Use of Technology Within Gossip Girl

In the television series *Gossip Girl*, technology is used in myriad ways to expose people’s privacy and control lives. As a result, people question the use of technology twenty years from now or in the near future. If technology is used for bad at this day and age, what would change about the use of technology as it evolves in the future? Most episodes of the series are filled with chaos and violations of privacy, however, the one episode that stands out is season 5 episode 13. In the episode, Blair Waldorf, the “Queen Bee” of the show is getting married to Prince Louis of Monaco. However, Blair is truly in love with Chuck Bass, a devious young man who is always looking for trouble. Throughout the episode, chaos is created by many people but mostly by Georgina Sparks, a long-time enemy of Blair, who tries to ruin the wedding for her own amusement and ultimately succeeds in doing so. Throughout the episode “G.G,” the evolution of technology has been shown as a negative sign for society in New York City due to the constant chaos that is created by the Gossip Girl blog.

As technology is evolving, people give up their privacy rights every day causing potential future problems. According to an article in Forbes magazine, “As Technology Advances, What Will Happen With Online Privacy?” people give up their privacy, both online and in real reality when they use technology in this day and age. The writer says, “Traditional concepts of privacy
— our right to be left alone — and the basic principle that the content of our communications should remain confidential — are being challenged and eroded with advancements in digital technology” (Quora 1). This shows that the use of technology today has evolved in a way that people have no privacy anymore. This is seen in Gossip Girl when Blair’s entire conversation with Chuck is recorded by Georgina and uploaded on the Gossip Girl blog (Safran). During the episode, Chuck confronts Blair minutes before the wedding to see if Blair really has feelings for him. Blair reveals that she will always love him but can never be with him. During this private confrontation, Blair and Chuck believe that they are all alone, however, Georgina is peeping through the door and recording the entire conversation on a video camera. Later the video is uploaded on the Gossip Girl blog for the entire world to see and Blair’s true feelings are exposed to Louis. This specific moment shows that no one is ever truly alone due to technology. It is extremely easy to invade someone’s privacy using a phone. In this scene, Blair and Chuck’s privacy is invaded and exposed with the use of technology. Technology was used to expose Blair’s true feelings for Chuck and sabotage her wedding with Prince Louis, causing additional chaos to her life. This is an example of a negative effect on the progression of technology at this time. If people do not have little to no privacy with the technology of this time, it is highly unpredictable how technology will impact our lives in the future. Maybe people will not be able to have simple conversations over the phone or by text and email, or buy a product online due to safety issues with credit card information and home addresses.

With the progression of technology in this time, people’s actions and thoughts are being influenced every day by the internet and social media. In an article, “Artificial Intelligence and Human Nature,” by Charles T. Rubin, technology is argued to have negative impacts on society, however, technology and artificial intelligence will inevitably replace humans in the future.
According to the article, “If we can understand… the ways in which modern science has shut itself off from serious reflection about the good life and good society” (Rubin 1). This shows that the use of technology today is not reflective of good morals and life. Technology has been used in a negative fashion that influences immoral actions done by humans. This is seen in Gossip Girl when Georgina is using her phone to record the entire conversation between Chuck and Blair. In this scene, Georgina is spying on Blair and Chuck through the crack of an open door and is recording everything on her cellphone (Safran). Without a cellphone, Georgina wouldn’t have been able to record their entire conversation in the first place, and without the Gossip Girl blog, she wouldn’t have the drive to sabotage Blair through the use of social media and the internet. This shows that technology has been influencing and corrupting people’s minds and actions throughout the decade. In this time, creating a great amount of chaos is very simple that it is impossible to predict what technology in the future holds to influence various actions. Maybe instead of creating chaos within seconds through the internet, it could be done in the blink of an eye ten years from now.

With the rise in the use of social media, teenagers have been losing control of their own lives, causing negative side effects for mental health. However, according to an article in the New York Times, “When Social Media Is Really Problematic for Adolescent,” by Perri Klass, it is not technology that is to be blamed. In the article, Klass interviews Dr. Michael Rich, an associate professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, who gives some insight into the correlation between teens and technology. During the interview, Dr. Rich said, “The technology isn’t the problem, we’re the problem” (Klass 1). As the article progresses, Klass writes, “What these different problematic behaviors have in common, Dr. Rich said, is that many of the children involved had underlying issues to start” (1). This shows that technology might not be
the only source to blame for a lack of control for someone else’s life. The user behind the screen and the recipient is also to be blamed. This can be applied to Gossip Girl because of Blair’s preoccupied mind. When the Gossip Girl blast of the video goes out seconds after the ceremony begins, Blair’s state of mind is astray because she is marrying a man she is not in love with. She is forcing herself to marry Prince Louis because she made an oath to God that she wouldn’t marry Chuck. This shows that Gossip Girl is not entirely to be blamed for Blair’s lack of control of life. Blair’s state of mind is equally to be blamed for the chaos of her life.

Blair’s state of mind and decisions are in question throughout the entire episode. This is seen through the lighting of most of her scenes. For example, when Blair’s mother brings Chuck to see her before the wedding, the lighting on Blair brightens. She first smiles at him but then frowns a few seconds later. This smile and frown highlight her love for Chuck and envy to be with him, however, she cannot break her promise to God. The lighting also emphasizes her happiness around him as it brightens when he walks through the door. During the wedding, when Blair walks down the aisle, the lighting never reaches the same level of brightness that was there during her conversation with Chuck. This indicates that Blair is not as content when she is with Prince Louis as she is when she is with Chuck. With all of these indications, Blair’s mind is clearly altered, which means that the use of technology throughout the episode is not entirely to be blamed for her sabotaged wedding. Her mind is distracted with misery and anguish because she is forcing herself to spend the rest of her life with a man she does not truly love. Her preoccupied mind is also to be blamed for the lack of control over her life.

Although technology has an important role in the evolution of science, it has been negatively impacting society for decades, as seen in Gossip Girl through the invasion of privacy via the internet and in real life, and influences from social media. However, technology is not
entirely to be blamed for the chaos that is created, but also the users behind the screens and recipients. This is seen in the episode, “G.G,” when Georgina records the very personal conversation between Chuck and Blair, which gives to show that with the evolution of technological devices, people’s privacies are threatened wherever they go and no one is ever truly alone. Social media and technology have been catalyzing negative actions that are seen as well when Georgina videotapes the entire conversation on her phone. With the technology that existed twenty years ago, people would have never been able to videotape and email on their cellphones within seconds. All of these struggles would’ve been avoided if technological devices haven’t evolved into smartphones and other such advanced devices. However, with the chaos that had been created in Blair’s life, her preoccupied mind is also equally to be blamed, as she was heavily distracted with the thought of her own future. With the chaos and negativity that is created within society today through the use of technology, it is highly unpredictable and how and what technology will be used for in the future. The evolution of technology must pace with the evolution of human morals in order for a balance of life and technology to be present.
Works Cited


