

Fuck your mobile
By: Scott Kennedy

You can see it everywhere, even in our microtropolis of Queenstown. Bubbling through our pseudo urban café culture you see it every day. You'll be sitting there enjoying your \$7 trim-soy-chai-mocca-latte when you hear a sound from across the coffee house. Sounding like R2-D2 playing early 90's German techno music, it is the unmistakable ring of a mobile phone.

Like gunslingers of the old west everyone instinctively reaches for their hip wondering if it is their call. But in the end only one lucky contestant is the winner, despite thinking to himself that the theme from Beverly Hills Cop sounded way cooler when he played it at home.

How did this all come about? When did cell phones become standard issue to every man, woman and child around? Mobiles have been around for a while now, I can still remember my Dad's first one. It looked like a WWII field radio; cost six bucks a minute to call down the street and the reception was so bad it sounded like you were calling Bangladesh during an electrical storm.

As the years went by the phones improved and as their size decreased their popularity exploded. They quickly went from unique to cool to mandatory seemingly overnight. It would seem impossible to function in our modern world without a mobile.

Phones aren't just phones anymore. They now come standard with video cameras, so you can take up to 5 seconds of useless home movie. Digital cameras come standard too, so you can take beautiful photographs that can be enlarged up to wallet size without distortion. Apparently some mobiles still allow you to place telephone calls to other phones as a surprise and delight feature.

What truly disturbs me is our society's need to be in constant communication with the outside world. Are we really that important? Is there some earth shattering news that we need to be available for 24/7? I mean unless you are an expectant father or a secret agent is this really necessary? For twenty thousand years we lived without this ability and we seemed to have muddled through. What has changed?

Have we become that lacking in self-esteem that we have to have our friends reaffirm their friendship fifty times a day? What if we miss their call? They may decide not to like us anymore! Do we need that constant flow of info to somehow feel a part of the greater world?

You hear stories of people sending a thousand TXT messages in a month. My God, that's like thirty a day! Sure the car might break down and you have to help remotely deliver a baby but that still leaves 28 messages to send. What is really that important? Maybe I need to get out more but even Fonze doesn't have thirty cool experiences a day. Not to mention the systematic destruction of the English language that TXT speak is doing. In a few years we will be writing to each other in binary, way simpler than using all of those pesky letters.

The truth is most of the chatter and the TXT's are completely useless wastes of time. Micro updates of our average, usual days. Before we had cell phones if we needed to talk to someone we would give them a call at home. If

they weren't there we might call back if it was important, or maybe even leave a message to have them call us, when they got home. Not anymore, we need to talk to them now, like right now. Doesn't matter if they are in a meeting, on a date, driving their car or on the ski field, they must drop all for the almighty call.

Has the world sped up so much that we could miss something vitally important if we are unreachable for an hour or two? Or is all this communication for the sake of communications sake. Like when they first came up with movie cameras and made films about horses running and other now boring stuff. Are we simply doing it because we can?

My favourite thing that I heard recently is about this web site that teaches you how to re-program your phone. It teaches you how to program your phone to vibrate for up to an hour, or as long as the battery lasts. Why you ask? Well to turn it into a sex toy of course. I have heard of people sleeping with their phones, well now you can actually, "sleep with your phone."

Makes perfect sense to me, the one thing in your life that you hold near and dear. The one thing that you take everywhere, the thing you hold in your hand with baited breathe. The most meaningful long-term relationship you have, the thing you love more than anything or anyone. Well now thanks to modern technology you can go all the way, you can actually consummate your mobile phone relationship.