**Carr, N. (2008). Is Google Making Us Stupid? The Atlantic Magazine July 2008 . What the Internet is doing to our brains…**

I believe this is a very thought provoking article, a lot more so because I read it in typed format, rather than from a screen. The article asserts that the more we use the internet, the more our actual thought patterns are altered, in fact the very way we think is changing and as a result we want information that is instantaneous and in easily digestible segments, in the same manner it is delivered to us on the Internet. The author produces a series of examples of how these changes are coming about.

In March of 2008, The New York Times decided to devote the second and third pages of every edition to article abstracts, its design director, Tom Bodkin (2) (The New York Times 2008), explained that the “shortcuts” would give harried readers a quick “taste” of the day’s news, sparing them the “less efficient” method of actually turning the pages and reading the articles. Old media have little choice but to play by the new-media rules. Television programs now add text crawls and pop-up ads, and magazines and newspapers shorten their articles, introduce capsule summaries, and crowd their pages with easy-to-browse info-snippets. (Carr, N. 2008)
A 5 year study of on-line research habits conducted by scholars from University College London, reported “It is clear that users are not reading online in the traditional sense; indeed there are signs that new forms of “reading” are emerging as users “power browse” horizontally through titles, contents pages and abstracts going for quick wins. It almost seems that they go online to avoid reading in the traditional sense.” (3) (Gunter, B., Rowlands, I., Nicholas, D. 2009)
It appears that skimming for information is the form of reading employed here, this type of reading is useful to source relevant information, but it can’t of itself be the route to a deep fundamental reflective and contemplative understanding of a subject, therefore if people are only using this method to read, it does not bode well for future learning.
As we are drained of our “inner repertory of dense cultural inheritance,” Foreman concluded, we risk turning into “‘pancake people’—spread wide and thin as we connect with that vast network of information accessed by the mere touch of a button.”(4)(Foreman, R. 2008).

This article is based on information gleaned from”The Shadows” (2010), by the same author, the abridged version in this article gives in my view an impression, that the author has not gathered a large body of opinion that have been giving the opportunity to react to his main contention, that the internet is diminishing our ability to concentrate and contemplate, and further evidence of this assertion would add weight to this contention. In contrast the book as expected gives a more detailed and comprehensive account.

Part of the usefulness of this article is that it has promoted reflection on my own teaching experiences, I sometimes question the limited attention span exhibited by many students especially when confronted with long text passages, a result of their immersion in the online environment. This promotes the question, would the incorporation of a greater level of relevant online content, help to improve levels of concentration by providing more variety and challenge.

I believe lessons are to be learned from this article, especially in the design of learning materials, and in the pedagogical design of courses, for example, could the development and incorporation of blended discovery methods of learning, using the social constructivist ontological position improve our interactions with new technologies.

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Foreman, R, 2008, The Pancake People, or, "The Gods are Pounding my Head". Edge, The Third Culture. Retrieved June 30, 2012.