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<div align="center">Oxford Scholar Essay</div>

Advancement in digital technology opens up a gateway to the future. Now that we are in the twenty-first century, access to technology further immerses oneself in political, economic, and fundamental studies. However, when 4.4 billion people worldwide do not have access to such resources, it begins to draw a thick line between the poor and the rich. As the digital divide grows, so do differences in income, education, and cultural advancements.

One of the biggest causes for lack of technology is income level. Most families find that the use of devices such as computers and iPads are too costly for their households. This in turn creates a divide between families with working internet access and families who lack this access, compounding the disadvantages for students in their homes. Many students receive online homework and essays, and digitally disadvantaged youths embark on more hours of research and are at risk for falling behind in their academics. Studies have shown that lack of computers for students at home can have a major impact by restricting them from the tech skills that are necessary to keep up with most of the jobs in today's society. Parents who came from a low income family are more technically challenged, and hence have a harder time helping their children with online studies. Some say that smartphones have disconnected children from their personal and family lives but in reality smartphones have helped to provide internet access to

populations who have been technically disconnected for centuries. Since low income families can't afford higher technology, smartphones are a cheaper way to get connected to the internet for research and world news.

To stand out in the job market today, you need some kind of technical skill set which stems from technology within education. Without a reliable internet source at home, students struggle to keep up with their school work. The students who are not proficient with technology in their school struggle to use it effectively. Therefore, since internet-based learning is now in most students lives, school systems and educators must be willing to help ensure that children have access to internet at school and outside of it. Similar to Cardinal Newman, schools worldwide have turned to an online grading systems and give mandatory online homework assignments to students. Most students without this access have to go to a library or computer source somewhere other than their own home. Students lucky enough to own computers, but lack internet connection, venture to places with "free wifi" or end up not completing the assignment at all. Not only do the students need to be connected to the internet but the parents as well have to be educated on these tools to be informed of their children's academic life. Schools that have provided their students with access to internet-based devices have seen an improvement with their student's homework ethic and tech skills.

The digital divide accentuates the split that is already seen between cultures. Poverty stricken countries, like India and Africa, do not even have technology on their minds because they are thinking of more immediate needs such as food, water, and clothes. I saw this first hand

when I traveled to India and was culturally shocked to see how underdeveloped a country can be. Not only did they lack basic necessities but they were extremely fascinated with the technology we had brought. I would have thought many of them would know what a camera looked like but unfortunately I was wrong. It created a division between our two cultures; mine, which is so technically advanced that I would never be surprised with most new technological advancements, and theirs which is so underdeveloped that they didn't even know the word for camera. This proves that the power of information and communication in one's society is instrumental to change. The absence of technology in poor countries makes it extremely hard for them to develop and learn. With increased technology in third world countries, the ability to grow economically would be substantially easier. Technology is one of the most influential factors of developed versus underdeveloped countries.