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## Is web surfing affecting how we think?

### Tech savvy at top of "new social order"

by Katie Scott published on 27 October 2008

People who know their technology could be the masters of the human race - "the top of the new social order" - according to a new report.

A scientist claims that people who regularly surf the web show increased learning capabilities and more creativity than those who don't.

Gary Small, who is a neuroscientist at UCLA in California specialising in researching brain function, has published a book claiming that internet searching and text messaging has made brains more adept at filtering information and making snap decisions, says Reuters.

Small studied the brain activity of 24 adults as they used the internet and he found that "experienced Internet users showed double the activity in areas of the brain that control decision-making and complex reasoning as internet beginners".

"We're seeing an evolutionary change. The people in the next generation who are really going to have the edge are the ones who master the technological skills and also face-to-face skills," Small told Reuters in a telephone interview.

"They will know when the best response to an email or Instant Message is to talk rather than sit and continue to email."

Small, who has published a book called "iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind", claims that there are major positives to being tech savvy in this age.

However, he does also acknowledge that too much web surfing and online interaction has sparked a dramatic rise in Attention Deficit Disorder sufferers.

Those who will succeed, he argues, have both



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the online and offline skills.

And this simply means getting a "balance": "It means taking time to cut back on technology, like having a family dinner, to find a balance. It is important to understand how technology is affecting our lives and our brains and take control of it," concludes Small.