Aggressive driving should be avoided

Technology, Cars

The main thesis statement of my speech is on why cell phone use should be prohibited by driving. The primary objective here is to persuade you not to engage in cell phone conversations when behind the wheel, based on the premises that I will present before you. The methodology of this study is compilation of established facts from published internet resources and newspaper or magazine articles.

While cellular phones have been considered rare luxuries a decade ago, today it is already a commonplace possession for many individuals. The advances in wirelesstechnologycoupled with high public demand have made cell phones affordable and accessible to many.

A 2004 MIT survey even revealed that the “ cell phone is the invention that people hate the most but can’t live without, beating out the alarm clock and television. Furthermore, in a 2005 University of Michigan study, 83 percent of respondents said cell phones have made life easier, choosing it over the internet (Leo pars. 1-2).”

The Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. released a January 2007 estimate that out of the 231 million Americans who owned cellular phones, an astonishing 73 percent of 1, 200 drivers with cell phones used them while driving. Moreover, the use of cell phones while driving was highest among young drivers (Insurance Information Institute, Inc. par. 3).

Another study made by the Insurance Institute claimed that those who used cell phones while driving were four times more likely to get into crashes serious enough to cause injury. This was backed up by the Virginia Tech

Transportation Institute who put distraction as the second most frequent cause of accidents next to fatigue (Leo par. 5).

Studies about cell-phone use while driving have focused on several different aspects of the problem. Some have looked at its prevalence as the leading cause of driver distraction. Others have looked at the different risks associated with hand-held and hands-free devices. Still others have focused on the seriousness of injuries in crashes involving cell-phone users and the demographics of drivers who use cell phones.

I fully support public safety advocates who are one in saying that while no data directly correlatesroad accidentsto cell phone use, cellular phones are a major distraction while driving. And the longer you are distracted, the higher the chance of a collision.

Let me point out some principal findings in a study which are relevant in convincing you that using cell phones can impair driving. Did you know that those who engage in cell phone conversations while driving:

·missed twice as many simulated traffic signals as when they were not talking on the phone;

· took longer to react to those signals that they did detect; and

·that these deficits were the same for those who used hand-held and hands-free phone users (Strayer et. al. par. 9).

The findings that motorists who use cell phones while driving are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves, are also

backed up by another study of drivers in Perth, Australia, conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

“ The results, published in July 2005, suggest that banning hand-held phone use won't necessarily improve safety if drivers simply switch to hand-free phones. The study found that injury crash risk didn't vary with type of phone (Insurance Information Institute, Inc. par. 9).”

Abovementioned data were concluded from findings in an in-depth study of driver safety and cell phone usage which summarized that “ conversing on either a hand-held or hands-free cell phone led to significant decrements in simulated driving performance. Moreover, the study suggests that the cellular phone use disrupts performance by diverting attention to an engaging cognitive context other than the one immediately associated with driving (Strayer et. al. pars. 10-11).”

In effect, this data contradicts the laws that permit only hands-free cell phone conversations while driving because their data suggests that it is not the phone conversation itself that is the interference but rather the central attentional processes.

Although inattentive driving may include talking to a passenger, eating or reaching for something, supporters of restrictions on driving while using a cell phone say that the distractions associated with cell phone use while driving are far greater than other distractions. Conversations using a cell phone demand greater continuous concentration, which diverts the driver’s eyes from the road and his mind from driving.

Most epidemiological studies to date have found indications of a link between cell phone use and auto accidents, but there is few research devoted to establishing a causal connection between the two.

Despite this deficiency, there is much to be concerned about regarding this issue following the release of an April 2006 study claiming that some form of driver inattention within three seconds of the crash attributes to 80 per of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes.

This is supported by the 100-Car Naturalistic Driving Study, conducted by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which revealed that the most common distraction is the use of cell phones, followed by drowsiness.

There are two dangers posed by conversing on cell phones while driving: first is that drivers would take their eyes off the road while dialing and second, the possibility of being absorbed in the conversation may impair the driving ability of the individual and increase the likelihood of endangering the vehicle occupants as well as pedestrians.

“ The latest research shows that while using a cell phone when driving may not be the most dangerous distraction, because it is so prevalent it is by far the most common cause of this type of crash and near crash (Insurance Information Institute par. 2).”

A summer 2006 research spearheaded by the University of Utah even concludes that talking on a cell phone while driving is as dangerous asdrunk driving, even if the phone is a hands-free model.

An even earlier study by the university found that “ motorists who talked on hands-free cell phones were 18 percent slower in braking and took 17 percent longer to regain the speed they lost when they braked. Also, drivers using hand-free phones had to redial calls 40 percent of the time, compared with 18 percent for drivers using hand-held sets, suggesting that hands-free sets may provide drivers with a false sense of ease (Insurance Information Institute, Inc. pars. 10-11).”