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Commentary Paper

Doing is knowing

There are two types of people in the world. Those who do and those who don't.

Experience is the best teacher in life, but it is not always going to be pleasant. Doing nothing will teach you nothing, there will be nothing to learn. Life is all about gaining knowledge and wisdom and to pass it down from generation to generation. We learn by doing, it is basic instinct in human nature. When we are down it is because we experienced the highs and of life. We experience hardship and learn from the mistakes that is how life works. Being able to use all of the senses to create an assumption of what life is.

Nicholas Carr poses the thesis "In the material world, doing is knowing; in media, the opposite is often true". We can see clearly that this premise to be true now with the digital age that we live in. People do not have to do much in the world to know about the world. We gain a sense of being in the know through a screen. Being in the comfort of your own space and time you can know anything you want with a screen and a click of a button. Carr argues that you don't have to go through much to experience what others have seen or what they heard. You are able to learn about certain ideals and aspect with the speed of the internet and the endless texts of the web.

The web and media have become extensions of man. Nicholas Carr's argument is supported by Marshall McLuhan's idea of media are extensions of the senses. Which explains that with media, man is able to extend his senses through a medium and go even further than the

physical plane. The limitations of distance is no longer a barrier for knowing, creating a networked world of simultaneous awareness. Producing the ability to see and hear in ways we could not do physically ourselves. Changing the pace, scale and pattern of our lives changes the way people do things.

People are able to see what the top of Mt.Everest looks like without leaving the comfort of their own room. There are videos of the world renown summit where someone can view with a virtual reality tool and see for themselves the breathtaking view of the horizon. The view becomes so much more beautiful in context when it is done physically. But to see the world through a lens changes the view.

We are able to do so much with the media we have that the attention span of the generation is shortening. Instead of studying and understanding certain aspects of the world, Google is there to bail us out in an instant. Tend to being in the unknown because it is so easily accessible. To know about a book is not reading it anymore it is looking up the premise and reading the conclusion. The speed at which we are able to do so deliberately manipulates the thought processes in life. We become so obsessed with being in the know. We lose the empathy and the message becomes obscured in meaning. Ideas become more streamlined with closed verdicts. Not allowing complexity to grow, by reading and seeing through others experiences.

Becoming so confined in the aspect of “not knowing” we create this anxious ideal of perpetuating assumptions of people instead of asking in face to face contact. Carr’s idea that with media we gain a sense of knowing through a screen poses a danger in unawareness called Narcissus trance coined McLuhan. Where there is a general unawareness in how much media

controls our lives. It changes the way we think and speak; manipulating users to be dependent and engrossed by the easy access to the information superhighway.

With this we fail to realize the sense in which we consume media. Carr's thesis is challenged by Paul Lazarsfeld idea of narcotizing dysfunction. Where people start to consume media in a false sense by not participating in the social process. Doing so much online and through media but not doing so in the physical life is the dysfunction. That mass media inundated people on a particular issues, they become apathetic to it, substituting knowledge for action. There becomes no action in the physical life but in media it moves, creating impressions, likes, retweets, and spreads information almost instantaneously.

Media itself has become such a tool for humanity they fail to realize what lead to its pioneering. The thirst for knowledge at such a speed was meant to be a tool to be utilized in supplement to the physical life. Now in 2019 we fail to realize the life off the internet. The ability to know is gained through experience with the trials and tribulations of life. And that ability has transcended through technology and that idea has been overlooked. Due to the change in pace, scale and pattern media has changed the overall sense of knowing. We become hungry for the now, and that time plays a factor in real experience so we take to the fastest and easiest route to be in the know.