



Do digital devices influence your mood?

Description

I put this question to a class of students in digital media and culture. As if we were ever in any doubt, most people agree that technologies do influence the way you feel, and networked, social-media-enabled mobile and laptop devices offer more than other tech. At the very least they provide channels for mood altering entertainment. Hereâ??s some of the nuanced responses that appeared on the class blog page culled from over 50 articulate and lengthy responses:

- The escalation to certain mood depends on how precise and well designed the **content** is. The other important factor is also **how willingly I want** my mood to be affected by digital media.
- These are how technology gives me **supernormal stimuli** (artificial stimulus that evoke a stronger response to our senses) and influence the way I feel as well as stretch my spectrum of feelings.
- The main question of this discussion seems almost vacuous â??! The fact that we use computers for tasks **beyond mere â??computingâ??** indicates some kind of emotional investment.
- According to personal experience, **â??my friendsâ?? words** on Facebook or Twitter really change my moods. If they share beautiful pictures of travel, food with enjoyable words, I feel quite good about views and foods and vice versa.
- Some people throw their devices because of their emotion toward the game [Flappy Bird] â??! the biggest factor that can affect our emotion from watching a movie is the **story** behind it.
- [More about Flappy Bird] I felt restless and the strong desire to win also drove me to play this game again and again until **my eyes started to hurt and my fingers became acid**. These were all the feelings I had when I playing this game on my smartphone.
- With all the recent developments which enrich the â??experience,â?? what digital media is actually doing is creating more efficient ways to **manipulate** emotions.
- I think there are **two modes [or kinds] of people**. One is independent from the environment (their moods do not change with changes of the environment). The other one is the inverse.
- It is always a delight when someone clicks the **LIKE** icon on your Facebook [update].
- If a digital device is poorly **designed**, it doesnâ??t have a chance at influencing our mood for the better.
- With **interaction** comes emotion â??! The whole purpose of creating such devices is to â??fillâ?? gaps in our **desires**: cameras to hold onto memories, phones to be closer despite distances,

networks to be part of something, computers to have control and audio players to filter what we listen to.

- Watch [video](#) of a fireman saving a **kitten**.
- I feel relaxed when listening to cheerful songs through audio players. I feel depressed and can not get over the emotion for long when I see terrorist attack news on the website. I feel no longer lonely every time I make a Facetime [call] with my **families and friends** from far away.
- I donâ??t consider the machine itself and its interface to influence the way I feel (if so, to a very minimal degree), but rather its function as an **intermediary** between me and whatever activity, need or goal I might want to practice, relieve or achieve.
- In a way many digital platforms such as social media, video games etc have become an easy and convenient way for us to feel better with little to no effort, thus making them very **addictive**.
- When Iâ??m being attacked by a tiger in a video game, sometimes itâ??s as scary as being attacked by something in **real life** and the feeling really astonishes me.
- As everythingâ??s available online, you **miss** the fun of hanging out with your family members/friends.
- The advent of social media has introduced us to a **new set of â??emotionsâ??**. I find that digital media quite effectively put me in the mood, whether by reinforcing a good or bad state that I may be in, or by completely altering it.
- When Iâ??m stressed, social networking and gaming have replaced the comfort of **sharing stories** with friends as in the old days.
- I had a friend who would always listen to music she hated or that annoyed her when she was in a bad mood in order to **maximise her anger**.
- You might start feeling **nostalgic** looking at old photos, happy when seeing babies or puppies, or annoyed by reading othersâ?? news about their work success, engagement or marriage or children.
- **Privacy** is to a certain degree lost and this can lead to feelings of anxiety, suspicion, jealousy or even depression.
- Computers **persuade** us through the practice of languages and phrases by using dialogue boxes. Languages and phrases which contain a meaning of congratulation or thankfulness make us feeling better and more powerful about ourselves.
- The **roller coaster** of emotion which social media makes us ride is in itself a unique feeling, serving to make even more apparent the specific feelings that each item evokes in us.
- If some random person (or worse, several random people) shoves cameras in your face as soon as you step out of your house, that would likely change the way you feel. As for smartphones, same thing. See [video](#). If while checking my Facebook page **my eyes are assaulted** by some horrible ignorance or violent injustice toward humanity, my feelings may be temporarily altered.
- I canâ??t even sit still when I could not find my iPhone anywhere near me! I would **panic** when the App Store suddenly tells me my password is incorrect, each time I make a small mistake when keying in my password. And I get excited when I hear The Kinks, even when it is randomly played in a mall.
- I wouldnâ??t say that Facebook or â??Two Dotsâ?? are inherently depressing (though I do think they are inherently isolating), and as an introvert I often thrive in being alone and can sit by myself playing phone games, listening to loud music, and feeling not the least bit **lonely**.
- Digital media influence peopleâ??s feeling not only by the content they provide but also by man-machine **interaction** as well as social interaction. It means you can get feedback immediately.

So sometimes it's about content, functionality, disfunction, intensity of engagement, rapid emotional transitions, realism, controlling your emotions, dependency, addiction, persuasion, being in contact with others through these media, isolation, having desires met, experiencing a lack, assault, and the personality of the user.

Admittedly the topic of the week was computers and emotions, with support from lectures and readings. So this isn't an unbiased survey. But responses to the question, "will computers ever recognise or express emotions?" were more varied. Eg.

- All of the programming is man made and controlled by engineers, thus proving that computers are not yet in the state of recognizing emotions.
- It should be possible in the near future for computers to have the ability to sense what emotion runs on a specific medium, and manipulate the environment to stimulate emotions in us. When devices don't work correctly (which happens with more regularity than I feel like it should), it has a rather more negative effect on my mood.
- I believe some computers can already sense (I submit that a more proper word may be identify) and simulate human emotions. Enjoy this nightmare of a [video](#).
- According to [TIME.com's](#) Health article, "These Goosebump Sensors Can Read Your Emotions" by Alexandra Sifferlin, June 2014, this new technology can actually read your goosebumps and indicate whether you are cold, scared or emotionally aroused.

Notes

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- The question was actually: Do digital media put you in the mood? Do computers, digital devices, cameras, smartphones, audio players, networks and social media influence the way you feel? Will computers ever sense, simulate, or have emotions?
- The picture below was taken at the waterfront in Singapore, 2013.



Category

1. Culture

Tags

1. mood
2. technology

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