KENNETH GOLDSMITH is a poet and author of ten books, including Seven American Deaths and Disasters (2013) and Uncreative Writing: Managing Language in the Digital Age (2013).He is the founding editor of UbuWeb, an online archive, and senior editor of PennSound, a website for digital poetry recordings based at the University of Pennsylvania, where he teaches writing.In reality it's a befuddling mix of the stupid and the sublime, a shattered, contradictory, and fragmented medium.The way Internet pundits tell it, you'd think we stare for three hours at clickbait--those articles with hypersensational headlines--the way we once sat down and watched three hours of cartoons on Saturday morning TV. But most of us don't do any one thing on the Internet.Am I wasting time if I look up the latest presidential polling numbers, but not if I'm communicating with an old friend on Facebook?Our time spent in front of the computer is a mixed time, a time that reflects our desires--as opposed to the time spent sitting in front of the television where we were fed shows we didn't necessarily enjoy.This essay, first published on August 12, 2016, for the Los Angeles Times, is from his book Wasting Time on the Internet (2016).The notion that the Internet is bad for you seems premised on the idea that the Internet is one thing--a monolith.Internet detractors seem to miss this simple fact, which is why so many of their criticisms disintegrate under observation.Am I wasting time if I watch cat videos, but not if I read a magazine story about the Iran nuclear deal?When I click around news sites, am I wasting time because I should be working instead?