Dave Cheema

Audio Essay Script

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\*Intro music - something light yet still upbeat\*

In the digital age we live in today, people of all ages can often find themselves fully immersed in the content provided by their phones, laptops, or even video gaming systems. What are people spending so much of their precious time looking at? Here’s the answer: *Social Media*. Between Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, individuals often find themselves fully immersed in a tech universe. However, is this captivation by social media a choice? Or is it ...*addiction*? In other words, are tech companies engineering social media sites in a way that will cause people to become addicted to them? Especially when accessing these sites is as easy as holding your face up to your phone, this point is important to consider.

\*Cut to “brain hacking\* video from Anderson Cooper. Not sure which exact clip segment to use yet. <https://youtu.be/ML55uumQgzA>\*

Interesting, so by writing certain codes and engineering devices/social media sites a certain way, tech companies are not only programming technology, they are essentially *programming people*. Furthermore, many people in the general public will hear this information and immediately think to themselves “these are adults that should be responsible and held accountable for the decisions they make”. So, how does this sentiment change when the individuals being “brain hacked” are teenagers? Or even worse… *children*.

\*Cut to video about NIH study. Again, not entirely sure which clip to use yet. <https://youtu.be/7RY3gSdKRn0>\*

Wow. So something as fun and “harmless” as social media has the potential to essentially re-wire the brains of our youth by affecting brain chemistry. The dopamine release talked about in the previous clip is the same chemical released when people do drugs such as *cocaine*. Could you imagine the uproar this country would be in if adolescents across the nation were snorting cocaine regularly? So, why are they not as concerned about the effects of social media? I’ll tell you why. It’s because even after hearing this information, the general public of America will think to themselves “Well isn’t that the responsibility of the parent to limit their child’s time spent online?” This is often, among other things in life, *easier said than done*. Furthermore, the authoritative approach and simply “taking the device away” does not always serve as the best solution to this *addiction*.

\*Cut to pbs clip. [**https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/the-drug-like-effect-of-screen-time-on-the-teenage-brain**](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/the-drug-like-effect-of-screen-time-on-the-teenage-brain)\*

As mentioned in the previous clip, perhaps the solution to this issue involves open communication and *actual* parenting. Not just yelling at your kids to get off their phones. Although the greedy, money hungry tech companies are the ones to blame for this epidemic, it is our responsibility to control it before we reach the point of no return.

\*Outro music. Something eerie/ominous.