Smart Devices -- Foolish Users, April 26, 2018.

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Columns · 2018
Original: http://quello.msu.edu/smart-devices-foolish-users-by-a-michael-noll/
Archived copy, Internet Archive snapshot 2018-06-13

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by William Dutton

April 26th, 2018

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It seems we have become slaves to our computers and smart phones, with near constant updating, synching, and battery recharging. The devices might be considered “smart,” but the users seem to be “foolish” and perhaps even “stupid.”

We are slaves to these devices. We need to feed them electricity to keep them charged, and groom them with updates. They disturb us with interruptions and demands for our attention. We become mesmerized and perhaps hypnotized by what they display to us on their screens.

We discover that their real owners are the suppliers of information, such as Facebook, Google, and the “cloud.” We willingly give over our most intimate personal information, and then seem surprised when it is misused.

They will evolve, we are told, with artificial intelligence into even smarter devices. We will be left wondering whether their artificial intelligence should be contrasted with our apparent natural stupidity. But the myth of the coming artificial intelligence is nothing new – we have been waiting for decades for the dawn of this new age. For me, I am not smart enough for a smart phone, but if I had one, I would put it away in a drawer — and forget it. It could then linger in its “smartness,” while I have my own life to enjoy without interruption and caring for its upkeep.

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Tags: AI, devices, mobile, phone, smart

Category: Mobile Policy and Regulation Opinion telecommunications

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