

2013 *What Matters?* Competition

YEAR 11/12 WINNER

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Techno Relationships

That one notification on Facebook, that little blue light on the 'connect' tab on Twitter or the orange bubble popping up on Instagram, indicating a like. The reality is that these things are taking over what most teenagers perceive to be 'reality'. To be more specific, technology and social networking have placed a new spin on relationships. Society would rather advertise their so called 'faithful' relationships rather than focus on the more intrinsic elements of being 'in love'.

Ting! Ting! Your significant other has texted you. Slide to unlock. 'Love you bby girl' (insert emoticon). This is the truth of a majority of teenage relationships in the 21st Century, this is how they share their love and emotions. Their superficiality is enough to make them believe that what they have is 'true desire' for one another. Whatever happened to the clichéd, long walks on the beach or the candlelight dinners at a cheap Italian restaurant? It seems as though love has a whole new dimension, a techno-relationship.

In a 'techno-relationship' one doesn't need to see their partner at all. As long as texts have been exchanged, walls have been posted on and there has been the occasional like, the 'relationship' will be successful. Though, the level of trust in this relationship is questionable. In the future, it may become a tedious relationship. One may become bored of the constant internet sharing and may have to disconnect your relationship. The ideal manner to do this would be through a Facebook message or Twitter DM, no one will have to see the disconnection, and glitches can be sorted out in private.

Some may believe this to be an exaggeration but statistics show that over 80 percent of couples do not spend time in their rooms talking with their partner but are engrossed in their phones or other gadgets. Exactly how can these people say they are in a relationship when most of their time they are not physically communicating with one another? If this is now, what will it be like in the future? At the rate at which society is going, people will never have seen their partner and still be classified as being in a 'dedicated and committed relationship'.

Clearly, technology is not a bad influence on relationships. Long distance relationships, emergencies and last minute things can be easily sorted out. The communication element of a relationship becomes much easier to handle, it's just that some relationships have gone completely overboard with this. To some, seeing people in the flesh does not matter anymore. To them, to have a healthy and balanced relationship means texting and the occasional phone call. To me, this is ridiculous.

The world is technologically advancing but socially, people are going backward. Backward, in a sense that there is no chance for development, the relationship is a straight line, going nowhere. I believe most people need to learn limits even though technology doesn't. Technology is taking over the most important element of any relationship, communication. We need to realise that the best

communication is one that is exchanged face to face, in flesh. Not through the occasional text and internet sharing.