more hours than they spend in school, a 1500 to 900 hour ratio, and by the age of 18 they will have seen 200'000 violent acts and 8'000 murders. The majority of us have seen television statistics similar to the ones above and are familiar with the violence often seen on TV, yet we fail to recognize that it is a factor which is negatively affecting world peace. It would seem that viewing violent acts decreases a person's sensitivity to violence, making it the norm rather than an anomaly. This is especially true of young people who are

developing and thus very impressionable. If a youth watches, on televisions, issues being resolved through violence, as opposed to being resolved peacefully, then resolving issues by violence becomes the norm. World peace will not come through issues being resolved by violence but through peace. If technology such as the television, however, is not modeling resolutions by peaceful acts how can we expect to advance world peace in the coming generation?

Does technology advance world peace? No, for technology itself is neutral but the uses that we give technology does affect the advancement of world peace either negatively or positively; unfortunately many of our “common” pieces of technology are being used in such a way that they hinder the advancement of world peace. For there to be peace in the world there must be peace in the home. As seen in the examples used in the main body of this essay, the majorities of our homes are continually bombarded with acts of violence and are provided with avenues through which hurt can easily be accomplished. This will later affect decisions that people will make on a more global level, decision like the example of how nuclear technology is used. The decisions that people will make on how technology should be used will affect whether world peace will be advanced.