

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade Winner: Raquel Pamplona da Silva**  
**Teacher: Randy Fugate**  
**Del Norte High School**

Nancy stern claims that technology is a “paradox”. It contradicts itself by how it was made to be used, and how it affects our relationships with the outside world. Stern says, “Technology helps us get in touch – and it prevents us from being in touch. It helps us save time – and it makes us waste time”. I agree with Stern’s statement. Based on personal experiences and observations.

In my AVID class we have been reading articles on how technology is affecting our generation. Our class took a “text walk” in which we only texted while we walked around outside. On the walk I noticed a few odd things such as a stuffed bear or an open book on a table. When our class took a second walk without texting, we realized just how much we had not noticed before. This supports Stern’s claim that we can be connected with someone away from us, but may not be very well connected to our surroundings.

When I am texting a friend while I am at home studying or out running errands with one of my parents, I do not focus on what I am doing. I simply just try to finish it without worrying about whether or not I did a good job. I only worry about checking my messages. This also supports Stern and her claim that “... the more connected we get the more disconnected we become”. The more connected to the texting, the less connected I am to my homework, parents, or any other thing or person around me. I become a “zombie”. I do not focus on anything but my phone.

Stern’s claim “Although we know technology provides many benefits, we tend to rely on it too much for important interpersonal communication”, is evidence that we, as humans, need to become aware of our surroundings and take a break from technology. If we do this and simply communicate with each other in person, then we can learn more about others.