



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## Unintended consequences of technology

Wednesday, November 12, 2014

My daughter got her first mobile phone in 1994. It was called a "car phone" back then and it was huge. Her new husband bought it for her since she had to drive 1 hour to work along country roads which were very deserted in the early morning. Safety was the driving force.

As the technology developed, the rest of the family acquired our own devices – for emergencies, we said. Safety was upmost in our minds or at least communicating something important that couldn't wait.

Yesterday on my run I was crossing the wide driveway of a parking lot. A car pulled out of a space to exit. I kept going. Cars had a stop sign before turning into the road. This lady kept going right at me. She wasn't slowing down. I waved at her, but her eyes were on her phone. She was close enough that I could see her thumb moving. She was either dialing a number or texting. I sprinted out of the way and she kept going, never noticing our close call.

So much for the original goal of safety. I also wondered why that call or text couldn't have been done while she was parked. That was only a few minutes earlier.

I love technology. As a technology coordinator for 25 years, I promoted and introduced all types of advancements in education from the old Apple II to the hand held wireless devices newly available when I retired in 2007. Our school's website went online in 1996 and our high school newspaper followed in 2001 - "News as it Happens" No more paper copies once a month.

English teachers believed that communicating with and writing for an audience would promote better writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. R U kidding? It didn't work out that way, did it?

Ease of communication and personal connections have definitely been enhanced by technology. My 50th High School Reunion couldn't have happened without social media. I couldn't have found my relatives in Europe without online genealogical resources.

DH is downstairs right now working on a presentation for a conference. I just sent him an email regarding our plans for the day.

Pro: I didn't want to break his train of thought

Con: I'm sitting on my butt instead of walking down and back up the stairs.

Con: I've been on the computer a long time this morning including the time to write this. I should have been out running or walking by now.

Pro: Checking in with SP motivates me to plan a healthy day.

The tracker allowed me to plan my food for the day.

I researched what to do with the organic avocado I bought at the coop. This is my very first avocado.

Reading sparkers blogs keeps me connected with like-minded people. Sharing their successes and setbacks reminds me that I'm not alone and motivates me to stick with this.

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I will get outside eventually. The bright side of this delay – it will be a bit warmer.

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## Member Comments About This Blog Post



**EGRAMMY**



2400 days ago



**MJZHERE**



Years ago (years), I was chosen to be the person who learned the new computer at work - it was the size of an entire long wall and info was entered using big cards with cut out spaces. Who would have imagined today?

2400 days ago



**LILANGEL181**



Thanks for the reminder to keep safety and health first!!

2400 days ago



**1STBUCKETITEM**



...yes, I also have been on the computer too long today. Gotta get moving!

2401 days ago



**BARB4HEALTH**



Taking time for technology is something we all do. However, the technology advocates say it is suppose to 'save' time for us. Hasn't done that for me. I get sidetracked and spend more time on the computer than I should. I still enjoy getting cards and letters by 'snail mail.' Don't think I will ever stop liking that! I have to tell or ask DGKs to put there ipods down while we have a meal together. Use to be 'turn the TV off' now its something else.

2402 days ago



**MISCHAKEO**



I am glad you were not hurt by that woman. Technology does have its pros and cons.Sharing with people here does keep me motivated also. It is a great tool. Nice blog.

2402 days ago



**MARYJEANSL**



I tend to be one of the last to get a new technology. I still have a dumb phone, for instance. It works great after over three years and a lot of phone abuse. Also, I have a major prejudice against e-readers, having a deep love for the printed word. But I am also the first to admit that technology, especially the internet, has made a huge positive difference to my life. I wish more people would use technology wisely.

Good luck with the avocado. I am not a big fan myself, though my older ds loves guacamole passionately.

2403 days ago



**SANDICANE**



Ah yes, the dreaded car phone...just got back from almost being hit twice b/c of ppl talking on their phones while backing out of their driveways....yep.

As for SP...yep, me too. I love to stay connected...if only I could do it while I DO other things....twoould be nice....

2403 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**



I am a totally paranoid runner, walker, and cyclist... because of JUST what you said. I kind of survey the drivers I see as I do my human-powered transit, particularly when I bike commute or walk home from work as part of my training plans... it is ghastly how many drivers have cell phones to their ears DESPITE the laws. I walk, run, bike AND drive defensively.

So glad you're safe. I love technology, but good heavens, people... most things CAN wait. Paying attention to what's happening in the physical space where you have that lethal weapon (car) aimed? Cannot!

Spark safely... and hope you got outdoors in the best part of the day!  
2403 days ago



#### WATERMELLEN

What a fun blog -- I had one of those giant "car phones", then a very simple flip phone, but only acquired an iPhone within the past couple years (and love it).

And as for the internet -- it's amazing how it's enable us to connect globally. So much info freely available, like a Gothic cathedral built by volunteer labour of so many.

2403 days ago



#### CD4114015

I thoroughly enjoyed this blog! SO true....and I walked down memory lane...I had one of those big first car phones! But what you speak of now is also more true than I almost can bear. I have heard of young people hitting and killing someone while texting! How awful...for both the texters victim's family and for the texter and his/her family. Lives ruined.

As the others said, texting is illegal in Michigan too but I have yet to see someone pulled over for it and I see it all the time.

Lots of good comments on this blog thanks for getting us thinking!

2403 days ago

Comment edited on: 11/12/2014 2:25:59 PM



#### BBEAGAN

Wild eh? In my city, there has been a HUGE increase in the past year in car-pedestrian collisions... IN CROSSWALKS! Both pedestrians and drivers not paying attention because of cell phones. Even though using a cell phone while driving is illegal here.

I'm one of the few remaining holdouts that still does not have a cell phone! Nor does my partner. I see no need to be accessible 24/7, and I spend enough time on computers as it is...

Love avocados... mmmm, now I want one...

2403 days ago



#### LEWILL1982

I know this is about technology, but your first avocado? I hope you enjoy it so much! I use it in place of mayonnaise in tuna fish - just mash up a whole one and add the juice of half a lemon or lime to keep it from turning brown. I also love it sliced on toast with salt, pepper and an egg on top. You can also puree an avocado, add some olive oil, lemon and fresh basil and make a delicious "cream" sauce to serve over pasta or spaghetti squash.

Technology makes things easier, but it also cuts down on proper communication. I'll be the first to admit, I'd rather send you a quick email or text than pick up the phone, but on the flip side, I miss old fashioned snail mail/letters. The only thing in my mail box is junk mail or bills. Having a degree in English, I do miss the written word and I take pride in trying to adhere to proper grammar- so much that I don't short hand my text messages, or even some of these SP blog responses. :-)

2403 days ago



#### TUTUNAN

Cell phones have their place, but it's not behind the wheel. Here in Hawaii, it's against the law, with a fine if caught. (Doesn't stop everyone, however!)

Hope you enjoy the avocado. Our favorite breakfast is avocado on toast with salt and pepper.

2403 days ago



#### LINDAKAY228

Your first avocado! I'm from New Mexico where we used them all the time, especially for anything that had guacamole in it (a staple there) and also love to just eat them plain or in salads or whatever. You have been missing out!

Texting while driving has become illegal here in Texas but that doesn't always stop people from doing it. And talking on cell phones in school zones also. It has saved my life but it has also caused headaches as far as technology. But I don't think I could go back to the way it was before. I never would have known you and so many other wonderful people!

2403 days ago



#### IFDEEVARUNS2

What do you mean this is your very first avocado?

2403 days ago



#### DR1939

IMHO the most important factor in writing, including grammar and spelling, is reading.

2403 days ago



#### FEISTYLIZARD

A few years ago, my province passed a law that made using your phone while driving super





illegal, for the reason you described. It caused even more dumb accidents than we needed, what with the amount of alcohol related ones we have. My friend pulled a dummy a month ago and was slapped with a \$300~ first time ticket. It actually surprises me that everywhere doesn't have a law like this in effect!

P.S. Mmmm avocado! I haven't bought one in forever but I love them! My favorite thing to do is to use it in place of mayo on a toasted tomato sandwich (my favorite!)- it's a lot more flavourful and the nutrients of the avocado and the tomato combine in a way that is really beneficial to the skin. Yum.  
2403 days ago



#### SWEETNEEY

Yes technology has its pros and cons. Got to balance sparking with getting exercise in and cooking a healthy meal (versus microwave dinners).  
2403 days ago



#### PHEBESS

My favorite bit of technology are the blue tooth phone thingies people wear in their ear ALL THE TIME. They look like Borgs with that little blinking blue light on their head. Absolutely ridiculous.

While I do tend to spend several hours per day on the computer, I also make sure I get outside for a walk, or dance in the hotel room if it's too rainy. And NEVER text while driving - even when I had a cell phone and a car. That's definitely an accident waiting to happen, each and every time.  
2403 days ago



#### GINIEMIE

It is against the law to text in GA, and if I have to call someone while driving I find the number before I take off. I don't do this often it makes Erik go livid, we live with the wonder if the lady who caused his accident was on her phone whilst driving. Some other form of "advancement?" is the GPS on phones, so people are looking at their phones for directions instead of where they are going. Even on my GPS it says, do not set while driving-or some such thing. I either set it, pull over to set it, or talk Erik through it...which in itself is a challenge-thanks to after effects of the above mentioned accident. My techie still has troubles and it breaks my heart in more ways than one. Sorry, my message is if it's so DARNED IMPORTANT pull over, or do it before taking off PLEASE. BTW, it's a good thing you weren't using your phone or GPS.

Thanks my friend, I'm sitting too long this morning too. I'll go do some housework now. Have a blessed day and thank you for your blog...we need to be reminded that being healthy and safe are choices.



2403 days ago



#### MILLEGE2

I, too, am a person "of a certain age" who reaps the benefits and pleasures of the new technology on a daily basis. One of my resolutions when I recently retired was to stay in touch with technology updates despite no longer having work-related reasons to keep abreast.

Nevertheless, using a device while operating a several-ton moving vehicle is total madness. On my daily walk I cross the driveway into a major medical facility and I usually hit it right about the time people are arriving for a shift change. I am SUPER cautious because practically every driver is using a phone while driving. Who needs to use a phone very minute?? And recently I took advantage of a beautiful afternoon to visit a scenic park beside our local river. There were only three other people there, but ALL were entranced with their little screens instead of the natural beauty. But at least they weren't endangering the lives of others.

Glad you survived your close encounter. Several weeks ago a friend of mine was injured in a car wreck caused by a texting driver (a physician who had already received one ticket that morning) who crossed the road's center line and hit her and a tow truck head on. Luckily, no one had to be hospitalized! Technology used sanely is great! But used irresponsibly, it can kill!  
2403 days ago



#### WUMPASTAR

Like with pretty much everything in our lives, balance and moderation is the key. Using a cellphone while driving is absolutely stupid - like you said, couldn't it have been done while she was parked? People underestimate the massive control technology has been taking over our lives, and it's a little saddening to see people talking less and less with each other, preferring to text or email because it's "more convenient" (but not so human in my book).

Also, that's awesome about the avocado. I'm crazy about those things and I buy at least one every week... I add them to pretty much anything!  
2403 days ago

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