**Task**: Write an essay on the suggested topic

**Topic:** How Are Social Media Platforms Redefining and Revaluing the Ties that Bind Us Together?

**Type:** Essay

**Length:** 5 pages

**Formatting:** MLA

**Requirements:**

Answer the question of the essay.

How Are Social Media Platforms Redefining and Revaluing the Ties that Bind Us Together?

**Introduction**

The ability of communication in different ways is the main competitive advantage of the human race. It is one of the determining factors allowing human species dominate on the planet. People are tied together. These ties can be defined as emotional interconnection between all representatives of human species regardless of positive or negative nature of this interconnection. The interconnection is realized via communication, both verbal and nonverbal. The pre-internet era did not stress this interconnection anyhow except for the invention of telephone, probably, but its influence was minor. Information technologies were developed to connect the world, make it more united but something went wrong. Sherry Turkle in *Alone Together* and Malcolm Gladwell in *Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted* explored the influence of the most significant advancements of IT revolution on the modern world – robotics and social

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**Comment [1]:** No need to capitalize that.

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**Comment [2]:** Can be phrased in a much simpler way.

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**Comment [3]:** Is that your opinion, or are you just making it up?

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**Comment [4]:** I think you forgot something....

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**Comment [5]:** Literally?

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**Comment [6]:** You like to leave out articles, don't you?

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**Comment [7]:** Missing “the” again.

networks. Turkle explored the growing yet strange interest of some people to robots as the targets of emotional connection while Gladwell identified the reasoning of people, helping strangers via social networks. Both came to rather surprising and disturbing conclusions. It can be said that the advent of the information technologies has connected the world and at the same time has made the world disconnected more than ever before.

**Discussion**

**Alone Together.** People seek for a 'safe harbor' (in terms of emotions) attaching to robots and loosing connections with real people. Sherry Turkle was very surprised and even shocked by the emerging trend, based on the advancements of the contemporary robotics. Practicing psychologist, Sherry asked Anne, a young lovely woman about 20 years of age if she would agree to live with anthropomorphic robot instead of her boyfriend. The question was somewhat of a joke, of course, but the answer was very unusual.

Turkle states:

> She confided that she would trade in her boyfriend "for a sophisticated Japanese robot" if the robot would produce what she called" caring behavior." She told me that she relied on a "feeling of civility the house." She did not want to be alone. She said, "If the robot could provide the environment, I would be happy to help produce the illusion that there is somebody really with me."… I asked her, gently, if she was joking. She told me she was not. (Turkle 269-270)

The question arises: How could a young, beautiful woman want to replace a flesh-and-blood man with some intellectual can? Something very bad has happened to this world if such situations emerge even hypothetically. The author explains it using her professional experience – people seek for safe relationships where they will not be hurt, they will not suffer from pain

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**Comment [8]:** Huh?

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**Comment [9]:** You clearly don't know how to use articles.

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**Comment [10]:** Not needed.

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**Comment [11]:** Really confusing.

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**Comment [12]:** Missing something....

caused by communications with other people. Another lightening-striking factor is fear. Fear of loneliness is tremendously big in any age (the story of Miriam and Paro) (Turkle 270) so it makes people seek for companions and disconnect with real people, real world. It seems like a paradox, and it is a real paradox. People want to avoid loneliness and related pain and they avoid communication with other people, finding psychological shelter in emotional attachment to a robot. This paradox redefines the ties that bind people together. Modern means of communication allow people be autonomous in full. In other words, if a person wants to avoid real life communication with other people, it is doable. Nearly anything can be ordered via the internet as well as it is possible to make for living online. The core of human existence, the communication with own kind, the emotions given and obtained in the process – it all vanishes today in the lines of texts, e-mails, and 'multitasked' Skype talks as in case of Ellen and her grandmother (Turkle 274-275). It appears that people choose control instead of uncertainty but at what cost. The most disturbing trend in this light is the lack of understanding of difference between living creatures and robot by younger generations (Turkle 265). In other words, people get disconnected from the real world and other people from the early ages of development because of the communication technologies, created to connect. Smartphones replaced real-life friends and even parents. It got easier to communicate by voice but texting and emails are far more preferable by youth these days. The situation may seem less paradox if people are isolated from each other but it is not so. Social networks were created to gather people in one place online, share and give. Facebook became the greatest social network in the world, uniting billions of people around the world, providing simple tools for communication and socializing. People from the most distant corners of the planet got the opportunity to find hundreds or even thousands of friends online. However, even social networks disconnect by connecting. People

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**Comment [13]:** Your phrasing is making me feel weird.

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**Comment [14]:** What the....

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**Comment [15]:** I think you are missing a question mark.

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**Comment [16]:** Your sentences are just hard to read. Period.

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**Comment [17]:** "paradoxical"

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**Comment [18]:** Is this supposed to be poetic?

are ready to help strangers and do not want to talk personally, face to face with friends. Malcolm Gladwell explored the situation.

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**Comment [19]:** Nice to know....

**Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted.** Social networks could have become one of the most powerful tools for organization and coordination of any activities. The events in Moldova and Iran showed that social networks could become a real power in this matter. However, Gladwell concluded that social networks are not suitable for revolutions. The author analyzed various situations and examples of organizations similar and very different from social networks. The results were unexpected, yet rather understandable.

Gladwell emphasized the following:

> The platforms of social media are built around weak ties. … But it doesn't involve financial or personal risk; it doesn't mean spending a summer being chased by armed men in pickup trucks. It doesn't require that you confront socially entrenched norms and practices. In fact, it's the kind of commitment that will bring only social acknowledgment and praise. (Gladwell 137-138)

At first glance, social networks were literally made for revolutions. They combine the unlimited access to almost any information, uncontrolled communication, sharing of various resources, and most importantly, millions of users, united by similar interests and goals. Gladwell compared organizations having hierarchic structure with social-networks' based organizations (communities) and concluded that flat structure of the communities is not suitable for any political activism, at all. It seems rather strange considering the fact that people come to communities driven by the same principles as in non-commercial organizations – free will, ideals or interests, and others. However, it is easy to see that Malcolm Gladwell is right. People, mostly, like to help others and are active in various communities because the goals of these

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**Comment [20]:** Need a different tense, buddy.

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**Comment [21]:** Super confusing.

communities are large but the price of help is minimal. Few pennies or dollars will not change anything for a social network user but millions of such users-helpers can make the difference. The price of the help matters a lot. The desire to help connects people, on the one hand. It provides the members of communities with feeling of being a part of something big and important. On the other hand, this help is always passive in nature. It has nothing similar with activism of the freshmen in Greensboro (Gladwell 133-135) because there the price was too high. Those actions required courage and guts to withstand the issue. It addition, college friends had no other tools to use. Maybe this is the problem today – people have too many convenient tools. It should be said that participation in communities create weak ties and destroys real-life ties, strong ties, real friendship and courage of acting and paying the price much bigger than few dollar as the result. Social network helpers replace real-life actions and big deeds formed by small steps with help to strangers and online friends. Why is it so? The thing is in the convenience and simplicity of such actions. It is much easier (and safer) to donate money to some account rather than stand outside face-to-face with police and shout aloud own position, being shoulder to shoulder with similar active real-life friends. Communication technologies such as social networks and technologies, allowing robots create the image of intellectual reactions to people's emotions were designed to connect people; however, they disconnect and do it rather efficiently.

**Conclusion**

Contemporary communication technologies were created with noble cause but they harmed people more than if they were not developed. Turkle and Gladwell showed how these modern communication technologies replace normal interpersonal ties with more vivid and attractive (sometimes) but soulless and empty emotional bindings to machines and avatars.

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**Comment [22]:** Missing another article.

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**Comment [23]:** Run-on seeeeeentence.

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**Comment [24]:** Try to use correct grammar next time you write.

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**Comment [25]:** The way this sentence is formed, it makes little sense.

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**Comment [26]:** I think I will call you the missing article king.

MostAwfulEssays 3/23/15 6:42 PM
**Comment [27]:** Confusing—once again.

Works Cited

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted*. The New Yorker. 4 Oct. 2010. Web. 28 Oct. 2014.

Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. New York: Basic Books, 2012. Print.

**Overall Impression**

One word: confusing. Though it was sometimes comprehensible, most of the time the phrasing was stranger than a mouse being a cat.