

I feel like I crossed a line

Last week the price of the initial version of the iPad were dropped by \$100. I went out and bought one.

Initially, I was looking for something to read some manuals for work. My nook just wasn't up to that task. Then I found an app that just may help me to put my thoughts down without wasting lots of paper or post-its. So far I've found many things I like to do with this little device. It is almost too fun.

The iPad has replaced my droid for quick checks of the weather, and quick games of angry birds. It replaced my laptop for email checking and looking up blog post or other social networks. On some books, it even replaced my nook!!

I know I will still use some sort of PC for things requiring a computer. The screen size and speed are lacking on the iPad for some applications. I also need storage for the iPad. I can envision a time when I will be moving things around to get what I need for a day or week.

Of course, this won't replace my android phone, too big to carry around all the time. My nook is my favorite electronic means of reading books. But I can use this to watch movies during a trip. I can send off a quick email or two. I can post a blog update. I can check on sport scores and news. I have found uses for it and I just like using it.

Good points to this are many, but there are also some things that limit the device. I still have issues with some of them.

1) You must have a windows or Mac PC to even start running the thing. An iTunes account is needed just to start it. As far as I could determine iTunes is not available on my Linux machines. That almost made me take the thing back.

2) To be more useful it needs a keyboard. That limits the

portability. The touch screen keyboard works, but it takes up valuable screen space. And you can't touch type.

3) For the same reason I stayed away from iTunes, I have a small problem with this device. It is too easy to make a bunch of small purchases that add up quickly. \$0.99 seems like such a small price, but it could add up.

4) It still seems expensive for what it does. I realize you are paying for the small size and apple name, but I feel the cost is a bit on the high side. This is what you will have when there is really no close competition from any other slate type devices. Apple found their niche and made it their own.

All that said, it is still a fun little device. I'm sure that I will find many more uses for it.

Talking maps

After the wonderful drive back from Florida, I went out and purchased a GPS system. My good friends take theirs with them everywhere they go (just about) and use it to find hotels, restaurants, and other fun places. Further adventures with "Jill" can be found [here](#). I haven't used mine long enough yet for the voice to be accepted, but right now she is called Samantha. That's the name the voice came with, but I do find it slightly annoying (the voice, not the name).

My daughter and son-in-law (one of three pairs, take your guess), took me to a place called [The Blarney](#). It was a great little place. I'm not sure how authentic it keeps to real pubs in Ireland, but it was a fun time. I had hoped my talking map would get me there, but we didn't have the address, and it wasn't in the restaurant list, we made our best guess. Lucky for us there was no ball game, the Blarney is just a short

walk away from the Mudhens stadium. This is going to be on my list of places to go. I'm not a bar scene person but this was a lot of fun. The Bangers and Mash was fantastic. I have to add this place to my talking map.

I'm hoping I can find some downloads for places like this on the GPS site. I'm wondering now if there are other Irish or English pubs in the area. Or maybe a coffee shop or two? Other places I may want to see. Who knows.

The funny thing is, I picked the GPS up because I wanted to make a side trip on my way back from Florida. I didn't have a map, and I didn't use Google Maps or Mapquest to plan my trip back. By the time I got an Atlas, I was passed any good way of getting to where I wanted to be. That may have been a blessing, since my truck battery decided to give out, but that was the cause of me getting more tech stuff. Really, it wasn't because I wanted another toy. I'm a very good map reader, and I like plotting my own course. I've tested the GPS already and it mapped the same travel routes that I did. So do I think like a computer? You don't have to answer that one.

So be on the lookout for more adventures with my talking map. I hope I don't get sent directions to turn into a lake... ☐

Baseball bat breaking news

There seems to be a lot more shattered bats during a major league baseball game these days. I've heard the talk that the newer maple bats tend to shatter, while the ash just split. A [news article](#) I just read discusses this 'new' event in major league games.

I understand why they don't use aluminum/metal bats in the

major leagues. If you ever saw a ball jump off of the new metal bats in college ball, or even the local softball leagues, you can guess why you wouldn't want one of those in the hands of a major league hitter. The pitcher would have to be 90 feet away just to be safe. I am wondering if some sort of material could be designed for baseball bats. Keep the elasticity (bounce of ball off the bat) the same as current wood bats, but have it much stronger to prevent splitting.

With the problems with Ash borers in the midwest (Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and maybe Pennsylvania), there may be a supply problem with Ash baseball bats in the future anyway. I think they may need to do something, before more people get hurt sitting in the stands.

A cool science quiz

[An Inventions Quiz, 15 famous inventors and their inventions.](#)

I should tell you my score, but I will wait until you get a chance.

I have a better thought. I will leave a clue to my score in the text of this post. In fact, if you can puzzle out the clue, you can report my score. I thought of a way to give a clue, but I think I need to do better than that. I am positive I can do better than that.

Yes, there is a clue or more in this post. I found a way to give multiple clues. In fact, the number of clues I created points to a clue. Can you figure it out?

This is another post obviously trying to get more people to comment. I'm hoping an interactive post is the answer.

I'm having too much fun. I think it is time to stop.

Life at the center of the earth...

Well I just saw the movie, now I'm going to explore some the science (or lack of it) involved in this journey. In Jules Verne's original book, the center of the earth is a large cave like area with some sort of electro magnetic field producing light. Same in the movie.

Current Science views the center of the Earth as a molten metal core, mostly iron. This would be well above the temperatures that humans could survive in. But just for arguments sake, lets pretend there is a large cave with volcanic vents that connect between Italy and Iceland. Why would we have prehistoric dinosaurs and other animals living there. What could be the possible connection. I can't really think of one, maybe my loyal readers could.

One other small problem, at least for the movie. The biggest plot mover in the movie is that temperatures will soon rise to unsurvivable levels. It is also indicated that it happened 10 year prior to this visit. How did the animal life stuck in the center survive, if it was so crucial that the intrepid explorers got out very soon. Must be something really special in the water that was going to evaporate in less than 3 days. I don't think I can believe the quantity of life in the center of the earth if every few years it is going to become an oven.

I guess since they went that far with the science, that God is having a hand again in matters here on Earth or in this case under the Earth, a running a new version of creation every 10 or so years. That would explain everything. Hmm, I guess I'm saying that there isn't a lot of science in the movie.

However, since I didn't start thinking about this during the movie, it really didn't matter. It took a while for it to settle in my brain.

Strange thinking..

I kind of follow the political news. I try to stay on top of scientific news. I'm very confused when the two of those collide.

The biggest collision of politics and science in my mind is global warming. Governments all over the world, and of course the United Nations are trying to "solve" global warming. Jumping over any science that is actually happening. With this scientists on both sides of the debate are getting very political on their views. Me, I want to talk about the science and leave any political views out of the picture. Feel free to comment on either picture.

Global warming – is it really happening? The best answer science has right now is.. Wait for it.... Maybe! That's right maybe! The past 20 years of weather data shows some warming, the past 10 years has been very stable. Hmmm. Global warming simulation programs show that the warming of the planet will be increasing in the next 20 to 40 years. These same simulations can not use past information to determine the global average temperature in past years... Hmmm again! There is a lot of science going on here and it all points to maybe. (at

least for me)

Global warming – What causes it. Well until you actually determine that it is happening, you can't really say what is causing it can you? This is where the politics really gets going, so I'm not going there. Just for the science background, most of the heat on earth comes from 1 source, the Sun. Yes, there is planetary heat (think radioactive decay and volcanoes), and heat produced by man (burning all sorts of stuff and other things from our mechanical world), but that is minimal. The thing to determine is how much heat comes from the sun, and how much is released back to space. If the heat in is more than the heat out, you have global warming. If you have more heat out than heat in, you have global cooling. If they are the same, well, you have steady temperatures. This will have to be measured for more than 10 – 15 years to determine if we are warming or cooling. As far as I know, nobody has these measurements. Big world, and it is hard to do, if not impossible with today's technology. So the talk about carbon footprints and greenhouse effect has no bearing on actual science known.

Global Warming – What can we do? Nothing and everything. Most things people come up with to actually combat the global warming are good to do. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle is scientifically a very good choice. There are a limited amount of resources available to us. While this may have effect on global warming, the best thing is using less, wasting less, and getting better value. By carbon credits? Doesn't do much except move your money to someone else. Not much science in that choice. Alternate fuels? That one is still up in the air as far as science goes. There are some good alt-fuels, some bad. We really need to check to see if the energy cost producing the fuel is less than the energy created. The science I see that may make the biggest impact in the next 10-20 years is [algae](#). Another is the new [Volt from GM](#)

One final thought, remember when it comes to weather

forecasting: This is one of the few jobs where you can be wrong 50% of the time and still have a job.