Most states have banned texting while driving, but distracted driving only seems to be getting worse. In New York, legislators introduced a bill that would allow police officers arriving at the scene of a crash to test drivers' phones for evidence of recent activity with a device called the "Textalyzer" – the digital equivalent of the Breathalyzer. Is this the best way to deal with public health consequences of texting and driving? What else can be done to stop this pervasive practice?

Before continuing with the assignments' directions below, please closely read the three attached articles (all published in the *New York Times* on May 2nd, 2016) and some of their in-text linked content.

Annotations & Summaries

For *each* article, annotate (circle/mark/underline related information within the text itself along with small written notes) and use the space in the margins to make annotations that address each of the following elements:

- What is the author's main **argument** in the article? Read it aloud, and *highlight it.*
- What **claims**, **reasons**, and **evidence** does he or she use to support that argument?
- Who is the author's intended **audience**, and *how* does that audience affect the way the author's argument is organized, arranged, or supported?
- Look at the line of reasoning: **number** the paragraphs in the article and make annotations about *how* each paragraph is related to the one before and after it.
- Which of the eight academic **lenses** (i.e., cultural/social, artistic/philosophical, ethical, political/historical, futuristic, environmental, economic, scientific) does this author seem to be coming from based on their argument, area of expertise, and background?
- Use the **CRAAP Test** to evaluate each of the three articles.

Discussion Questions & Further Research

- After annotating all three articles, consider which of the eight academic lenses were *not* represented by any of the three authors' arguments. Choose **one** of them through which to conduct further research.

  Use the **research databases** (e.g., Gale and EBSCO) you learned about to find a source that addresses a **topic** *related to* any of the articles, the issues they address, and/or the questions they raise. The article *must* come from a research database, not a simple search engine. **Print** the article, and bring it to class on the due date; please **label** it (at the top) with all of the following: your name, class period, and the name of the academic lens you feel it seems to (primarily) be coming from. Lastly, *highlight* its **main argument**.

- Please create *four* **discussion questions** (that cannot be answered with a simple yes/no) related to any of the issues involved with this assignment (i.e., the articles

themselves or your further research); bring those questions to class, written down and headed with your name and period) for our scheduled class discussion.

Safer Alternatives for Drivers Who Text Are Just Around the Corner

Jake Fisher is the director of auto testing for Consumer Reports' Auto Test Center in Connecticut. He is on Twitter (@CRcarsJake).

It continues to prove difficult to deter drivers from texting and driving. Laws have been passed and apps have been written to restrict texting, but they have had mixed results. When a loved one or your boss reaches out, it's very difficult to resist the desire to respond right away.

To really make a positive impact on safety, doing the right thing must be made easier than doing the wrong thing. Apple learned this more than a decade ago with the 99 cent music download: When shutting down Napster and other websites did little to combat illegal music downloads, Apple introduced an easier alternative that was, incidentally, completely legal. For those who want to stay connected behind the wheel, there are signs that a safer alternative is just around the corner.

Every auto manufacturer now provides very capable infotainment systems, and some provide decent smartphone integration. Make no mistake, many create distractions themselves — and when new technologies threaten consumers' safety, Consumer Reports will continue to call them out. But the best provide excellent voice controls, steering wheel buttons, and large, clear screens that help prevent handheld smartphone use. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto go further by providing users with a familiar — and safer — interface for their smartphone. These systems are becoming increasingly available on new vehicles, and make it possible to receive and reply to texts by using conversational language and without taking your eyes off the road.

Ultimately, any type of communication behind the wheel carries some risk and distracts the driver from the primary task of navigating a quickly moving two-ton vehicle. But this technical problem may benefit from a technical solution. And until cars learn to drive themselves, the computers in our cars can help communication become less complicated and potentially a lot less distracting.

Incentivize People to Ignore Their Phones While Driving

*Sarah Doody is a user experience and product designer. She blogs at SarahDoody.com and is on **Twitter** (@sarahdoody).*

As a resident of New York City, I don't need to own a car. But a few years ago while on vacation, I rented a car and within minutes of driving I received a text message. *Ding*. That familiar phone sound, a signal that someone had something to share with me. I was tempted to look, but I didn't.

On another trip, riding on a bus from Boston to Maine, I looked down into all the vehicles we passed, shocked by the number of people using phones — some typing with a phone in one hand or driving with their knees, eyes veering back and forth from screen to the road.

The impulse to check one's phone is strong and clearly dangerous. So I applaud the recently introduced bill before the New York State Senate which, if approved, would allow police to check mobile phones and portable electronic devices for use-while-driving after an accident or collision occurs. The bill would certainly result in more accountability for drivers, and would make drivers think about the consequences of their distractibility on the road.

But I believe the idea of implementing a "textalyzer" falls short: It is not preventative enough. The onus is still on the driver to turn their phone off or have the self-discipline to not engage with their device while driving. And unfortunately, the reality is that we are addicted to our phones. They have such a profound psychological power on our actions that it's not realistic to rely on people to have the self-control to stop using their devices while driving.

In fact, researchers from Florida State University (http://goo.gl/GI2ndk) found that simply hearing a notification from a mobile device, without interacting with the device (for example, checking a text message or tapping into an app), can even hurt performance on a task.

To change people's behavior, we must change the trigger — in this case, the text or call notification — that causes the behavior in the first place.

One app, LifeSaver (http://goo.gl/prlmLr), attempts to block the temptation: Once installed on a mobile phone, it automatically locks the device in about three seconds after driving starts. When driving stops, it can unlock just as quickly or it can be configured to wait longer (60 seconds) to discourage usage at stop lights. The app can't distinguish passenger from driver, or car movement from that of a train, but its aim is to protect teenage drivers: Parents can incentivize good behavior — and encourage teens not to over-ride the lock on the device — by setting monthly rewards for them based on data that tracks phone activity in a moving vehicle.

This concept of rewards could incentivize adults as well, most especially if those rewards were tied to credits on auto insurance.

If people were incentivized against picking up their phones while driving, that trigger, that seductive *ding*, might be somewhat defanged.

Mobile phones have become so integral to society, it is not fully effective to rely on people to have the self-discipline to not use their devices without a true incentive to do otherwise.

Are the Solutions to Distracted Driving Really What We Want?

*Jamie Lincoln Kitman, a lawyer, is the New York bureau chief for Automobile Magazine. He is on **Twitter** (@jamiekitman).*

People should never text and drive. That's the message from carmakers and governments, just like "drink responsibly" is the watchword of distillers, the fine print admonition you find in their ads near the image of the woman in a bikini scarfing cocktails at the volleyball net and inviting you to join the fun. Talk about mixed messages.

Of course people should never text and drive. Many of the suggestions offered in this debate have promise and merit. But while a lot of talk is devoted to stopping texting while driving, what's really going on is that our automobiles and laws are changing to allow us to do just this: text while driving.

The self-driving features in today's cars – lane-change warnings, adaptive cruise control and functions that permit the car to stop and steer for you, when you've failed to do one or both properly – are safety advances. But they're also technologies that allow carmakers and technologists to bring everyone's phone into the car even more openly as a participant in the experience, a facility they market enthusiastically, while offering – and appearing to offer – a variety of partial solutions to the hazards of distracted driving.

And the completely autonomous car is up next. The car in which you will be free to safely text, knit or read. Possibly even sleep.

Auto manufacturers and their suppliers have all come down on the side of autonomous cars, and the government regulators are in agreement. They cite efficiency, safety and other benefits, many of which will be real. But they will also be expensive.

Yet no vote has been taken, no national dialogue conducted where we discuss the course the industry is on. In coming years, America will be socializing the bill for a trillion-dollar-plus commitment to automating roads and cars. Not all, but much of the benefit will accrue to the private stakeholders who will make and program these cars, both traditional carmakers and new tech companies with interests in future vehicles, like Google and Apple.

Their business interest is obvious, but other companies are happy to see this day come, too. Americans spend billions of hours in their cars every day and this once-wasted time is being claimed by your carmaker, Internet provider and the makers of the apps you use. More time to market to you, more time for you to shop and, all the while, the data of what you do and where you go collected and monetized by someone who's not you. To make it all happen, there will be pronouncements, laws and liability issues relitigated, or relegislated, in favor of industries. And there will be large piles of taxpayer money spent.

Would it be better spent on high-speed trains? Repairing highways, tunnels and bridges? Educating drivers better? We'll never know, we're too busy texting and driving.

Car Driving Distractions Could Be Mitigated Better Voice Technology

*Anjan Chatterjee (http://goo.gl/rVHNas), the chairman of neurology at Pennsylvania Hospital and the Elliott professor of neurology at the University of Pennsylvania, is the author, most recently, of "**The Aesthetic Brain**: How We Evolved to Desire Beauty and Enjoy Art" (http://goo.gl/g8IGFD).*

Attention is largely aligned to our sensory and motor systems: When we are driving, the act of reading or using our hands to text draws attention from seeing the road (the sensory) and interferes with using our limbs to appropriately accelerate, brake or turn (the motor). The ability to "multitask" is mostly a myth, and when applied to driving, it has extremely dangerous consequences.

But giving the police the authority to examine people's phones if they might have been texting while driving may not be the best solution.

Here, we encounter another universal mental shortfall. We all have biases that influence our interpretation of events. These biases allow us to make quick useful judgments — a sudden movement in the dark is dangerous by default until proved otherwise. But they also color our judgments of people based on their age, gender, attractiveness, race and ethnicity. As a bearded, brown man I encounter frequent "random" searches in airports, for example. In a society inflamed by racial tensions in which trust between police and some of the public is tenuous at best, should the police have unfettered access to someone's phone?

The danger is that "Textalyzers" might be another law enforcement measure that comes to disproportionately penalize some groups, and not others, regardless of the frequency of crimes committed.

While we wait for autonomous cars (and jet packs), the distraction of texting and driving could be mitigated by the implementation of better speech recognition and production technology. Using our ears and mouth rather than eyes and hands for brief communication would reduce distractions to the level of talking with a passenger or singing with the radio. Setting aside important concerns about privacy, if police are allowed to examine phones for texts, the procedure would have to apply to all car crashes, and not be left to the discretion of individual officers with specific drivers.

After all, drivers and police officers are human, all too human.

Wireless Networks Should Provide Cell Records to Officers After an Accident

John Villasenor (http://goo.gl/47cbF3) is a national fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor of engineering, public policy and management at the University of California, Los Angeles.

In the long term, driverless cars (http://goo.gl/PjdB3n) will provide an important component of the solution to the pressing and dangerous problem of distracted driving. But when human drivers are behind the wheel, law enforcement officers should have the ability to find out whether texting may have been a contributing factor to an accident. Forcing drivers to hand over their electronic devices to police officers at the scene of an accident, however, would inevitably lead to overreach, among other problems.

First, there's no guarantee that the searches would be limited to texting activity. In fact, what is being called the "Textalyzer" bill (http://goo.gl/6Fn1xF) in the New York legislature would provide a far broader search authorization than that moniker suggests, applying not only to mobile phones but also to laptop computers, tablets and other portable electronic devices. And it's not just texting activity that could be searched: Officers would also be permitted to access information (http://goo.gl/gQpM3b) about the use of a device for a number of other activities.

What's more, officers responding to an accident already have their hands full. Given the complexity of many accident scenes, it's unreasonable to expect them to do an on-the-spot analysis to determine the exact time of the accident, collect what could be half a dozen or more mobile devices, and then to access only the information related to device usage by the drivers in the moments immediately prior to the accident. The natural tendency will be to err on the side of over-inclusion, leading to collection of device activity information from well before the accident.

Clearly, this raises significant privacy concerns.

Instead, wireless network companies should provide mobile phone usage records to law enforcement. While that process takes more time, it also includes important privacy protections that are less likely to be present in device searches at the scene of an accident.

Working through the wireless networks has another advantage as well: It doesn't depend on seeking consent from a driver who may be injured or disoriented and unable to respond.

It's also important to keep in mind that text records alone -- however, they are obtained -- don't tell the whole story. What if a driver had asked a passenger to read and respond to an incoming text? If an accident were to occur at that moment, evidence from a Textalyzer would be used to "prove" that the driver had been texting, even though nothing of the sort had occurred. And what if hands-free texting apps become more capable and widely adopted? How would a Textalyzer distinguish texting performed using voice recognition from more traditional hands-on-the-phone texting?

Despite concerns about the specifics of the New York bill, the discussion it is spurring is of vital importance. Finding effective ways to ensure that human drivers pay attention to the road and not to their devices needs to remain a top priority.

Laws and Attitudes About Texting While Driving Need to Change

Amy Klobuchar (http://goo.gl/0OctwY), a Democrat from Minnesota, is a member of the United States Senate. She is on Twitter (@amyklobuchar).

Five seconds (http://goo.gl/esc3jm). That's how long your eyes are off the road when you text. That's how long (http://goo.gl/oPHNfk) it takes to drive across a football field at 55 miles per hour. And that's how long it took for Jane and Dan Phillips from my home state of Minnesota to lose their daughter, Kelly (http://goo.gl/VpHtws).

Kelly's friend took her eyes off the road to send a text message or change a song. The car went off the road at a curve and rolled. Kelly and her friend died.

It's a common story in our tech-savvy world. Much too common. And that's why, together with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the United States Senate, I've worked to advance legislation that will help slow the surge of distracted driving.

My bipartisan initiatives, which have been included in the last two transportation bills, encourage states to enact graduated licensing programs, helping new drivers acclimate to the rules of the road and increase funding for states to enact and enforce distracted driving laws. It's laws like these that make it possible for states to continue educating the public and for law enforcement to step up their efforts. In April, for instance, Minnesota police officers issued nearly 1,000 citations (http://goo.gl/flBJez) for texting while driving during a weeklong concerted enforcement effort.

There's more work to do. And, of course, this can't be just about changing laws, we need to change attitudes, too. But I'm confident that we can do it because we've done it before. In 1970, fewer than 15 percent of Americans used seatbelts (http://goo.gl/IbivL7). Today, 84 percent do.

We need to keep working together until Americans keep their eyes off their phone and on the road. No text message is worth dying for.