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3/10/2020
English 101
Argumentative Essay

Is computer-mediated-communication (CMC) destroying our capacity for meaningful, in-person conversation?

~~From as far back as we can remember,~~ Technology is always advancing and with ~~these advancements that~~ people are always ~~in the~~ need to adapt ~~to these advancements.~~ I believe ~~o~~One of the adaptations has been the human's connectiveness to our computer mediated communication (CMC) society. ~~We come from an age where w~~Within the past thirty years we have made major advances ~~including in regards to~~ the internet, social media, cell phones, laptops and these devices have played a big role in ~~the change of~~ human communication. We were a society that used to go out to play, mail cards to people on holidays or invitations ~~via the post,~~ ~~received~~ busy signals when trying to reach others that were on the phone, had to wait days for photos to be developed, had to wait until after 9 pm to get cheaper rates on landline phone calls. ~~Now~~ we have morphed into relying on our phones to send instant messages. ~~e~~Our ideas of playing outside have changed into playing videogames in online lobbies while chatting with people around the world. ~~e~~Our greeting cards have turned into Facebook posts and our birthday invites are easily handled through creating an event on social media. ~~B~~busy signals have turned into adding multiple people onto one phone conversation. ~~N~~ot seeing someone until tomorrow has turned into facetimeing someone at any time of the day. CMC can be broken into two forms: synchronous and asynchronous. ~~Where~~ ~~s~~Synchronous CMC refers to communication in real time, like facetime calls or video chat. Asynchronous CMC ~~would be~~ ~~is~~ the opposite, ~~where in which~~ the sender does not receive immediate

Commented [LS1]: How can you phrase this to more precisely state what you mean? Are we more connected to our computers? To society? To one another via CMC? To computers because of our CMC?

Commented [LS2]: Just as with the other verbs, since "used to" still applies and makes the verb past tense, you can leave it as a present tense verb

Commented [LS3]: Here, as above, use active phrasing, rather than passive phrasing and simply sentences if additional words don't enhance the meaning of a sentence. Here a simple, "Now we rely on our phones to..." would suffice.

Commented [LS4]: Be more precise for clarity. Is it our ideas that have changed? Or our actions?

Commented [LS5]: Consider more precise phrasing, using active rather than passive language. Eg: Instead of dealing with busy signals, we...

Commented [LS6]: The "Where" makes this phrase a fragment

responses from the receiver such as text messages and emails. I believe that computer-mediated-communication is most definitely destroying our capacity for meaningful in-person conversation. I believe that our emotional experience of connectedness has diminished due to us relying so much on text, audio, video that our in-person communication has been put on a shelf ~~waiting to~~ patiently ~~waiting~~ to be used once again as the new technologies take its place.

Commented [LS7]: Misplaced modifier; the noun being modified by "such as text messages and emails" is too far away from its modifier, and makes the sentence slightly unclear. Since "immediate responses" is the noun "text messages and emails" modifies it should come right before its modifier.

Commented [LS8]: These are useful terms, but it's unclear why are they defined here?

Commented [LS9]: Great thesis!

Researchers have experimented using different techniques, collecting data to see if people felt most bonded during in-person interactions vs_ computer mediated interactions. A university in Los Angeles did a study involving 58 female students between the ages of 18-21. They picked females because they were viewed to be more sensitive to social signals both online and offline, developing closer peer attachments than males were. Each participant engaged in four 5-minute conversations, each in a different condition: in-person, video chat, audio chat, and instant messaging. Affiliation cues were used in each condition of the study: the Duchenne smile, head nod, gestures and leaning towards the partner. Textual cues were used for the instant messaging portion of the study which consisted of: the emoticon, letter repetition, capitalization, excessive punctuation and typed laughter (Sherman 3-6).

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During these studies it was found that participants used digital affiliation cues more than in-person cues. These results related specifically to the instant messaging portion of the study. This result proves that these days not only are we relying on the digital world but also relying on digital cues by way of communication more than verbal and in-person. Typed Laughter led the results by 93% which indicates that the presence of real laughter is taking second place to the easy and quick "LOL". Researchers found that ~~l~~etter repetition came in

Commented [LS11]: More discussion of the purpose, outcomes, and interpretation of this experiment is needed for clarity.

second place at 79% because it has become the norm to stress a response with a few extra letters than facial expression during an in-person conversation (Sherman 7).

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Studies also showed that although digital affiliation cues were used more, it was the in-person affiliation cues and in-person bonding that were directly related. On the contrary,

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there was no significant relationship between reported bonding and affiliation cues in the mediated conditions including video chat, audio chat and instant messaging. Although all four

Commented [LS14]: word choice

conditions received a sense of bonding, it was the in-person experience that felt the stronger presence of bonding (Sherman 8). Ultimately, the researchers in this study found that did adapt

more using digital affiliation cues, and that was related to an increase in connectedness. People are not only adapting to the new wave technology but are trading the old ways in for good.

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Instant messaging, video chats and audio chats are destroying our ability to have meaningful in-person conversations because we are living in a time where we need answers and approvals

from society on the fly. Although the rich communication that is found in in-person

Commented [LS16]: Although both of these points seem relevant and feasible, they don't seem to follow from the research you've been citing. Either clarify the connection or make these points using different textual evidence.

conversation is so beneficial the new norm has for a greater experience of expression with less reality of affection.

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The United States military have been adapting to the changes of technology using Computer-Mediated Communication as its primary source of communication tools in the

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recent years. Although it has given them an ability for fast directives and responses between branches throughout the world it does create a lack of establishing face-to-face relationships

within military teams. "According to media-richness theory, a text-based communication tool, such as chat, is considered a less-rich medium of communication, given that it lacks the visual

and auditory cues found in face-to-face interactions" (qtd. in Cordova). Researchers find that

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“teams using legacy computer-mediated communication report less cohesiveness and more difficulty developing trust compared with face-to-face teams and teams using audio or video”

(qtd. in Cordova). ~~While Since~~ many military branches rely on integrity and trust this brings up major issues. ~~as insufficient trust and a possible or a~~ lack of cohesiveness have the potential to hamper the interactions between intelligence personnel and other teams ~~and negatively affect. Also effecting their effectiveness when the~~ execution of ~~ag~~ crucial joint missions (Cordova 7).

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Commented [LS21]: Aim for concision and clarity by getting rid of extra/ redundant words and phrases.

The problem is that it is extremely important that there is a level of trust that is developed between our military and its different branches in order to effectively work together and if that trust is not built due to the change in how relationships are developed how can we rely on them to keep our country safe.

Commented [LS22]: Make this sentence concise and clear by cutting extra words. To conclude, tie the paragraph back to your thesis by directly reminding readers of its connection to CMC.

Commented [LS23]: What article?

It is said in the article, “Scholars also argue that the lack of nonverbal and auditory cues (e.g., tone of voice, hand gestures, facial expressions), which allow for the expression of feelings and greater personalization, can interfere with the development of interpersonal relationships” (qtd. in Cordova). ~~Which This~~ brings us to the realization that face-to-face interactions, especially when first creating relationships, can alter the quality of the relationship between two or more individuals. People may be less likely to focus ~~on how they could impact others~~, are less inhibited and polite, and may have more difficulty forming interpersonal relationships. As a result, the use of computer-mediated communication is hypothesized to be more likely to lead to lower cohesiveness and trust among team members within our military ~~branches~~.

Commented [LS24]: ?

Commented [LS25]: Does this also apply to civilians?

We see benefits in the article as well but none that surpass the negative effects computer-mediated conversation has on in-person conversation. Research continues and has

found that virtual management tools such as Google Wave, which combines features of chat, email, graphics and document sharing is a great benefit. Through these technologies, distant team members can now work together more closely despite maybe being dispatched throughout different parts of the globe. It is said that the current focus of our military intelligence organizations concerning CMC is text-messaging capabilities through virtual chats.

“In many military and nonmilitary organizations, chat is currently one of the preferred means of communication for situations in which rapid information exchanges between personnel not physically located at the same site are critical” (qtd. in Cordova). It was found that virtual chat allows for real-time communication and almost-immediate feedback within our military, which is beneficial at times of war and critical instances that instant feedback on carrying out orders are needed.

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Our only problem with these benefits is the huge impact CMC has on the clarity of communication it can have on military teams. Because of the absence of verbal and auditory cues, team members are less able to detect if someone agrees or disagrees with a statement or order from a commanding officer (Cordova 8). “This lack of common understanding can lead to such problems as misinterpretations, unevenly distributed information across team members, and even the failure to convey important information” (qtd. in Cordova). Our military is built on respect and respect is not requested it is demanded from commanding officers. CMC takes away the ability to show face-to-face acknowledgement which can cause unnecessary assumptions that may not even be true.

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Commented [LS28]: The extended commentary on CMC in the military raises the question of how communication was taking place face-to-face in the past.

Change is inevitable and is something that we will always see in society. The change of-in how we communicate has taken a toll on in-person conversation. Some may say in-

person conversation is dying out as the new wave of technology is paving the way for us to depend and get comfortable with doing so from the palm of our hands rather than face-to-face.

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Many have said eChange is often good but I don't think it should be replacing the quality of conversation that we receive from in-person interaction. If we continue to rely on computer-mediated-communication will these eventually lead us to stop seeing people in a personable

Commented [LS30]: Be precise. To what does "it" refer? As is, "it" is referring back to change (ie [change] should be replacing the quality...) which doesn't really work for the rest of the sentence.

way altogether? That is a reality I don't think I am ready for nor would I ever want to be. The importance of a cellphone and instant chatting has been proven but it should not replace the benefit of a developing a real relationship with someone that can only be accomplished in real life vs. behind a screen. We should ask ourselves if we replaced in-person conversation with CMC altogether what would we do in the event technology crashes? I would hate to see us as a society get so caught up in technology that if it was taken away we would forget how to interact with people on a daily basis in the real life.

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ARGUMENT HAS THE BASIC COMPONENTS NECESSARY. IT MAINTAINS A CLEAR THESIS THROUGHOUT, IS GENERALLY ORGANIZED, AND MAKES GOOD USE OF RHETORICAL QUESTIONING. HOWEVER, THE SUPPORTING POINTS/EVIDENCE DON'T CLEARLY BACK UP THE THESIS. MORE CONTEXT IS NEEDED FOR EACH OF THE TWO ARTICLES USED AS WELL AS MORE DISCUSSION OF HOW OBSERVATIONS AND/OR THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH SHOW THAT WE'RE LOSING OUR ABILITY TO MEANINGFULLY INTERACT FACE-TO-FACE. I BELIEVE THE OFFICIAL ASSIGNMENT ALSO REQUIRES 4 SOURCES TO BE CITED. THE ARTICLE PERTAINING TO THE MILITARY SEEMS TO BE A SOURCE OF SOLID INFORMATION, BUT THIS ESSAY MUST MAKE CLEAR HOW THE SAME COCEPTS APPLY TO CIVILIANS. THE COMMENTS MADE IN THE MARGINS

MAY SEEM NUMEROUS, BUT MOSTLY PERTAIN TO MINOR MECHANICAL/GRAMMATICAL
ERRORS.PLEASE CONTACT ME WITH QUESTIONS AND/OR FOR CLARIFICATION.

Works Cited

- Lauren E. Sherman, Minas Michikyan, Patricia M. Greenfield. "The effects of text, audio, video, and in person communication on bonding between friends"
Masark University 2013.
- Amado Cordova, Kirsten M. Keller, Lance Menthe, and Carl Rhodes. "Computer-Mediated Communication" *JSTOR, RAND Corporation 2013.*