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Dependence on Technology

Technology in the world is increasing and becoming more advance as each day goes by. Technology can be very useful and efficient for everyday life and for work but technology can also cause negative consequences in their use. *The Martian Chronicles* by Ray Bradbury, is a series of short stories about predictions of the future from the 1950’s due to the evolving and increase in technology. The short stories are about the humans migrating to planet Mars and creating a civilization there just like on Earth. The humans migrated to planet Mars in search for freedom and some for safety. At the time, atomic technology was created and very dangerous to use. Close to the end of the book, the short stories were about the use of atomic technology on Earth which killed all the humans living there. Even the humans on planet Mars traveled back to Earth to visit their loved ones and were impacted by the atomic technology. Technology that existed while the humans were alive continued to exist without them there and the humans that remained alive on planet Mars, used technology to fulfill what they desired the most. Ray Bradbury in *The Martian Chronicles* is warning that increasing dependence on technology can cause the loss of domesticity in the home and technology causing the lack of domesticity can be applied to a nursing career.

In *The Martian Chronicles*, the short story “April 2026: The Long Years” is about Mr. Hathaway and his “family” living on Mars after atomic technology destroying Earth. Mr. Hathaway’s human family had died and he recreated his wife, two daughters and son as robots. He spent time with the robots and spoke to them like if they were his actual family. One day a rocket lands on Mars, it was Captain Wilder and his men who traveled to the other planets. They had known Mr. Hathaway from past expeditions they did together to Mars before human civilization on Mars. Mr. Hathaway and his family held a huge breakfast for the men. As the men enjoyed breakfast with the family, they realized something was off about the family, their appearance did not match with their age. As they continued to study the family, the men discovered 4 crosses close to Mr. Hathaway’s home. Captain Wilder and his men took a walk with Mr. Hathaway, and during the walk Mr. Hathaway fell to the ground. Mr. Hathaway insisted on his family not being informed because they wouldn’t understand and he died. Captain Wilder confronted Mr. Hathaway’s wife and realized she and the children were robots. He explained Mr. Hathaway was dead. He buried Mr. Hathaway’s body next to his deceased family’s grave. He then left planet Mars with his men and left the robots there.

The use of technology in this short story shows the loss of domesticity in the home by the building of robots to recreate the family Mr. Hathaway lost. Mr. Hathaway lost his family and desired them to be back. Through the use of technology, he recreated his family as robots. He spoke to his robots and addressed them like if they were real humans. The robot wife said how Mr. Hathaway after some time forgot he created them. But the robots did not feel the same way Mr. Hathaway felt for them, they were just robots. Making the value of family nonexistent in this technological family. When Mr. Hathaway passed away, his robot family did not feel any emotions. The robots understood what happened, but did not feel any emotions like a real human family member would. Mr. Hathaway’s dependence on technology to fulfill his desire to have his family back caused the loss of domesticity in his home.

A quote from “April 2026: The Long Years”, also shows how the value of domesticity is lost. Ray Bradbury says “He stood looking down at four graves with crude wooden crosses on them, and names. Tears did not come to his eyes. They had dried long ago.” (Bradbury, 208). This was when Mr. Hathaway was visiting his family’s grave. In other words, as Mr. Hathaway visited the grave of his family, he no longer felt the sadness he did from losing his family. The sadness and emotions were gone because of the robots he created to replace his family. Here it is seen how Mr. Hathaway has lost the relationship and the value of his family because of technology. Mr. Hathaway no longer feels emotions towards his real family, which means the value of his family is lost.

In *The Martian Chronicles*, the short story “August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains” is about a dream house full of technology on Earth. The dream house at specific times does the work of everyday life for a family. Because of atomic technology, the family that lived in the dream house died while being outside when the atomic bomb went off. But the death of the family did not stop the house from its everyday routine. In the morning breakfast is cooked, after breakfast the house is cleaned, then the sprinklers are activated in the garden, and so on. Through the everyday routine of the house, a dog barks and is recognized by the house and lets him in. The dog is badly injured and emaciated. He runs into the house in search for a human but doesn’t find one. He smells the food being cooked at the kitchen and begins to act wildly and then dies. The house responds by cleaning up the dog’s dead body. After the dog died, the house continued with its normal hour to hour routine. Patio tables opened, music was played, and lunch was served but no one enjoyed it. Bath water ran but no one there to bathe in it. Then the house recited a poem but no one is there to choose the poem to recite. So, the same poem is recited. Then the house caught fire and fell down, only a wall was left after the fire.

Ray Bradbury in “August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains”, is showing us how the dependence on technology will cause the loss of domesticity. The family that lived in the house died because of atomic technology. In the story it says:

“The entire west face of the house was black, save for five places. Here the silhouette in paint of a man mowing a lawn. Here, as in a photograph, a woman bent to pick flowers. Still farther over, their images burned on wood in one titanic instant, a small boy, hands flung into the air; higher up, the image of a thrown ball, and opposite him a girl, hands raised to catch a ball which never came down.” (Bradbury, 222).

In other words, what is being described here is what the family was doing at the time the atomic bomb went off. The family was outside the home and as the atomic bomb went off, their reflections showed on a wall of the house. Since the technology of the house did all the house work, the family was outside when they were killed when they could have been inside of a home which could of protected them. In a home that does everything for you, it lacks the feeling of domesticity. What makes home feel like home is the role that each family member does at home. For example a mother that cooks, cleans, and cares for her children, while the father fixes appliances at home, and the children play. The house did all the cooking and cleaning for the mother, also woke up everyone at the house at a certain time, and entertained the children. So what would make this house feel like home if nothing is done by the family? Nothing. That is why this advanced technological home lacks domesticity.

Lack of domesticity can also be seen in “August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains” when the dog enters the home. The dog enters the house in search of a human by yelping door to door. The dog was sick and was emaciated but no one is there to care for the dog. As the dog smells the food being cooked in the kitchen, he dies. The dog’s body remains there for about an hour as mentioned in the story. No one is there to comfort the dog in his death. After the dog dies, the house detects the decay in the dog’s body and picks it up and puts the body in the incinerator. No feelings or emotions are felt or seen by the dog’s death. The house continues to technologically run its routine. The fact that there is no one there to comfort the dog in the way a home with a family would, shows the lack of domesticity in the home. Without humans, the house is just a house, it is not a place someone would consider “home”.

Ray Bradbury’s message in warning about increasing dependence on technology affecting domesticity in the home can be applied to a nursing career. The use of technology is increasing and being applied to a nurse’s routine of patient care, which is affecting the values of patient care by the nurses. Nurses are to create a feeling of domesticity in the workplace to allow patients to feel at ease and comfortable. This is accomplished by interacting with patients to build a trusting relationship. A way to build a trusting relationship is by using eye contact when speaking with patients. Now nurses have to incorporate the use of technology into providing care for patients. This dependence on technology, is interfering with building a relationship with patients. The use of computers is now being incorporated when interacting with patients for the first time. Now patient information has to be electronically documented. Nurses’ use of a computer to document patient information interferes with building a relationship. Nurses have to look at the computers in order to properly document patient information, instead of looking at the patient. Since nurses are not looking at their patients, there is no eye contact. No eye contact during interaction, does not allow for the patient and nurses to build a trusting relationship. It is a nurse just getting her job done. As this is continually being done, patient care values are being lost.

The use of technology has also decreased relationships between nurses and other workers in the workplace. Before technology in the workplace, the nurses and doctors would interact with each other to discuss patient care. Nurses and doctors would get together to discuss the plan of care for the patients and decide what medicines and therapies will work best. Now plans of care for patients have to be electronically documented and so, doctors depend on technology to send the message to the nurses about plan of care for the patients. This creates a lack of team work and relationship between the health care workers. Also dependence on technology to send the message to other health care workers regarding patient care can lead to mistakes and misunderstandings. Possibly causing harm to a patient.

Ray Bradbury in *The Martian Chronicles*, is warning about how the increasing dependence on technology will cause a lack of domesticity in the home. In the short story “April 2026: The Long Years”, Mr. Hathaway lacked domesticity in his home because of technology. He had lost his family and recreated them through the use of technology. His dependence on technology caused him to lose the value of family. He depended on his robots to replace his family, that he no longer felt the same emotions when he visited his deceased family. But the robots did not feel for him the same way Mr. Hathaway felt for them. After Mr. Hathaway’s death, the robots continued to exist. In “August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains”, the family of a technologically advanced home died but the house continued to run and exist without them. Without the humans the house lacked domesticity. The dog that was severely sick died in the house and no one was there to comfort it. The house just got rid of the dead body. Also the house was very technologically advanced that because of its technology the family lacked domesticity because everything was done for them. The roles that each family member would do in a normal household were done by technology. This message Ray Bradbury is warning about can be applied to a nursing career because increasing dependence on technology is affecting patient care in nurses and relationships between health care workers. Technology is interfering with the creation of trusting relationships between patients and nurses. Also technology is lacking relationships and communication between nurses and doctors and other health care workers. Technology is affecting the values in patient care and the feeling of domesticity for patients in healthcare facilities. Ray Bradbury is warning that increasing dependence could lead to the loss of human essential domesticity. Technology needs to be controlled or else it will rid of value that is most important to every human, home feeling like home.

Reference:

Bradbury, Ray. *The Martian Chronicles*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1950.

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