

Are There More Dinosaurs?

When I was a child, I traveled a lot by train. The train cars were nicer then. The service was better and the schedules were more convenient and definitely more reliable. My sister still enjoys traveling by train, but I think her enthusiasm is influenced by her acrophobia. I limit my trains to trains of thought - but even those aren't as reliable as they used to be. When I was in school, I had to read Chaucer, Shakespeare and Hawthorne. They're not the only things missing from my reading now. What happened to punctuation? Where are the colons and semi-colons? Commas are uncommonly prevalent, but colons and semi-colons seem to have been removed from what I read by some sort of literary colonoscopy. Drug stores used to have soda fountains; and soda fountains used to have soda jerks, who made cherry cokes, milkshakes and sundaes - and who left the skirts on scoops of ice cream. When I was in high school, I dated a soda jerk. My mother was happy I was dating someone with a job. I was happy dating someone in uniform. Soda fountains are gone and so are drive-in movies. Selling the land became more profitable than selling tickets and snacks. My mother wouldn't let me to go to the drive-in with a boyfriend. If I had, there would have been two speakers outside my boyfriend's car. Asteroids killed the dinosaurs and cell phones are killing pay phones. Pay phones used to be in stores, along sidewalks and always in gas stations. Now they're gone and so is the chance to play a public slot machine. When you pushed the coin return button, there was always a chance you'd get back more money than you'd put in. Cell phones have taken the element of chance away - unless you're in an area with poor satellite reception. Even newspapers are dying. Fewer readers equals fewer advertisers and fewer advertisers equals fewer newspapers. People on the run want to get their news on the run - from their car radio, their computer or their iPhone. A world without newspapers will be a world with new problems. What will we fold to make pirate hats? How will we make paper mache? What will we use to wrap glasses and dishes when we move? What will we put on the floor when we housebreak a puppy - or maybe the National Enquirer will survive.

About the Author

Knight Pierce Hirst takes humorous looks at life. Take a minute to make yourself smile at <http://knightwatch.typepad.com>

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