

Texting and Driving

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Prewriting

What is your narrowed *topic*? Be detailed in your answer. You can use any of the versions you've developed for prior assignments.

- ✓ Texting and driving

Who is your primary *audience* or reader? *Why*? Be detailed in your answer about your audience.

- ✓ Primary audience is lawmakers. Since texting and driving has become such a huge distraction nowadays that a lot of drivers are putting other drivers' lives in danger for being careless and thinking he or she has multi-tasking skills when driving.

In a sentence or short paragraph, what is your *thesis statement*, including your angle? Write what will appear in your essay.

- ✓ My point is that drivers are affected by a distracted driver because if the driver is traveling at a speed of 55 [MPH], he or she can actually travel the length of a football field in five seconds. Statistics have shown that 23%, which breaks down to be 1.3 million, of all accidents has had a distracted driver from texting. That is a horrific number, and if there was a device in all vehicles that does not allow the driver to text, there would be fewer accidents from the driver being distracted.

What topic sentences will you use as the foundation of your communication? (If necessary, add more points.)

- ✓ The one thing worse than drinking and driving is texting and driving.
- ✓ Texting and driving is equivalent to someone drinking 4 beers and then deciding to get behind the steering wheel, and drive.
- ✓ The astronomical amount of accidents from texting and driving has reached 1.3 million, which this amount will only keep raising if something is not done about this major distraction.

✓ Research (DeAngelis, 2009) stated that the risk of a crash or near crash event for drivers whom are distracted from texting was 23.2 times greater than those drivers were not distracted while driving.

What *method of organization and development* will you use to develop your paragraphs?

- **Introduction:**

Technology has made a huge advancement over the last couple of years with cell phones. There are almost 200 million licensed drivers in the United States (StateMaster, 2003-2014). When these two items are mixed, the results are shocking. There have been 1.3 million accidents due to texting and driving. It does not matter how far the driver's desired destination is, the use of mobile phones should wait.

- **Body:**

✓ The only thing worse than drinking and driving, nowadays is texting and driving. Studies have shown that texting and driving is equivalent to drinking 4 cans of beer and then getting behind the wheel. I disagree with this because from research and the visual images below, texting and driving has caused more accidents with injuries and fatalities than drinking and driving.

✓ The astronomical amount of accidents from texting and driving has reached 1.3 million. This amount will only keep rising if something is not done about this major distraction. All the accidents occurring from texting and driving comes from the driver thinking

he or she can multi-task. The only multi-tasking that should be done by drivers, is concentrating on the road and paying attention to other drivers.

- ✓ Research (DeAngelis, 2009) stated that the risk of a crash or near crash event for drivers who are distracted from texting was 23.2 times greater than those drivers were not distracted while driving.

- **Conclusion:**

- ✓ Texting and driving has become the most dangerous thing that any driver has done thus far. Not only does it put him or her at risk, but it puts everyone else that could cross paths with the driver at risk as well. It does not matter how far the driver's desired destination is, he or she should wait to use the cell phone. Also, there should be a device that can be installed under the steering wheel that detects signals or wave lengths from a cell phone that automatically puts the phone in a mode that can only be used in emergency only situations.

Texting and Driving Second Draft

Technology has made such a huge advancement over the last couple of years with cell phones, and there are almost 200 million licensed drivers in the United States (StateMaster, 2003-2014). When these two items mix, the results are shocking, as the astronomical amount of accidents from texting and driving has reached 1.3 million (Texting and Driving Statistics, 2002-2014). This amount will only keep rising if something is not done about this major distraction. All of the accidents occurring from texting and driving comes from the driver thinking he or she can multi-task. The only multi-tasking that should be done by a driver is concentrating on the road and paying attention to other drivers.

Since texting is everywhere and seems to be the thing a lot of people are doing, there are reasonable places and times that texting is acceptable and certain time it is not (some examples include the following: texting is fine if someone is having a conversation with a friend on a bored day when you are lounging around the house, or whatever the case may be). Texting, or any use of a cell phone is not acceptable when someone is behind the wheel driving. This behavior poses as a major and an often deadly distraction, because there are more people in this world dying on a daily basis from texting and driving then drinking and driving. While drinking and driving causes drivers to become impaired due to being inebriated, texting and driving is a far worse distraction because there are three different things involved that causes so many accidents [whether only injuries or fatalities]. I have included the 3 different forms of distractions below:



Figure 1: Texting While Driving: A Killer of Teen Drivers. 2014. by Paul Samakow.

Figure 1: As one can see, the image above shows three different forms of distractions contained with texting and driving. All of these forms are important when it comes to driving, because cognitive or mental distraction occurs when a driver's mind isn't focused on driving. Visual distraction occurs when a driver looks at anything other than the road ahead. Manual distraction occurs when the driver takes one or both hands off the wheel for any reason (Samakow, 2014). According to (Samakow, 2014), C&D rigged a car to alert drivers when to brake. They [C&D] then tested how long it took the driver to brake when sober, when legally drunk at .08, when reading an e-mail, and also when sending a text message. Driving at 70 miles per hour, the driver was slower and slower reacting and braking when e-mailing and texting. The results of this test are as follows: A) Unimpaired: .54 seconds to brake; B) Legally drunk: add 4 feet; C) Reading e-mail: add 36 feet; and D) Sending a text: add 70 feet. (Beckman, 2012).



Figure II Stopping Distance Added When a Driver Is Texting, 2012. by Sarah Beckman.

Figure II: After seeing these results, texting obviously comes in last with the longest distance, making it the most dangerous form of distraction he or she can be doing behind the wheel due to the fact that it involves all three forms distractions, where drinking and driving involves two of the three; it does not involve manual distraction (Samakow, 2014). In 2012, texting while driving accounted for over 1.6 million accidents in the United States, while in the same year 1,060 people were injured; and eleven teens died each day (Samakow, 2014). If the eleven teens each day is multiplied by 365 days for the year, that is 4,015 fatalities due to texting behind the wheel per year if this number does not increase.

The only thing worse than drinking and driving nowadays is texting and driving. Studies have shown that texting and driving is equivalent to drinking 4 cans of beer and getting behind the wheel. I disagree with this because from the visual images below [Fig. IV & V], texting and driving has caused more accidents with injuries and fatalities then drinking and driving. In my opinion, texting and driving is more dangerous than drinking 4 cans of beer because it depends who (AAA) is drinking the 4 cans of beer, as ones blood alcohol level differs from another within those 4 cans depending on one's height, weight, and if he or she is a male, or female. Everyone has a different tolerance level when it comes to alcohol. Also, everyone needs to

realize that once he or she is behind the steering wheel, in any kind of motor vehicle, they should not even touch the cell phone for any kind of reason. It might only take five seconds to reply to a text message, but within that five seconds traveling at a rate of 55 [MPH], he or she can travel the length of a football field. Texting behind the wheel involves taking your hands off the steering wheel [whether it's one hand or both], one's ability to see what is going on within the lanes [because their eyes are on the phone and not the road], and the ability to concentrate on driving [due to the fact he or she is trying to think of what to send in the text message]. Research (DeAngelis, 2009) stated that the risk of a crash or near crash event for drivers who are distracted from texting was 23.2 times greater than those drivers were not distracted while driving (Texting and Driving Statistics, 2002-2014).

Texting has become the top form of communication which prompts a growing concern about texting and driving posing a major risk to public safety. Texting involves multiple sources of distraction. Anyone behind the wheel texting will need to change his or her behavior in order to save the maximum number of lives per year. Texting and driving has been proven that it is more dangerous than being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. There have been more accidents caused by texting and driving in the last couple of years than there has been due to being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (Pascual-Ferrá, Liu, & Beatty, 2012).

Accidents caused by drivers who have been under the influence [that resulted in fatalities] have decreased since 2002, [but when it comes to texting] accidents that have been fatal are the rise because of the driver being distracted. Mostly every household member owns a cell phone and this distraction can start with drivers at the age of 16, where the age for being under the influence is typically 21 and older. . The driver is not only putting him or herself at risk, but they are putting everyone else on the road in the way of danger when he or she is not

thinking of all the dangers involved. If drivers have to take an important call or send a text he or she should pull over on the shoulder of the road and maybe realize how distracted they have become by this distraction (Bowers, 2014).

When I had a flip phone, I was one of the drivers who would send text messages. I knew where every letter was, and had it in the T9 option so all I had to do was spell out what I wanted and the phone put the word in [I could text without taking my eyes off the road], but I still had to think of what I wanted to send, so my concentration on the road was still diminished. Then I got smart, I upgraded to a smart phone. This being said, I will not attempt to send a text message with it, because of everything involved doing anything on the phone, and I do not want to be the cause of an accident or not see what is going on in my lane on the highway. I put my phone in “drive mode” which automatically rejects incoming calls, emails, text messages, or anything else that may cause a distraction.

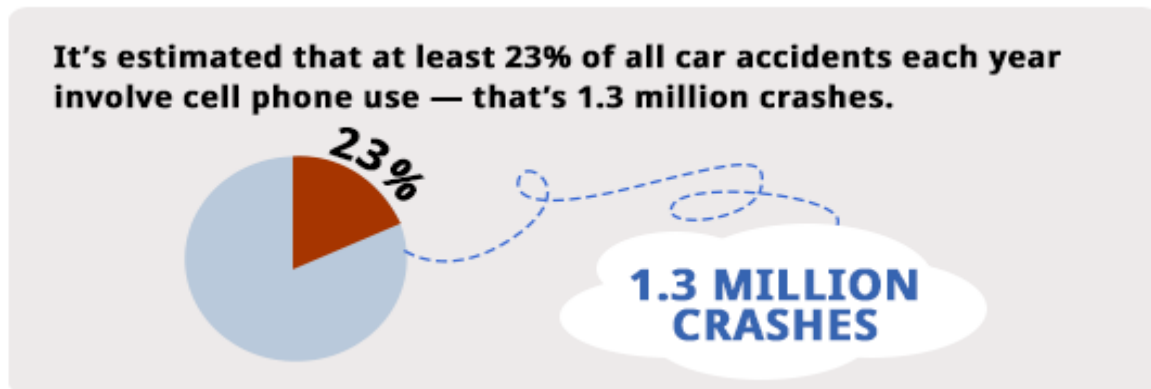


Figure III: 2011 Cell Phone and Driving Statistics. 2002. by Edgar Snyder.

Figure III: There were 3,331 people killed and 387,000 injured in accidents involving a distracted driver. This number of auto accidents occurred in 2011. The chart I have inserted below [see figure IV] is what I have created for a visual perspective.

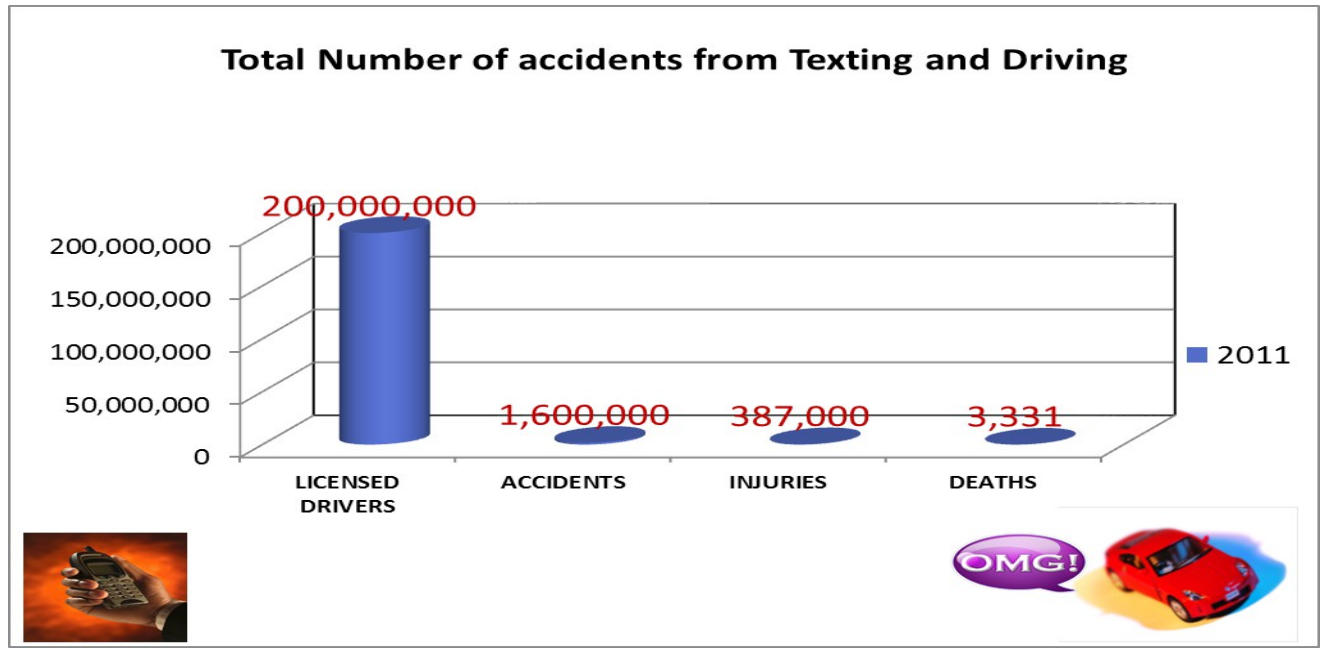


Figure IV Total Number of accidents from texting and driving in 2011.

Figure IV: This chart is just to give a visual perspective of all accidents related to texting and driving in 2011. As listed above in graph, I have listed all of the licensed drivers at 200 million in the United States, followed by the annual number of accidents, injuries and deaths that all come being involved in texting behind the wheel. The total number of accidents per year is almost 10% of all licensed drivers.

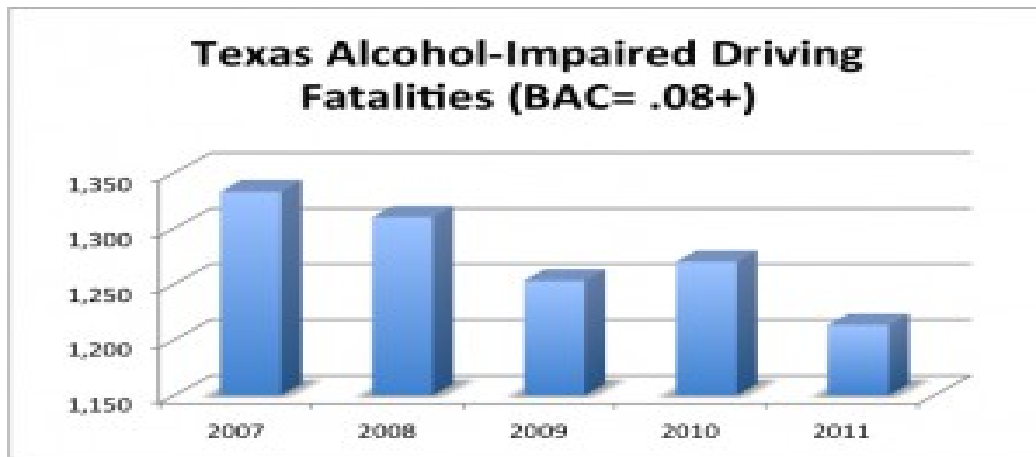


Figure v [Lubbock] DWI [Policy] May Refuse to Work. 2013. by J. Key.

Figure V: As one can see, I have provided two visuals to look at. The first one; is of drivers who text behind the wheel with the number of accidents, injuries, and fatalities for the year of 2011. The second visual is of alcohol related fatalities. The 2011 year total of alcohol related accidents is 244, which does not even compare to texting and driving. Texting and driving has become the most dangerous thing that any driver has done thus far. Not only does it put him or her at risk, but it puts everyone else that could cross paths with the driver at risk as well. It does not matter how far the driver's desired destination is, he or she should wait to use their cell phone.

After all the research available on this drastic driving hazard, and the total amount of deaths and injuries per year due to this horrific problem; I believe there are only two options to help eliminate the use of cell phone behind the wheel. The first option is a state to state nationwide ban against using cell phones for any reason while in driving. The second one being a little black box wired under the steering wheel that will automatically detect the devices location [every cellular device has this feature] for a driver and will not allow him or her to use the phone except for 911 situations. I am going to call this little black box device "Emergency-Only".

So, the first option of having a nationwide ban against texting would allow police officers to be able to pull driver's over if seen on a cell phone, I think this would help on the number of accidents involving injuries and fatalities. I honestly think if one gets pulled over one time, there should be a fine as a penalty, with police officer's having the ability to see if you have been pulled over for breaking this law previously. If being pulled over continues to be a reoccurrence for some or most drivers, I think officers should be able to treat it like they would if drugs or anything illegal is found in a vehicle; and the driver should receive jail time, or have his or her driver's license suspended for a year.

The second option I have mentioned is the "Emergency-Only" device. Since all licensed drivers have to carry auto insurance, I believe the insurance companies should be the ones to have and dispense the emergency-only device, and should make sure this device is installed in every vehicle upon purchasing insurance. I know for a fact they make this kind of gadget for people with challenged credit to allow them to have a vehicle to repair credit. With these boxes for people with challenged credit, once he or she makes the monthly payment is made by he or she makes the monthly payment is made by he or she who has financed the vehicle, a code will be provided that must be entered to tell the gadget the payment has been made, which is called prepaid transportation.

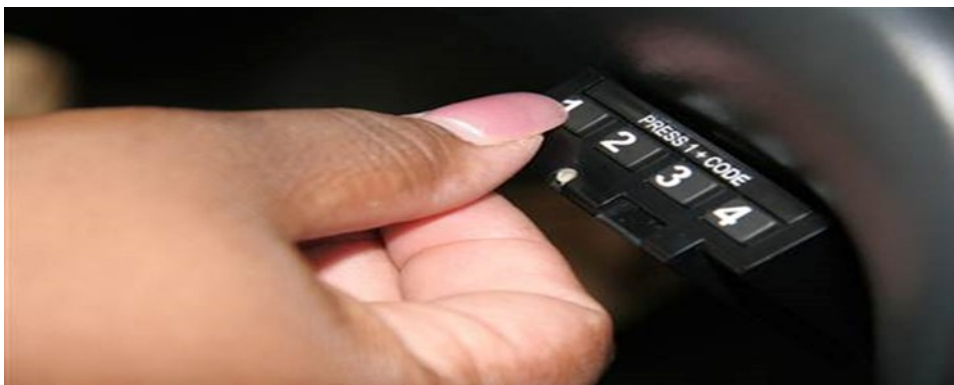


Figure VI Device Puts Brakes on Defaulters. 2006.

Figure VI: The image above is the device mentioned about that shows the box (Press, 2006) for those who have challenged credit. Now with the information provided about the prepaid transportation, imagine how much of a decrease in accidents there would be if every licensed driver had to receive the “Emergency-only” box from the insurance companies. I think the emergency-only device will cut down on a lot of accidents [also those involving injuries and fatalities]. This device will then force them to pay attention to the road and what he or she is doing. I am not saying this option will eliminate all accidents because things do happen [whether someone falls asleep at the wheel; blows a tire; or Mother Nature is involved], but it will definitely cut back on a lot of accidents due to this horrific distraction. I honestly feel this device would be more beneficial because it seems like the residents within the states that already have the primary texting ban is not efficient enough because drivers might get fined, but who is not to say he or she is not thinking that being fined is ok, because payments can be made; and keep using his or her phone. If this device would be installed in the vehicle, the driver would not be able to use his or her phone at all for his or her leisure.

When it comes to cost for the “Emergency-Only”, I’m sure these boxes should not cost a lot because all you would need is two pieces of plastic, and some kind of little electronic transmitter to be able to pick up a cell phone signal and automatically switch it to “Emergency-only”. With all the vehicle accidents occurring per year due to texting while driving, if every insurance company made this device mandatory to have, I believe that this would cut down at least all most all of these causing a huge difference in decrease. Another opinion of mine is that, I think this device would work more efficiently over the nationwide texting ban. The reason I think this device would be more effective over the nationwide ban is because with this

device shutting down phones and not allowing drivers to use his or her phone, they obviously have to stay focused on driving.

I propose that a law be made to have 1000 “emergency-only” devices installed in vehicles as a trial period. Once the year has passed and all devices are accounted for, it should then be a mandatory law that every vehicle has to have this device installed or a license suspension will be issued for those drivers who do not have it. Once this law is passed and set into place, it should then enforced treated like the “Click it or Ticket” seat belt law. In my opinion, I feel this will be the only two ways that this distraction is resolved so innocent people are not being hurt or maybe involved in a fatality due to the attitude of “It won’t happen to me”. Anything can happen to anyone at any given time, especially when a driver is distracted looking at his or her phone.

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