

Nicholas Carr has published an essay that argues that new technologies such as computers are affecting people so that they are becoming “more stupid.” Within his arguments, Carr says that people have become stupider because they quickly skim through information rather than reading deeply into written works and because they cannot retain any information for long periods of time. Carr’s argument brings up some notable points, but the use of modern technology itself is not causing people to lose their intelligence; rather it changes their method of processing information. Most of Carr’s suggestions rely on the basis that the change of human nature because of technology is harmful to intelligence, but in reality it merely shows humanity’s adaptation to its environment. Carr argues that technology based resources have hindered people’s ability to read deeply and retain information from complex texts, which is true, but this does not make people “stupid.” The recent development of computers and phones that can connect to search engines such as “Google” has caused a change in how people must process the information that they read. In times before computers, books and other handwritten resources were the main references for facts, and these were considered more factual because fewer people had access to edit them, which perhaps made them more credible. With the advent of computers, the spread of online web pages has increased the amount of people who can publish information which allows a greater amount of false stories to come out by people who are not educated about that information. Since so many articles online cannot be trusted, the human brain has rewired itself in order to skim over information to process if the source is credible in a shorter amount of time. By doing this, humans have lost the ability to read deeply over every sentence as a way to adapt to the deceitful nature of the new technology, which serves as an indicator of human intelligence. Also, Carr claims that the access for most people to look up whatever they want whenever they want has caused them to lose the sensation of truly understanding and obtaining information. Carr believes that the lack of the ability to obtain information is a key factor for being classified as “stupid,” but it is actually a form of adaptation of the way people process information. The human brain has started to understand information for a short while, rather than long term. This is because most websites and articles can be bookmarked, so if any information is forgotten, people can easily rediscover the lost information. The inability to remember information is not an indicator of a lack of intelligence; instead it shows that human nature has found a new source of a long term memory bank online making the obtainment of information in their minds obsolete. It is evident that humans have not become “stupid” because of their inability to obtain information for a long time. Carr states that humans are “stupid” because they have lost their abilities to read deeply and obtain information, but these points are just evidence of adaptation to an ever-changing environment.