

The Epidemic of Distracted Driving
The Advocates Injury Attorneys Scholarship
Jordan Feinberg

In today's society, technology is so integrated into everyday life that it might as well be second nature. Everyday, we rely on technology to make our lives easier. Technology allows people to multitask like never before and when living in a society that praises rapid productivity, there could be no better skill than multitasking. When people are plagued by the greatest cause of motor vehicle accidents, distracted driving, can the multitasking that causes distracted driving still be considered as valuable?

While multitasking may appear to enhance productivity, it is more likely to hinder job performance than to help. Clifford Nass, Stanford University researcher found that "over time, frequent multitasking actually changes the way the brain functions, leading to decreased productivity even when focused (McGraw Hill, 2018)." While increased technological safety measures are a great attribute to compliment the "hustle and bustle" society we live in, it lacks a comprehensive solution to distracted driving.

Productivity is valued in the United States over all else. Where people commonly work 40+ hours per week, have multiple jobs, families to care for, while still trying to maintain an adequate social and emotional state, it leaves barely any time to breathe. An article based off of research by Marriott International, Inc. found that among the nine developed countries surveyed, the US respondents reported multitasking the most by far in comparison to their global counterparts. The survey also found that 80% of global respondents felt that inspiration came more frequently during a time without multitasking (PRNewswire, 2019). Without doubt, multitasking, especially when operating a multi-ton vehicle, isn't productive.

While technology is the main medium of distracted driving, the greater issue is the pressure to constantly be on the go. Taking a moment to do something with devoted attention isn't valued the same in a world of mass productivity. The culture in the United States is so focused on working non-stop to reach prosperity that the concepts of focus, work with integrity, and emotional well-being are sacrificed. We need to learn to appreciate the value in balance and creativity, creating an environment where people can be financially stable and manage their responsibilities in a manner that doesn't promote excessive multi-tasking. With the decreased

pressure of multitasking, mediums of distracted driving will decrease, allowing people to feel comfortable to take the time and devotion needed for a task. Altering the way society behaves is clearly not a change that can be made overnight. However, the more people that implement this ideology in their everyday lives, the less motor vehicle accidents caused by distracted driving will occur. I can advocate this change by practicing it myself and encouraging my friends and family to do the same. This will allow us to have more time to manage our responsibilities and tend to our well-being with full attention, diminishing the need to care for those things while driving. Internalizing these concepts is the initial step. Taking action to create a society where this is widely respected is next.

Bibliography

Marriott International, Inc., November 05, 2019. "Americans Multitask More Than Any Other Country - Suppressing Their Creativity and Inspiration". *Cison PR Newswire*. Accessed by www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/americans-multitask-more-than-any-other-country-suppressing-their-creativity-and-inspiration-300951710.html.

McGraw-Hill Higher Education, November 09, 2018. "Multitasking: Helpful or Harmful?" *McGraw Hill*. Accessed from www.mheducation.com/highered/insights-ideas/multitasking-helpful-or-harmful.html