

# Draft: “No Isolation” and being present in time

My idea for this written is exam is our everchanging conception of being present through real-time data-streaming. With new software making it possible to be present, even though the physical self is not there. We know this from Skype or Messenger, but this concept can be used for various purposes, that enables the social connection between humans. But in a society, that nowadays keep being accused for being the most introverted and least open to each other, because of for example Facebook and Twitter.

These platforms are supposed to make us more connected, but instead they are making us lonelier than ever before (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-Gil9l8yIE>). Why is that? It seems very contradictory, that software is not capable of bringing us people closer together, but instead, create a gap between our social relations. Is it possible to make software that really connects people? That make us feel “present” even though we are not actually there?

For exploring this idea, I’m using the Norwegian company “No Isolation”, whose goal is to fight loneliness especially amongst children and elders. And they are doing it with technology. They started off the project AV1. Their aim was to help children with long-term sicknesses. Not with the actual sickness, but rather with creating software that helped them feel less isolated socially. Since sick children can’t attend school, they quickly miss out on a lot of social interaction with other children. This can be unhealthy in the long scheme of things. Not just mentally, but physically. Lonely people are at more risk for heart disease and strokes, sleep problems, weight gain on so, because it increases the cortisol levels in the body. Bottom line, loneliness makes poor mental health, which very much affects the physical health.

The AV1 project is a small robot, that contains speakers, microphone, several lights with LED and a camera. The robot is placed in the classroom and via an app the sick child can follow along with his or her mates “in” class. The child can signal that she is raising her hand through blinking lights. The lights can also signal that is just following along passively with blue light and it can “whisper” to

classmates. It weighs one kilo and with 360 cameras the child can see the whole classroom by swiping left and right.



*The Av1 in the classroom. Source: Nolsolation.com*

But could this AV1 robot and real-time streaming be enough “social aid” for a sick child?

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*I want to address the efficiency of the AV1 robot of feeling present, critically through software studies, by analyzing and using real-time and temporality and furthermore discuss ethically the role of a software being a source for a good mental health.*

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In which way can The AV1 robot feel limiting or like having more freedom by the individual?

How can this device contribute positively to the fight against loneliness?

Can software have this kind of moral and ethics and why is a robot a possible link for social interaction?

How can this change the way we perceive macro-temporality?

So far, in this analysis I will use “Real-time Streams” by David Berry and “Real-time for Pirate Cinema”. When analyzing presence, the question of time and real-time becomes relevant. Our perception of time has changed over just the last 30 years and therefore it seems like we can almost travel between places and time through various platforms. But the catch is, that we aren’t there physically and furthermore the software are the deciding our way around the technology.

What could be the consequences of this?

We are given an illusion of freedom and power by the software, while our understanding our “now” (the present time) is vastly shrinking into milli- and microseconds, that almost only can be measured by computational time. Altogether this can change our perception of our existence, since every computational process goes by so quickly, it’s unperceivable, we humans compare to the world unrelated to software.

So, therefore our feeling of “now” is a key point in this assignment and especially for children born into world filled with software technologies. How do they perceive this kind of presence and being in the moment? This can “real-time streams”, as it explains, data streaming in relation to the individual and society. Furthermore, it reveals our perception of time both present and past time and that can also shed light on the subject and the related issues the might follow along with this new technology.

The next steps would for me to figure if the literature is covering enough for this entry. I still feel there could be more to it, so I might need another approach to the idea. The entry feels a bit to narrow still. Therefore, I think could find other literature on my own, with a critical view on software and new technology. Alternatively, I could check if there’s a theme for my exam paper, that covers the literature better, but still covering the idea about children with technology and the possible consequences.