

**HISTORY OF IDEAS AND THE HISTORY OF COMMUNICATION**  
**A Lesson for Research on the Cognitive Consequences of Mobile Communication**

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During the past 50 years, insights from the history of communication have been an inspiring force behind research in the history of ideas broadly understood – from the history of science to the history of philosophy. The lessons drawn from the studies published in this area support the conclusion that significant changes in the technology of communication induce, both directly and by triggering social changes, certain cognitive consequences. Among other insights, this historically plausible influence of technology on cognition inspired some to explore the present influence mobile communication could possibly exert on our cognitive capacities. In this paper I will argue that, not excluding other possible sources of inspiration, the history of communication, if treated properly, could not provide support for current research on the connection between mobile communication and cognition. The core of my argument is a distinction between two concepts of communication, i.e. *significant communication*, meaning the kind of communication that is relevant in the process of knowledge preservation and transmission, and *non-significant communication*, lacking the crucial role in these processes. I will argue that at the present stage of development mobile communication is far from being part of significant communication – though future may bring surprises.

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