

New Online Media, Old Human Behavior

October 24, 2014

The Wall Street Journal:

“I’m open to new things, but I’m worried for my children’s generation. They’re consumed. They don’t play outdoors or spend time with friends anymore. The nuances of face-to-face communication have been lost. They ‘write’ a ‘letter’ and then—what do the children call it?—‘mail’ it, and someone far away finds out what they’re thinking. Weird.”

Some ancient Egyptian parent must have had such worries. For millennia, new technologies have outpaced traditional human interactions. Consider giving directions over the phone: “When you’re off the freeway, there are two streets to the right. Take the sharp right.” Odds are that, while doing this, the caller would point sharply to the right, as if the other person was there. Speech and gestures intertwine, and our brains often have trouble dissociating them when we talk on one of those newfangled telephones.

Read the whole story: [*The Wall Street Journal*](#)