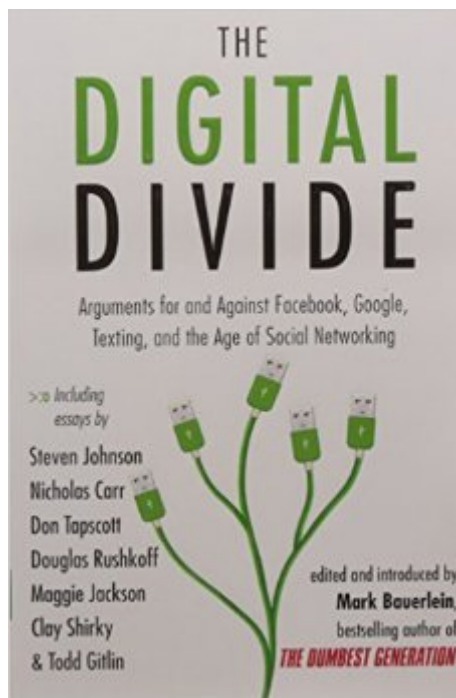


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The Digital Divide: Arguments For And Against Facebook, Google, Texting, And The Age Of Social Netwo Rking



Synopsis

This definitive work on the perils and promise of the social-media revolution collects writings by today's best thinkers and cultural commentators, with an all-new introduction by Bauerlein. Twitter, Facebook, e-publishing, blogs, distance-learning and other social media raise some of the most divisive cultural questions of our time. Some see the technological breakthroughs we live with as hopeful and democratic new steps in education, information gathering, and human progress. But others are deeply concerned by the eroding of civility online, declining reading habits, withering attention spans, and the treacherous effects of 24/7 peer pressure on our young. With *The Dumbest Generation*, Mark Bauerlein emerged as the foremost voice against the development of an overwhelming digital social culture. But *The Digital Divide* doesn't take sides. Framing the discussion so that leading voices from across the spectrum, supporters and detractors alike, have the opportunity to weigh in on the profound issues raised by the new media—from questions of reading skills and attention span, to cyber-bullying and the digital playground—Bauerlein's new book takes the debate to a higher ground. The book includes essays by Steven Johnson, Nicholas Carr, Don Tapscott, Douglas Rushkoff, Maggie Jackson, Clay Shirky, Todd Gitlin, and many more. Though these pieces have been previously published, the organization of *The Digital Divide* gives them freshness and new relevancy, making them part of a single document readers can use to truly get a handle on online privacy, the perils of a plugged-in childhood, and other technology-related hot topics. Rather than dividing the book into "pro" and "con" sections, the essays are arranged by subject—"The Brain, the Senses," "Learning in and out of the Classroom," "Social and Personal Life," "The Millennials," "The Fate of Culture," and "The Human (and Political) Impact." Bauerlein incorporates a short headnote and a capsule bio about each contributor, as well as relevant contextual information about the source of the selection. Bauerlein also provides a new introduction that traces the development of the debate, from the initial Digital Age zeal, to a wave of skepticism, and to a third stage of reflection that wavers between criticism and endorsement. Enthusiasms for the Digital Age has cooled with the passage of time and the piling up of real-life examples that prove the risks of an online-focused culture. However, there is still much debate, comprising thousands of commentaries and hundreds of books, about how these technologies are rewriting our futures. Now, with this timely and definitive volume, readers can finally cut through the clamor, read the the very best writings from each side of *The Digital Divide*, and make more informed decisions about the presence and place of technology in their lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Digital Divide, although published in Fall 2011, contains, for the most part, articles from the 1990s and early 2000s. This means that the reader gets a decent historical perspective of how rapidly social networking and Internet use have changed, but I found myself a little frustrated that privacy issues, for instance, did not receive much ink beyond passing anecdotal references. I found some of Bauerlein's categories and the various studies cited throughout the book suspect for lack of depth, but those things are for each reader to figure out and pursue further, if so inclined. By all means, read this book for a history of the Internet. And it does acquaint the reader who is beyond the age of game obsession with some new facts of life, such as the fact that game designers are now educating educators, students, the military, and much of the workforce. The articles in this book provide some interesting background. It would be good to see a sequel at some point. I read the Kindle version of this book through my public library. Its rendering and navigation are Kindle-perfect.

Very good book about the technological revolution, which is taking place in our society today. It made me to change some of my opinions about the technology. The essays in the book are great because they provide with the current information about the change in the informational age, and in the behaviors of the technology users.

Bauerlein is a talented story-teller. It is not uncommon for tech types to be unable to communicate, but Mark keeps things interesting enough that I found myself choosing to pick up this book as a

source of entertainment, rather than sticking with my regular discipline of reference reading before bed. And I found myself relating stories to colleagues. There are some pretty juicy tidbits about keyword searches, and who searches for what, along with some interesting insight on how search words are monetized. Don't expect this book to be some sort of end-all and be-all guide to the Internet, social media, and the digital world in general, because that would just be impossible to fit into one book.

I personally find this book very interesting and entertaining. This book is compiled of many different articles that pertain to different ideas and views about how people are changing now that we are in the digital age and makes comparisons between the past and today.

If you are trying to define and understand the differences between digital natives and digital immigrants, this is a good place to start. It is a collection of essays. Supplement your reading of this book with current items, also.

This book surprised and delighted me! I expected to read it favoring one perspective, instead it almost completely changed my viewpoint by contrasting varying opinions.

After reading you will understand why there is such a huge division on the use of technology in the 21st century.

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