Stoopid or Smart?

In the article *Is Google Making Us Stupid?,* Nicholas Carr argues that the Internet has impacted his life in many conflicting ways. Carr personally cites his inability to easily comprehend works due to his inability to concentrate while reading. He also blames technology for the general decline in human intelligence as well as an increase in laziness. His perceived impact of Google is simply not true. Carr’s broad generalization and personal experience is not representative, nor applicable across generations.

It is irresponsible to blame technology for the lack of comprehension and decline in intelligence. Consider the idea that McDonald’s cannot be held responsible for obesity. People choose to overindulge in less nutritious meals, just as they choose to open the web browser on their laptop or phone. Google cannot be blamed for our Internet use. People make their own decisions to utilize the immediacy of the Internet for needed information instead of traditional research using books, indices, and libraries. Though less physical effort is made in modern research technquies, human intelligence actually *increases* because of the Internet*.*

Self learning has become much easier with technology. One can take advantage of online resources to repair vehicles, install appliances, cook a meal, develop the next big cell phone application, and various other skills. In some communities, people who are not given the opportunity to attend school can take advantage of the internet for personal and professional growth. Moreover, not having to memorize basic information that is easily accessible, such as measurement conversions and complex mathematic formulas, can increase brain capacity for higher order thinking. Some research measuring neural activity shows that people who use the internet have significantly increased frontal lobe activity. This increased brain activity allows a person to more efficiently analyze information to make well advised choices, and could even prevent degeneration of brain tissue, such as dementia and Alzheimer’s disease, over time.

Furthermore, Carr believes that people have lost motivation and become more lazy because present-day technology. People get easily sidetracked with their phones, and boredom tends to come more easily. Although his statements regarding an overall lack of motivation and general laziness sound reasonable, Carr seems to have forgotten the information revolution that the Internet has birthed. He can simply log on to his computer now and gain and share an immense amount of valuable knowledge. Carr is confusing laziness with efficiency.

Though originally published in print, we are more efficiently accessing his article for our analysis. Carr should appreciate how easily his writings are more readily available providing him with the attention often desired by writers. By examining this article it is clear that Carr is focusing on the negative and not looking at the bigger picture. He is living in the past, just as Uncle Rico from *Napoleon Dynamite*, and Carr needs to embrace modern information sharing, just as Socrates should have embraced writing.