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*The Written Word vs. The Visual Image*

The “written word” can still be argued to have a certain relevance in today’s fast paced, internet-driven society. The written word has been the basis of which human society was founded upon. However in today’s world, society as a whole has been relying more than ever on technology as a substitute. The written word should still have a place in our society but is proving to become more and more obsolete due to the fact that people today are more inclined to watch a video, as opposed to reading the same material since they are able to receive the same amount of information in a much shorter time-span when watching a video. Watching a video also, takes less effort and concentration which is an aspect that appeals to those who simply do not wish to read or take the time to do so.

Karen Swallow Prior claims that reading has a unique and important role in human life, to which she is correct. Prior states in (*How Reading Makes Us More Human*) that “‘deep reading -- slow, immersive, rich in sensory detail and emotional complexity -- is a distinctive experience’ ... good deal of what passes for reading Today.” (Prior). Deep reading provides a particular experience that can only be relayed through the written word, not video. Prior is of the belief that reading would be enjoyed and practiced more if texts in schools had more meaning and purpose other than just to recognize the surface meaning of a few words. Prior is correct in her claim that reading is a specifically humane practice, one that separates the human species

from the rest of the Earth. Humans are the only species proven to be capable of reading on a complex level which is a practice that should be continued and revered as reading of the written word has been the foundation of which society is built on. Reading has a spiritual aspect to it since it can be applied into a social context. Reading can be defined by Prior as “to decipher a given and learned set of symbols in a mechanistic way, but it... of ‘reading’ a person or situation.” (Prior). This definition shows that reading has social benefits that should not be neglected for the convenience of video.

Cassie Werber’s describes the belief of Facebook’s Mendelsohn’s claim that video will end up taking the place of the written word altogether through time. Mendelsohn states that Facebook will eventually be all video. Facebook, one of the most popular social media outlets where most people communicate and receive their news, etc has shown the potential to eventually replace the written word. Mendelsohn also believes the written word will be surpassed by video due to the efficiency aspect of the video. He stated in (*Facebook is predicting the end of the written word*) that “it conveys so much more information in a much quicker period.” (Mendelsohn). He also mentioned that statistics have proven that the written word will be cast aside for moving images and speech. However, the written word will not vanish completely as most videos require a written script. Prior in comparison to Mendelsohn, believes that the written word is soon to be obsolete but is far more apprehensive about it’s replacement.

In my own experiences, I have learned to enjoy the process of reading as I find that it

allows me to fully appreciate and connect with the characters and their experiences as well. As

Karen Swallow Prior stated, 'read' means not only to decipher ... it suggests that very human act of finding meaning, of 'interpreting' in the sense of a 'reading' a person or situation' (Prior).

Reading and deep reading allows one to fully appreciate a character for who they are and relate to their experiences. My knowledge and experience reflects both the ideas of Werber and Prior as

I enjoy the expression of the written word but also value the convenience and efficiency of the conveyance of information in speech and in video. However, I still believe the written word still

has a place in our society to be thoroughly enjoyed and revered.