

Tabula Rasa

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The Burden of Youth

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Youth in society are locks on the floodgates to groupthink. We bring in new perspectives and prevent the over-fermentation of beliefs held by our elders. Between each generation, an ideological divide forms between the old and the new. Antiquated beliefs are recognized by the youth's fresh eyes. As we grow, adolescents gain independence and critical thinking necessary to challenge the status quo. We discover truths about the world without adult guidance, which gives us each our own perspectives. These critical years of independent thinking form the essential foundation for our understanding of the world.

However, this time can also be molded, mobilized, and weaponized by powerful elites through advertisements and social media algorithms. Young children get lost in loopholes of content on "kid-friendly" sites like YouTube Kids. As we grow, our thoughts are dictated by hollow programs on Instagram and TikTok that impose inescapable stockpiles of content onto our vulnerable minds based on what the algorithms think will keep our attention. When we become young adults, the world of information we consume will be filled by relics of past generations while artificially "intelligent" content creators will operate behind backdoors shielded by human faces. They will have become our new companions. Therefore, technology has disrupted the flow of knowledge creation, and it has brought unforeseeable changes to the human psyche. No longer are children provided the space to develop our own ideas. Rather, our thoughts and perspectives on the world are controlled by robot nannies who have no concern for the vitality of the young.

Despite these insidious obstacles, youth today still have the same function that we did in ages past. Though we must defend ourselves from an onslaught of manipulated information, we also, more than ever, have the vital burden to determine what is true and what is moral. Our job now may be significantly more difficult than it was previously, but it is paramount for both our ancestors and posterity that we take it seriously.