
Subject: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [Black Bear](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 01:20:19 GMT
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Infestation.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [Catlady](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 01:41:12 GMT
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While I have not read Alex's Adventures , I must say that I'm glad such a book exists. I had a great fondness for math (my own adventures in algebra include once asking a teacher a question so forcefully [that is, refusing to be put off by the standard, "If I explain it to you I will confuse the rest of the class, please stop asking,"] that he broke the overhead projector.) and find that it is soothing when all the rest of the world has spun away into chaos. I sponsor my office's annual Pi Day celebration (March 14 - 3.14, you see -- though that only works if you do month/day in an American fashion). Which is to say I bring in a lot of pie. This particular holiday seems to have gained quite a bit of popularity since I started working there...

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [Diane in MN](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 05:29:18 GMT
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Or how about logarithms? Take something mind-breakingly complicated—something you have to have a calculator to figure out in the first place; pre-calculator there were log tables [. . .]

And there were slide rules. VERY cool. Not that I ever got much beyond using mine for multiplication and, if I remember correctly, square roots (high school was a long time ago), but I was immensely pleased with it. It wasn't pocket protectors that identified the potential engineers and such, it was slide rules. :)

Good luck with the Audible download. I live in the primitive world of audiobooks on CD, so once I have the thing in my hand, it's all there. Just recently ordered The Last Chronicle of Barset for my trip to Massachusetts--two lovely fat boxes which will probably last for the whole drive. But it was expensive even with a coupon from the publisher; an Audible subscription would be a LOT cheaper.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [Graycat](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 12:49:43 GMT
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Have you tried the Audible app for iPhone? I use that a lot for listening on my iPod touch because it has an extra sleep timer I can use and an easy go back button which can be set for between 10 and 90 seconds to catch what you just missed.

It does get picky about having to download all the parts of the book at the same time though,

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [BurgandyIce](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 15:20:54 GMT
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Oh yea.

So. I did something, too... transferred audible book to son's mp3 so he could read a book that was "cool" and above his current reading level (encouraging sons to read things they're interested in while avoiding burying them in 'Too hard!' is a knife-edged balance especially w/ the interesting array of teachers he has, speaking of your two Algebra experiences.)

He couldn't find it, of course. Listening on the computer didn't work too well. I decided to cancel my audible subscription (which is really good, as you said, for price-wise, should audio books be listen-able.)

This window popped up, one of those "Are you sure you really mean to cancel? Do you mind telling us why first?" I totally should have guessed right then that I wasn't even close to cancelling, but... it's really hard not to vent when given the option.

The first (ok, maybe second) option was "Won't play on my device". And the whole point of this longish story is that they know it might not be working on the device... ANY device. They make it easy to complain about the way it doesn't work on the device. What is up with that?!

Fortunately, they offered me HALF PRICE for the next three months while I figure out how to get it working. I'm totally thrilled, of course, since it was a good price before. It's difficult being angry and thrilled simultaneously, but I'm getting practice at knife-edged sorts of balancing. Sort of like... what you said. Yea... THAT.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology

Posted by [Jacky](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 17:45:02 GMT

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If you don't get some books going in just a few more tries, tell them they need to hire you as a beta tester.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology

Posted by [Aaron](#) on Tue, 11 Oct 2011 19:32:20 GMT

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Diane in MN wrote on Mon, 10 October 2011 22:29: Or how about logarithms? Take something mind-breakingly complicated—something you have to have a calculator to figure out in the first place; pre-calculator there were log tables [. . .]

And there were slide rules. VERY cool. Not that I ever got much beyond using mine for multiplication and, if I remember correctly, square roots (high school was a long time ago), but I was immensely pleased with it. It wasn't pocket protectors that identified the potential engineers and such, it was slide rules. :)

My ugly yellow Pickett got me through physics in high school and still lives in a drawer at home. It could be carried on your belt like a young sword but only the more militant did so. I am saddened to have been too young to call them "Napier's Bones" but just as happy not to have had to use tables.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology

Posted by [Diane in MN](#) on Wed, 12 Oct 2011 06:27:56 GMT

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Aaron wrote on Tue, 11 October 2011 14:32

My ugly yellow Pickett got me through physics in high school and still lives in a drawer at home. It could be carried on your belt like a young sword but only the more militant did so. I am saddened to have been too young to call them "Napier's Bones" but just as happy not to have had to use tables.

Mine was an ugly yellow Pickett too. My husband, who was a math major for some time, had a handsome bigger and fancier one with more functions on it and a leather case. I don't know where mine got to; his is in his top dresser drawer. But it's there from inertia, not nostalgia; the device he cares about is his fancy HP calculator.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [Aaron](#) on Wed, 12 Oct 2011 17:30:09 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Tue, 11 October 2011 23:27 Aaron wrote on Tue, 11 October 2011 14:32
My ugly yellow Pickett got me through physics in high school and still lives in a drawer at home. It could be carried on your belt like a young sword but only the more militant did so. I am saddened to have been too young to call them "Napier's Bones" but just as happy not to have had to use tables.

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I actually got my degree in Mathematics but I don't recall the slide rule as being very useful on that side of campus. I am grateful for your evidence to justify blaming the mathematics for my retention of my last HP (41CX).

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [PamAdams](#) on Wed, 12 Oct 2011 20:49:58 GMT
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I enjoy reading the science books aimed at a general audience. I can highly recommend both The Calculus Diaries and, even better, How to Teach Physics to Your Dog, <http://dogphysics.com/>.

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [CathyR](#) on Fri, 14 Oct 2011 07:18:04 GMT
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PamAdams wrote on Wed, 12 October 2011 21:49 I enjoy reading the science books aimed at a general audience. I can highly recommend both The Calculus Diaries and, even better, How to Teach Physics to Your Dog, <http://dogphysics.com/>.

I very much enjoy these sort of books as well (haven't seen these two, so I'll look them up) - but I just wish I could retain what I read!! :)

Subject: Re: Demon Infested Technology
Posted by [oldoakforest](#) on Mon, 17 Oct 2011 20:44:37 GMT
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This is only relevant in that it involves a book about numbers, but I grew up absolutely LOVING Hans Magnus Enzensberger's The Number Devil. My English-language translation had a bright yellow cover, and I actually took it with me as a reference for a few mathematics classes. Vroom numbers! Imaginative numbers! Hopping!

What an amazing book. :d
