Complex Litigation in the New Era of the iJury

Andrew J. Wilhelm

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/plr

Part of the Courts Commons, Judges Commons, Litigation Commons, and the Science and Technology Law Commons

Recommended Citation

Andrew J. Wilhelm Complex Litigation in the New Era of the iJury, 41 Pepp. L. Rev. Iss. 4 (2013)
Available at: https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/plr/vol41/iss4/3

This Comment is brought to you for free and open access by the Caruso School of Law at Pepperdine Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pepperdine Law Review by an authorized editor of Pepperdine Digital Commons. For more information, please contact Katrina.Gallardo@pepperdine.edu, anna.speth@pepperdine.edu, linhgavin.do@pepperdine.edu.
Complex Litigation in the New Era of the iJury

I. A NEW ERA OF LITIGATION ................................................................. 818

II. THE OLD FRAMEWORK ..................................................................... 821

A. Technology: Not Yet ................................................................. 821

B. Litigation: Not Complex ......................................................... 822

C. Juries: Not So Diverse .............................................................. 824

III. TIMES ARE CHANGING .............................................................. 829

A. Technology: Proliferating ..................................................... 829

B. Litigation: Increasingly Intricate ............................................ 831

C. Juries: Evolving ..................................................................... 836

IV. A NEW REALITY ........................................................................... 839

A. Technology: A Good Thing? ................................................. 839

B. Litigation: Behind the Times? ............................................... 840

1. Litigation Must Follow Educational Trends .................... 840

2. Litigation Must Keep Up with Technology .................... 843

C. Juries: Legitimate? ................................................................. 846

1. Competence ..................................................................... 847

   a. Arguments Against Competence ................................... 848

   b. The Other Side of the Story ......................................... 849

2. Advantages of Juries ......................................................... 851

V. IMPROVING LITIGATION BY LEGITIMATING THE JURY ................. 852

A. Juries on the Decline .............................................................. 853

B. Suggestions Moving Forward ............................................. 854

VI. CONCLUSION ............................................................................... 857
I. A NEW ERA OF LITIGATION

After a three-week trial, the jury delivered its much-anticipated decision in only three days, taking the technology and legal worlds by storm. On August 24, 2012, a nine-member jury rendered a verdict of over one billion dollars for Apple in its high-profile patent litigation against Samsung. The jury was diverse but decidedly not a panel of patent experts: among the two women and seven men were a “social worker, an engineer[,] and an unemployed videogame enthusiast.” One juror had experience testing the quality of lunch boxes. Although one juror had experience with patent registration, the court dismissed another potential juror with actual patent experience. Of the nine jurors, only one had prior jury experience, and eight had no experience with the trial’s subject matter. However, the jury was not uneducated—six had college degrees. For such a high-profile technology trial, the jury was not terribly tech-savvy. In fact, only one juror owned an iPhone, and none owned a Samsung phone.

6. Id.
8. Sandoval, supra note 5.
9. Id.
10. Id.
11. Id.
The jury was composed of average people who, like the vast majority of Americans, had no prior experience adjudicating litigation.\(^\text{12}\) Apple, Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co. (Apple v. Samsung)\(^\text{13}\) was, by any standard definition, complex. The thirty-seven-page complaint alleged a variety of patent and trademark infringements.\(^\text{14}\) During trial, when the judge asked an attorney what identification number a newly admitted exhibit should receive, the attorney replied, “How about we give it one million?”\(^\text{15}\) At the end of the trial, the judge issued eighty-four esoteric jury instructions spanning 109 pages.\(^\text{16}\) Instructions in hand, the jury took only twenty-one hours of deliberation to answer over seven hundred questions necessary for the verdict.\(^\text{17}\) According to a popular legal blog, such a feat meant the jury was either brilliant enough to work at Google or too dull to understand the nuanced legal theories.\(^\text{18}\) Given the two options, the author said she was "going to vote for the latter."\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{12}\) According to a 2008 poll, less than a quarter of all Americans have served on a jury. See Harris Interactive, Just Under Three in Five Americans Believe Juries Can Be Fair and Impartial All or Most of the Time, FLA. JURY SELECTION BLOG (Jan. 22, 2008, 7:08 AM), http://www.juryblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/the-harris-poll-on-jury-duty.pdf.


\(^{14}\) Vascellaro, supra note 4.


\(^{17}\) Id.

\(^{18}\) Id. Comments like these, which doubt whether average Americans can adjudicate difficult issues, are far from novel: one English lawyer called the jury trial the "'high point of amateurism, potentially a recipe for incompetence and bias.'" Jennifer Walker Elrod, Is the Jury Still Out!: A Case for the Continued Viability of the American Jury, 44 TEX. TECH. L. REV. 303, 306 (2012) (quoting Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, A Judge Can Do the Work of 12 Amateurs, and Better, TIMES (London), Oct. 21, 2003, at 10).

The late twentieth century was rife with condemnations of juries in light of litigation’s growing complexity. See, e.g., Note, The Case for Special Juries in Complex Civil Litigation, 89 YALE L.J. 1155 (1980) [hereinafter The Case for Special Juries]. This is not to say that jury competence articles have ceased completely. See, e.g., Jennifer F. Miller, Should Juries Hear Complex Patent Cases?, 2004 DUKE L. & TECH. REV. 0004. Rather, existing literature has failed to adequately synthesize technology’s impact on learning and, by extension, its impact on jury competence in complex litigation. This Comment seeks to do so.

There are legions of definitions of “complex litigation,” and the academy has not yet agreed on a definitive meaning. Franklin Strier, The Educated Jury: A Proposal for Complex Litigation, 47 DEPAUL L. REV. 49, 74 (1997). This Comment adopts a general definition of “complex litigation”:
One major change has occurred since the advent of complex litigation: “[l]aw today has entered the technology age.” 20 Certainly, technology was expanding in previous decades when complex litigation concerns were at their height, but this Comment looks at jury critiques from a new perspective: through the lens of the ubiquitous, 24/7 technology of the twenty-first century. 21 The primary concern should not be with the fact that technology itself is changing; rather, it should be on how technology is altering the way young jurors process information. This Comment argues for a comprehensive approach to legitimizing the lay jury—an approach involving education, 22 attorney adaptation, 23 courtroom renovations, 24 and judicial knowledge 25—and a better understanding of how legal professionals can fairly and most effectively transmit knowledge to the average American. 26 The lay jury can remain a vital, unique part of the American judicial system if the bench and bar take seriously their responsibilities and adapt to today’s new reality. 27

Part II examines the background of three basic components of a successful contemporary trial: technology, 28 litigation, 29 and the jury. 30 Part
III explores how these three components have evolved in the modern era. Part IV analyzes how the components should be understood to maximize the legitimacy of lay juries. Part V notes probable future trends and offers suggestions for improvement. Part VI concludes.

II. THE OLD FRAMEWORK

Modern American complex litigation represents the synthesis of at least three factors, each of which has undergone massive changes throughout its history: technology, litigation, and juries. These three factors, while theoretically independent, become inextricably intertwined in the courtroom. With billions of dollars on the line and the world watching, the attorneys litigating Apple v. Samsung had to do more than simply know about these factors. Instead, they had to understand and exploit them for maximum juror understanding of complex subject matter. By doing so better than its adversary, Apple received $1 billion for its efforts. This section explores the background of each of these elements: first, technology; then litigation; and finally, juries. One theme rings throughout: the factors that characterize modern litigation were vastly different for the first two centuries of American litigation than they are now.

A. Technology: Not Yet

Technology—at least in the way we think of it today—had little impact

31. See infra notes 111–203 and accompanying text.
32. See infra notes 204–333 and accompanying text.
33. See infra notes 334–84 and accompanying text.
34. See infra notes 385–400 and accompanying text.
35. Compare Part II with infra Part III.
36. See infra notes 204–333 and accompanying text.
37. See infra notes 362–73 and accompanying text (describing ways attorneys must adapt to technology).
38. See infra notes 204–333 and accompanying text.
39. See Rosenblatt, supra note 3.
40. See infra notes 45–50 and accompanying text.
41. See infra notes 51–64 and accompanying text.
42. See infra notes 65–105 and accompanying text.
43. Compare Part II with infra Part III.
on the juries of ancient Greece through colonial America for an obvious reason: it did not yet exist. There were no multimedia PowerPoints, video depositions, or digital crime scene recreations. Instead, jurors evaluated oral evidence and arguments. Of course, the printing press brought literacy to the wealthy and educated men who served as jurors, especially by colonial times. However, the tradition of oral advocacy dominated. In colonial America, litigation was a crude dispensation of justice, often argued and decided by non-professionals. By one account, early litigation was simply two adversaries telling their sides of the story to a panel of judges who decided the case by drawing lots. Modern technology was slow to enter the courtroom—it was not until 1998 that a federal pilot program encouraged the use of technology in litigation.

B. Litigation: Not Complex

Though generalizing the first two millennia of litigation is impossible, several noteworthy themes exist. First, early litigation was usually much shorter than it is today. Early English trials were often extremely short, with up to twenty-five trials occurring in a single day. By contrast, the
average civil trial now takes three to four days. Second, jury trials were relatively simple. The rules of joinder codified in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure did not exist until 1938. Until then, judges—not juries—heard suits involving several parties or issues. Complex litigation, with vast numbers of plaintiffs and causes of action being argued in front of a jury, simply did not occur. Third, courts were unlikely to compensate injured citizens. In the nineteenth century, “views and practices that held individuals accountable for their own personal injuries . . . dominated the legal and social terrain”; therefore, lawsuits were less prevalent. Finally, lawyers won trials through oral advocacy, with tradition demanding that “two orators stand juxtaposed to one another, and the more persuasive of the two w[on] the day.” Today, however, attorneys have more weapons in their persuasive arsenal. Without characterizing historical jury trials as quaint, it is important to recognize that lay juries simply did not decide complex, multifaceted cases the way they do today. Instead, wealthy, educated men relied on oral advocates to persuade them in cases that

55. See FED. R. CIV. P. 19–20; see also Douglas King, Comment, Complex Civil Litigation and the Seventh Amendment Right to a Jury Trial, 51 U. Chi. L. Rev. 581, 581–83 & n.7 (1984); see also id. at 606–07 & n.148 (discussing how the introduction of joinder altered the landscape of litigation).
56. Sutton, supra note 54, at 582. This is particularly compelling because, historically, juries were composed of the most educated of the populace. See id. at 579–80. If the most educated in society were deemed inadequate to adjudicate complex litigation, there has been an enormous shift from elitism to populist thinking in the past two hundred years. Some point to this historical use of equity courts to suggest that there is no right to a jury trial in complex litigation today. See id. at 582; infra notes 151–56 and accompanying text.
57. See Sutton, supra note 54, at 582.
60. Ponder, supra note 45, at 299.
61. See infra notes 157–63 and accompanying text.
62. See supra notes 52–57 and accompanying text.
involved relatively few issues. But times have changed—drastically.

C. Juries: Not So Diverse

Though the jury system dates back to at least ancient Greece, most academic discussion begins with sixteenth-century English juries because of their great influence on their colonial American counterparts. English and colonial American jurors had trial experience and specific knowledge of the issues to be litigated. In fact, they were chosen because of their special knowledge of the case. Like most groups that wielded any civil power at the time, the jury was composed of white, male property owners. Commonly, these men were required to possess more than property to be eligible—they also needed a minimal level of intelligence. When John Adams described the jury as the “voice of the people,” he took care to define the “people” as not “the vile populace or rabble of the country, nor the cabal of a small number of factious persons,” but instead the “judicious part” of the citizenry. With all of these qualifications, early English and colonial juries were more similar to what today have been coined “special juries”: juries chosen from a select group of “qualified” citizens, rather than from a random selection of lay citizens. Lastly, the jury’s role was greater than it is today: it decided questions of both law and fact until 1895. 

63. See supra notes 45–60 and infra note 69 and accompanying text.
64. See infra notes 131–71 and accompanying text.
65. Elrod, supra note 19, at 310.
66. See, e.g., Smith, supra note 46, at 390 (“Since the modern American jury finds its roots in the early English jury, it is useful to study this institution in order to determine how the jury has evolved in America . . . .”).
67. Id.
68. Strier, supra note 19, at 58; Smith, supra note 46, at 399; see also James C. Oldham, The Origins of the Special Jury, 50 U. CHI. L. REV. 137, 164 (1983) (“Originally, jurors were presumed to know the facts in dispute because they were residents of the vicinity where the dispute arose. The early statutes called for jurors who were ‘next Neighbours,’ those who ‘have best Knowledge of the Truth, and be nearest.’”).
69. See Smith, supra note 46, at 399–400.
70. See id. at 434. Even when intelligence standards were not explicitly employed, the property qualifications certainly increased the chances of an educated jury. Id. at 399.
71. Id. at 432 (internal quotations and footnote omitted). This is antithetical to modern concerns of cross-representation. See infra note 93 and accompanying text.
72. See generally Sutton, supra note 54; see also infra note 151 and accompanying text.
73. See, e.g., Sparf v. United States, 156 U.S. 51, 63–64, 69–70, 99–103, 106 (1895). The decision to prevent jury determinations of law was an early example of the modern trend to decrease
Like many American institutions, the jury underwent dramatic changes in the twentieth century. Its demographics evolved “dramatically at a pace far exceeding the diversification of legislatures, executive branches, or the judiciary.” Though the Fifteenth Amendment technically opened voting—and jury service—to African Americans in 1870, conservatives widely used Jim Crow laws and other techniques for almost a century to keep them off juries. Changes continued in 1920, when women gained the right to vote and, as a result, to serve on juries. In 1975, the Supreme Court’s jury power. See infra notes 83–95 and accompanying text. As the opening page of one textbook put it, “mistrust of juries is the single overriding reason” for modern jury-limiting laws. Christopher B. Mueller & Laird C. Kirkpatrick, Evidence Under the Rules I (7th ed. 2011).

74. See infra notes 75–81 and accompanying text.

75. Laura Gaston Dooley, Our Juries, Our Selves: The Power, Perception, and Politics of the Civil Jury, 80 Cornell L. Rev. 325, 326 (1995); see also id. at 326 n.5 (noting that as of 1988, women comprised only 7.4% of the federal judiciary).

76. U.S. Const. amend. XV; John R. Vile, A Companion to the United States Constitution and its Amendments 189, 245 (5th ed. 2010). “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” U.S. Const. amend. XV.

77. This is not to imply political conservatives. Rather, I use a literal definition of conservative: “tending or disposed to maintain existing views, conditions, or institutions.” Merriam-Webster Dictionary (11th ed. 2003). In this sense, conservatives are those in power (the bench, bar, and academy) who have no interest in changing power structures because they are already at the top. See id. For example, at the time, it was Southern Democrats who were, in this sense, “conservative”—“unified in their desire to uphold segregation and to resist any threats to the Jim Crow South.” Juan F. Perea, The Echoes of Slavery: Recognizing the Racist Origins of the Agricultural and Domestic Worker Exclusion from the National Labor Relations Act, 72 Ohio St. L.J. 95, 102 (2011).


In fact, even today, studies suggest that some jurisdictions suffer from underrepresentation of African Americans on juries. See Shaila Dewan, Study Finds Blacks Blocked from Southern Juries, N.Y. Times, June 2, 2010, at A14, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/02/us/02jury.html?pagewanted=all. In one case, prosecutors used all of their peremptory strikes to exclude black jurors, leaving a jury composed of one black and eleven white jurors, even though the county in which the crime was committed was 45% black. Id.

79. U.S. Const. amend. XIX; Vile, supra note 76, at 188, 198. “The right of citizens of the
holding in *Taylor v. Louisiana*,80 that criminal juries must represent a cross-section of society, further cemented jury diversification.81

As the twentieth century progressed, conservatives bristled at the idea of—to quote John Adams—the “vile populace”82 gaining power in the legal realm.83 In response to expanding jury demographics, they used several strategies to reapportion power to those in the courtroom whose demographics remained stable (judges and lawyers).84 The first was the peremptory strike, which allows lawyers to dismiss a potential juror for no stated reason.85 Critics of the peremptory strike allege that “[t]hose persons in the venire who appear perceptive, well-educated, or independent-minded are in the most danger of being peremptorily struck,”86 but others have found no such result.87 In 1938, the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure codified a

United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” U.S. CONST. amend. XIX.

81. *See infra* note 93 and accompanying text.
82. Smith, *supra* note 47, at 432 (internal quotations and footnote omitted).
84. *See id.* at 355 (“The movement toward limiting jury power corresponds with the struggle of formerly excluded groups to gain access to jury service.”); *see also* Smith, *supra* note 46, at 385.
85. The peremptory strike has long been a weapon in lawyers’ arsenals. 2 ALAN WRIGHT ET AL., FEDERAL PRACTICE & CRIMINAL PROCEDURE § 384 (4th ed. 2012). Though the Supreme Court has refused to recognize a constitutional guarantee to peremptory strikes, it has long acknowledged their essentiality in litigation. *Id.; see also* Lewis v. United States, 146 U.S. 370, 376 (1892) (holding that the “making of [peremptory] challenges was an essential part of the trial, and that it was one of the substantial rights of the prisoner to be brought face to face with the jurors at the time when the challenges were made”). However, the Supreme Court has held litigants may not use peremptory strikes on the grounds of race, *see* Batson v. Kentucky, 476 U.S. 79, 87–88 (1986), or gender, *see* Edmonson v. Leesville Concrete Co., 500 U.S. 614, 622 (1991).
The well-educated are also more likely to be dismissed from the jury due to undue financial hardship, since they typically have the most money to lose by spending the day in the jury box instead of at work. *See id.* at 62 & n.28. Some suggest mitigating or eliminating the peremptory strike as one method of fostering a more educated jury. *See, e.g.*, Strier, *supra* note 19, at 74 (warning that such mitigation would be met with strong resistance from lawyers, who, nonetheless, would retain unlimited challenges for cause).
87. Hillel Y. Levin & John W. Emerson, *Is There a Bias Against Education in the Jury Selection Process?*, 38 CONN. L. REV. 325, 328 (2006) (writing that the results of studying Connecticut juries were “surprising: there is no evidence that juries are undereducated relative to the venires from which they are selected. Indeed, juries seem to be better educated than the Connecticut population demographics reported by U.S. census data. Thus, our study suggests that the system is not broken in the way we typically imagine”). It is strange that, at some point, the peremptory strike shifted
second method of sapping jury power: the JNOV. By using the JNOV, judges are able to “fix” unreasonable jury verdicts they find to be against the legally sufficient weight of the evidence. Another academically popular method of jury control is the special jury. For decades, the academy has pushed for special, or “blue ribbon,” juries composed of those it deems qualified to adjudicate complex litigation. For instance, a 1980 Yale Law Journal article advocated that “[a]ny party to a complex suit should be allowed to move for trial by a special jury . . . . [A] complex antitrust action by one large corporation against another would seem perfectly suited to the use of a special jury.” A final strategy is to eliminate the jury altogether in favor of a bench trial, but this would almost assuredly run afool of the

from excluding minorities and other perceived underqualified jurors, see generally WRIGHT, supra note 85, to excluding, as critics allege, overqualified jurors, see Lilly, supra note 86 and accompanying text.

88. Rule 50(b) states:
If the court does not grant a motion for judgment as a matter of law made under Rule 50(a), the court is considered to have submitted the action to the jury subject to the court’s later deciding the legal questions raised by the motion. No later than 28 days after the entry of judgment—or if the motion addresses a jury issue not decided by a verdict, no later than 28 days after the jury was discharged—the movant may file a renewed motion for judgment as a matter of law and may include an alternative or joint request for a new trial under Rule 59. In ruling on the renewed motion, the court may:
(1) allow judgment on the verdict, if the jury returned a verdict; (2) order a new trial; or
(3) direct the entry of judgment as a matter of law.
FED. R. CIV. P. 50(b).
90. See FED. R. CIV. P. 50; Dooley, supra note 75, at 333.
91. Cries for special juries were especially loud in the 1980s after the surge of complex tort and technology litigation in the 1970s. See generally, e.g., The Case for Special Juries, supra note 19.
92. Id. at 1172–73. While there is not broad consensus on exactly how to compose special juries, one reasonable suggestion is for a majority of the jury to hold a college degree. See Strier, supra note 19, at 58–60. The Supreme Court has held that in criminal cases, the Constitution requires juries to be a “fair cross section of the community.” Taylor v. Louisiana, 419 U.S. 522, 527 (1975). While the Court has not squarely held whether civil cases require the same cross-section, see Sutton, supra note 54, at 581, some argue that a college-educated jury would pass constitutional muster because “today’s population of college graduates represent virtually every segment of society.” Strier, supra note 19, at 63. Furthermore, as long as the venire meets cross-section requirements, there is no law requiring that petit juries do so as well. Lockhart v. McCree, 476 U.S. 162, 174 (1986). Therefore, if a college-educated jury pool represents the community as a whole, it might pass constitutional muster.
93. See infra notes 151–56 and accompanying text.
Seventh Amendment’s guarantee to a civil jury.\textsuperscript{95}

The rationale underlying all of these power-shifting techniques is the same: the academy\textsuperscript{96} has insisted that the jury is incompetent to effectively, fairly, and objectively adjudicate complex litigation. There are myriad denunciations of the ordinary American’s capacity to adjudicate today’s complex matters: that the assumption that juries understand instructions “seems highly artificial”;\textsuperscript{97} that there is “no constitutional or statutory right that ‘ignorance’ be represented in the jury box”;\textsuperscript{98} that there is no reason to “wait until the appellate level to have triers of fact that are prepared to render accurate and consistent verdicts”;\textsuperscript{99} that “[t]he only question is whether we can tolerate comprehension problems as the price for maintaining jury participation in resolving conflicts”;\textsuperscript{100} and that despite good intentions, “[t]he cross-section requirement . . . serve[s] to decrease the competency of the jurors entrusted with deciding a case.”\textsuperscript{101} It seems that those at the top of legal structures have always distrusted juries—English kings threatened severe penalties for juries who handed down undesirable verdicts,\textsuperscript{102} and modern intellectuals continue to deride common citizens who give what they consider undesirable verdicts.\textsuperscript{103} Though the history of the jury has seen plenty of changes,\textsuperscript{104} the suspicion with which those in power

\textsuperscript{95.} See Strier, supra note 19, at 64. Further, bench trials have not been found to produce better results than jury trials, at least in patent litigation. See Kimberly A. Moore, Judges, Juries, and Patent Cases—An Empirical Peek Inside the Black Box, 99 Mich. L. Rev. 365, 387–88, 408 n.155 (2000).

\textsuperscript{96.} The academy’s critiques are in the same vein of conservatism referenced in supra note 77.

\textsuperscript{97.} Lilly, supra note 86, at 68.

\textsuperscript{98.} The Case for Special Juries, supra note 19, at 1171 (quoting United States v. Henderson, 298 F.2d 522, 526 (7th Cir. 1962) (internal quotation marks omitted).

\textsuperscript{99.} Miller, supra note 19, ¶ 42.

\textsuperscript{100.} Arthur Austin, The Jury System at Risk from Complexity, the New Media, and Deviancy, 73 Denv. U. L. Rev. 51, 60 (1995).


\textsuperscript{102.} See Smith, supra note 46, at 408 (“[I]n the sixteenth century the courts in England possessed the power to set aside verdicts and punish jurors at will . . . .”); see also Elrod, supra note 19, at 312–13 (“[J]uries even in early modern England could be punished for failing to reach the verdict desired by the government . . . . In extreme cases, even death was an available penalty.”).

\textsuperscript{103.} See supra notes 97–101 and accompanying text. In all fairness, the fact that those at the top of the legal power structure only critique juries instead of threatening them with jail time for being “wrong” shows a marked improvement in societal norms.

\textsuperscript{104.} See supra notes 75–81 and accompanying text.
view it has remained consistently high.\textsuperscript{105}

The ever-connected, technology-laden jury\textsuperscript{106} is a new phenomenon unknown to the traditional legal system.\textsuperscript{107} Historically, technology played a minimal role in predominantly oral trials.\textsuperscript{108} These trials were, by modern standards, short and simple.\textsuperscript{109} Privileged white males composed juries that wielded more power than they do today.\textsuperscript{110} Against this background, however, modern technology burst onto the scene.

III. TIMES ARE CHANGING

A. Technology: Proliferating

One of the greatest changes since early jury competence literature lies in the realm of technology.\textsuperscript{111} Decades ago, when the academy was already plenty displeased with the average jury’s ability,\textsuperscript{112} few would be able to predict the proliferation of new technology and how soon much of it would be ubiquitously enmeshed in society. Today’s world is far more interconnected and saturated with battery-powered gadgets than ever.\textsuperscript{113}

Americans have always loved their televisions, and “total TV viewing has been on the rise in the U.S. for years . . . .”\textsuperscript{114} Currently, 114.7 million households own televisions, and the average American watches an astonishing five hours of video every day, 98\% of which is viewed from a traditional TV.\textsuperscript{115} That means that in a single year, the average American spends over seventy-six days sitting in front of a television.\textsuperscript{116} But the

\begin{thebibliography}{11}
\bibitem{105} See supra notes 83–103 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{106} See infra notes 182–203 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{107} See supra notes 44–50 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{108} See supra notes 44–50 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{109} See supra notes 51–64 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{110} See supra notes 65–73 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{111} See infra notes 117–30 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{112} See, e.g., supra notes 91–93, 97–101 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{113} See infra notes 114–30 and accompanying text.
\bibitem{115} Id.
\bibitem{116} See id. (five hours multiplied by 365 days per year equals 1,825 hours per year, or 76.04 days).
\end{thebibliography}
television is no longer the only screen captivating Americans’ attention.

Welcome to the era of the cell phone, and, increasingly, the smartphone, which is capable of accessing the Internet and running applications (apps). As of 2011, 83% of all American adults owned cell phones, and approximately one-third of Americans ages fourteen to seventeen owned smartphones. Proliferation of smartphones has contributed to an explosion of texting. While teenagers as a whole send an average of sixty text messages per day, fourteen- to seventeen-year-olds send one hundred per day. An even more poignant illustration of the way technology is replacing traditional modes of communication is the fact that about two-thirds of teenagers text every day, while only about one-third engage in daily face-to-face socializing outside of school.

Americans increasingly turn to omnipresent technology to thwart boredom. Forty-two percent of cell phone owners use them for 

---


121. See infra notes 122–23 and accompanying text.

122. LENHART, supra note 120, at 2.

123. Id.
entertainment when they are bored. For Millennials, that figure escalates to 70%, with nearly half of them admitting they “have had trouble doing something because they did not have their phone nearby.” As of March 2012, 212 million Americans used the Internet. Ninety-two percent of all young adults, and virtually all college students, are online. Over half of young adults go online everyday “for no particular reason except to have fun or to pass the time.” In short, mobile technology has transitioned from being a luxury of the few to a common fact of everyday American existence. It should also transition legal professionals to a new way of looking at litigating in front of juries.

B. Litigation: Increasingly Intricate

Since the mid-twentieth century, litigation has become significantly more complex due to several factors. First, the introduction of the federal rules of joinder in 1938 allowed for multiple claims by multiple parties to be decided in a single lawsuit by a single jury. Second, the subject matter of litigation became much more intricate than in the past. Many lawsuits began

124. SMITH, supra note 119, at 2.
125. See infra note 181.
126. SMITH, supra note 119, at 2.
127. May 2012—Top U.S. Web Brands and News Websites, NIELSEN NEWSWIRE (June 22, 2012), blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/may-2012-top-u-s-web-brands-and-news-websites/. Google was the most viewed website, while Facebook came in second. Id.
130. As an example of the increasing accessibility of technology, the 1984 Apple iMac cost $662.35 per MHz of computing power; by 2009, consumers paid just $0.34 per MHz. Mark J. Perry, Computers Just Keep Getting Cheaper and Better, ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA BLOG (Apr. 7, 2010), http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2010/04/computers-just-keep-getting-cheaper-and-better-and-we-should-eagerly-await-the-days-ahead/.
131. See supra note 19.
132. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 19–20. The exponentially increased complexity these Rules allow prompted one commentator to write that the rules of liberalized joinder pit Fifth Amendment due-process concerns against the Seventh Amendment, though the merits of that debate are beyond the scope of this Comment. Roger W. Kirst, The Jury’s Historic Domain in Complex Cases, 58 WASH. L. REV. 1, 8–9 (1982).
to center around novel and esoteric concepts: DNA, computers, derivative securities, antitrust, and, as in Apple v. Samsung, software patents. Third, recent decades have seen juries hear an “explosion of patent litigation,” which is “inherently complex.” One federal district court judge commented: “Honest to God, I don’t see how you could try a patent matter to a jury. Goodness, I’ve gotten involved in a few of these things. It’s like somebody hit you between your eyes with a four-by-


135. The most famous derivative securities suit is likely Ross v. Bernhard, 396 U.S. 531 (1970) because of its famous “footnote 10,” which some have construed as allowing for a complexity exception to the right to trial by jury. See infra note 151. The suit focused on whether Lehman Brothers was unlawfully controlling another corporation. Ross, 396 U.S. at 531–32. In footnote 10, the Court listed three factors when discussing whether a jury should try particular issues. Id. at 538 n.10. The third factor is “the practical abilities and limitations of juries.” Id. The ambiguous phrase, listed last in a series placed in a footnote, has led scholars to conjecture whether the Supreme Court tacitly approved of a complexity exception. See infra note 151.


Where history and precedent provide no clear answers, functional considerations also play their part in the choice between judge and jury to define terms of art. . . . [T]he fact/law distinction at times has turned on a determination that, as a matter of the sound administration of justice, one judicial actor is better positioned than another to decide the issue in question. . . . The construction of written instruments is one of those things that judges often do and are likely to do better than jurors unburdened by training in exegesis. Patent construction in particular is a special occupation, requiring, like all others, special training and practice. The judge, from his training and discipline, is more likely to give a proper interpretation to such instruments than a jury; and he is, therefore, more likely to be right, in performing such a duty, than a jury can be expected to be. . . . [T]he claims of patents have become highly technical in many respects . . . .

Id. at 388–89 (internal quotation marks and citations omitted).
four.”

Patents or otherwise, juries are required to understand increasingly complex subject matter.

Such complexity increases the cost of litigation and the scope of evidence. Patent litigation very often costs each party more than $1 million. Though not necessarily typical, document discovery involved 3,000,000 pages in In re NASDAQ Market-Markers Antitrust Litigation.

Likewise, 577,000 pages were admitted into evidence in Cimino v. Raymark Industries, Inc. Even if the Cimino jury were comprised of solely Mensa members, it is hardly conceivable that they would be able to grasp over 500,000 pages of documents.

Since previous academic critiques of jury competence, litigation has continued to evolve. The critiques from the 1980s are still present and, some would argue, more pronounced: “[M]odern trials and the jury selection process have coalesced to exacerbate traditional problems that have long been recognized.” In response to this perceived exacerbation, courts are taking measures to preserve the legitimacy of trials. One involves avoiding the jury; the other involves accommodating it.

The first response, avoidance, assumes that a “complexity exception” exists to the Seventh Amendment’s guarantee of the right to trial by jury in civil cases. Some have used equitable and due process considerations

---


141. See supra notes 133–40 and accompanying text.

142. Moore, supra note 95, at 367.


146. See infra notes 147–71 and accompanying text.

147. Lilly, supra note 86, at 53.

148. See infra notes 151–63 and accompanying text.

149. See infra notes 151–56 and accompanying text.

150. See infra notes 157–63 and accompanying text.

151. The academy has long debated whether such an exception actually exists. See supra note 135. Exception proponents claim that special juries are rooted in history and that incompetent lay juries raise due process concerns. The Case for Special Juries, supra note 19, at 1163, 1170–72. Others offer what they believe to be sufficient suggestions for improving lay juries without replacing them with special jurors. See, e.g., Friedland, supra note 101, at 209–18.

152. “In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved . . . .” U.S. CONST. amend. VII.
to argue that the most complex civil litigation should be taken away from the
purview of a jury. 153 Concerns of complexity, typified by Judge Covello’s
statement above, 154 led Pennsylvania to contemplate the idea of
implementing a specialized jury-free commercial court, 155 which is not
unheard of—Delaware has a special chancery court dedicated to commercial
matters.156

The alternative response, accommodation, requires courts to finally
embrace technology. Though judges are notoriously averse to change, 157 the
1999 Federal Judicial Conference endorsed the use of courtroom
technology,158 and as the price of mobile technology has dropped, more
attorneys are using it.159 Affordability is not the only force propelling


153. See generally The Case for Special Juries, supra note 19.
154. See Judicial Panel Discussions on Science and the Law, supra note 140 and accompanying
text.
155. Paul Lansing & Nina Miley, The Right to a Jury Trial in Complex Commercial Litigation: A
156. Id. at 135. The Delaware Chancery Court is strictly equitable, meaning that commercial
matters in which the plaintiff seeks monetary damages may still be tried before a jury. See id. at
135–36.
157. Judges’ tolerance of courtroom technology is “evolving”: they “tend to be[come] receptive”
to it after seeing its advantages. Ponder, supra note 45, at 289–90.
158. Elizabeth C. Wiggins et al., Federal Judicial Center Survey on Courtroom Technology 1 (2003),
159. Ponder, supra note 45, at 292.
160. Longhofer, supra note 19, at 341.
Courts § 61.3 (3d ed. 2011). A survey revealed that attorneys use their laptops for presentation
purposes, litigation support, connecting with the court’s audio/visual system, online research, and
email access. Id.
162. Frank Herrera, Jr. & Sonia M. Rodriguez, Courtroom Technology: Tools for Persuasion,
TRIAL, May 1999, at 66, 68 (quoting John Selbak, Digital Litigation: The Prejudicial Effects of
Computer-Generated Animation in the Courtroom, 9 High Tech. L.J. 337, 359–60 (1994)).
Technology not only helps lawyers inside the courtroom, it also aids reporters outside. The ease of technology and rise of instantaneous news allows reporters to cover sensational and important cases like never before. Even Supreme Court Justices are not impervious to media reports of their decisions. Finally, many litigants would rather stay out of the public microscope, lest a jury deem their actions illegal for the world to see. In sum, court proceedings are no longer impervious to technology’s ever-expanding impact.

As technology infiltrates the courtroom—at however slow a pace—we can expect the character of litigation to continue to evolve. Darwinian though it may be, those who evolve most quickly will likely not only survive, but walk away with tremendous verdicts. Just ask Apple.
C. Juries: Evolving

The United States “is now the only country in the world where the jury continues to play both a broad and a central role in the adjudicatory process.”172 One explanation is that the American jury is defined, in part, by its adaptability.173 Academics have long discussed how the jury’s demographics and role have adapted to various cultural and political eras174—and how those in power have countered with legal adaptations of their own175—but they have spilled little ink regarding how juries have changed in the twenty-first century. Perhaps this is because the changes are less immediately noticeable.176 Recently, we have not seen the introduction of new races or genders into the jury as we did in the twentieth century.177 However, equally radical changes are presently afoot, particularly among today’s youth.178 Today’s younger generations are vastly different from baby boomers,179 and they will likely respond to litigation differently than their parents and grandparents.

While older jurors are certainly important right now,180 the future of juries—and the legal system—lies with Millennials.181 Ergo, any adaptations the legal system makes necessarily must take them into consideration. Millennials are marked by several distinct characteristics.182

172. Lilly, supra note 86, at 59. In Europe, juries have been relegated mostly to the realm of serious criminal trials. Id.
174. See supra notes 75–81 and accompanying text.
175. See supra notes 83–95 and accompanying text.
176. See supra notes 76–81 and accompanying text.
177. See supra notes 76–81 and accompanying text.
178. See infra notes 183–200 and accompanying text.
179. See infra notes 183–200 and accompanying text.
182. See infra notes 183–88 and accompanying text.
They “expect results immediately” and “carry an arsenal of electronic devices.”\textsuperscript{183} They are more educated than their parents,\textsuperscript{184} expect to make more money, multitask, want to learn only what they have to learn, and do so in a style that is best for them.\textsuperscript{185} Teachers often bemoan their inability to hold students’ attention for even the shortest periods of time.\textsuperscript{186} Millennials are known for their short attention spans, in part, opined one teacher, “because of the media that . . . teachers and parents have encouraged them to spend their time with, and in part because we haven’t taught them to have longer attention spans.”\textsuperscript{187} Students rarely afford professors their undivided attention; “[i]nstead, they must learn to selectively focus when critical material is being discussed . . . . The juror’s role is analogous.”\textsuperscript{188}

Today’s (and tomorrow’s) jurors also consume incredible amounts of media—both television\textsuperscript{189} and Internet\textsuperscript{190}—which has changed the way they process information. For instance, the twenty-four-hour news cycle has turned news into fast-paced bullet points.\textsuperscript{191} When it comes to learning the

\textsuperscript{183} Carlson, supra note 181, at A34.
\textsuperscript{184} Id. The education level of juries has been a hot topic among the highly educated academy. See Levin & Emerson, supra note 86, at 327. \textit{Compare generally} Lilly, supra note 86, \textit{with} Levin & Emerson, supra note 87. While many suspect that the most educated are barred from participation via peremptory challenges, see Lilly, supra note 86, at 64, at least one study has disproven this fear, see Levin & Emerson, supra note 87, at 328.
\textsuperscript{185} Carlson, supra note 181, at A36.
\textsuperscript{186} See id.
\textsuperscript{187} Id.
\textsuperscript{188} Strier, supra note 19, at 71. Naturally, this leads to the question: What is “critical material” in a trial? Do jurors, like modern students, mentally calculate what will be “on the exam,” that is, what is necessary for them to arrive at a proper conclusion?

It is not clear that technology’s role in American education is as efficacious as it could be. See \textit{Pisa Envy}, ECONOMIST, Jan. 19–25, 2013, at 61–62, \textit{available at} http://www.economist.com/news/international/21569689-research-comparing-educational-achievement-between-countries-growing-drawing. A recent report ranked the United States seventeenth in overall education. \textit{Id.} The top-ranked countries “differ widely in their approach” toward funding and implementing education. \textit{Id.} at 62. Though education’s exact effect on jury competence is difficult to compare since so few countries use juries, continued poor education seemingly would not bode well for the lay jury’s future.

\textsuperscript{189} The average American watches over thirty hours of television per week. \textit{See} Stelter, supra note 114.
\textsuperscript{190} Internet users scroll through pages at a rate of about one per minute. \textit{May 2012—Top U.S. Web Brands and New Websites}, supra note 127.
\textsuperscript{191} \textit{See supra} notes 183–88 and accompanying text.
news of the day, the thirty-minute nightly news programs now seem impossibly long. 193 Although thirty minutes might be too long for news, it is not too long for the popular phenomenon of legal dramas. 194 One of the most popular, Law & Order, premiered in 1990 195 and led to myriad spinoffs. 196 In fact, by 2005, seven of the top twenty TV shows “were premised on forensic investigations and courtroom dramas,” meaning that more than 120 million Americans (many of them potential jurors) watched shows based heavily on litigation. 197 Although these shows are entertaining, they present a false picture of what happens in both the laboratory and courtroom. 198 Because they invariably resolve with successful DNA matches and forensic breakthroughs, jurors tend to believe forensic evidence is infallible. 199 The increase in courtroom dramas may contribute to the decline in jury knowledge of real-life litigation and lead to more evidentiary problems by promulgating false information. 200

As jurors continue to evolve, and as Millennials occupy more and more seats in the jury box, the influence of technology will only increase. 201 It will change the way children grow up, students learn, and lay citizens
perceive litigation. Only those attorneys savvy enough to understand the jury’s changing dynamics will find themselves consistently successful in tomorrow’s complex litigation.

IV. A NEW REALITY

A. Technology: A Good Thing?

It is undisputed that technology is proliferating. More prone to debate, however, is the extent to which this proliferation is beneficial. Technology experts are split on the issue. Proponents emphasize that the next generation will be “nimble, quick-acting multitaskers” who will develop the future’s most valued skills: “rapidly searching, browsing, assessing quality, and synthesizing . . . vast quantities of information.” In complex litigation involving voluminous discovery, rapid search and synthesis skills could prove to be a distinct advantage for both lawyers who present the information and juries who evaluate it.

Others view technology with greater caution. This new way of constantly networked living “will drive [young people] to thirst for instant gratification, settle for quick choices, and lack patience.” If true, this

202. See supra notes 183–98.
203. See, e.g., supra note 2 and accompanying text.
204. See supra notes 111–30 and accompanying text.
205. JANNA QUITNEY ANDERSON & LEE RAINIE, PEW RESEARCH CTR.’S INTERNET & AM. LIFE PROJECT, MILLENNIALS WILL BENEFIT AND SUFFER DUE TO THEIR HYPERCONNECTED LIVES 5 (2012), available at http://www.pewinternet.org/~/media/Reports/2012/PIP_Future_of_ Internet_2012_Young_brains_PDF.pdf. “But their presence and reach into our lives will be less visible.” Id.
206. See infra notes 207–18 and accompanying text.
207. ANDERSON & RAINIE, supra note 205, at 2. It is likely, however, that time will lead to greater consensus on the need for adaptation.
208. Id. There is now even evidence of “supertaskers”—those who “can handle several complicated tasks well.” Id. at 3 (citing communications expert Stowe Boyd).
209. Id. at 4 (quoting principal Microsoft researcher Jonathan Grudin).
210. See supra notes 143–45 and accompanying text.
211. See infra notes 212–18 and accompanying text.
212. ANDERSON & RAINIE, supra note 215, at 2. The new “cognitive challenge” for today’s youth is “integrity, the state of being whole and undivided.” Id. at 5 (quoting Barry Chudakov). Maintaining presence, mindfulness, and awareness in the face of persistent and pervasive
could prove to be disastrous for jurors in complex litigation, where decisions must be made methodically, and patience is at a premium. Soon, the skill of critically reading one thing and concentrating on it extensively will not necessarily be completely useless, but it will be of far less consequence for most people. If the next generation is trained in skills devoid of sustained critical thinking, difficulty in adjudicating complex cases seems unavoidable. Nicholas Carr provides one final premonition about the scatterbrained jurors of tomorrow: “When we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning.” The Internet might provide easy access to mountains of information, but “it is turning us into shallower thinkers, [and] literally changing the structure of our brain[s].” Technology’s complete impact remains to be seen, but the trend away from prolonged concentration and toward cursory analysis necessitates that the academy, judges, and attorneys begin thinking now about what that impact might be—and what they should do about it.

B. Litigation: Behind the Times?

1. Litigation Must Follow Educational Trends

The advent of ubiquitous technology and speculation about its impact will be highly sought after skills. These are precisely the skills jurors will need to effectively adjudicate long, complex trials. See supra notes 131–71 and accompanying text (describing modern changes in litigation).

213. This is particularly true when the jury needs to fill out a step-by-step special verdict form. See supra notes 52–53 and accompanying text.

214. Patience is much more important with the length of today’s trials compared to their historical counterparts. See supra notes 290–92 and accompanying text (describing how even higher education did not yield greater juror understanding).

215. See infra notes 220–80 and accompanying text (analyzing probable changes in litigation).

216. See supra notes 111–30 and accompanying text.
on our futures lead to another debate with direct bearing on future litigation: how technology will affect education. The answer affects not only how professors should teach their students, but also how lawyers should communicate with juries. The courtroom and classroom share numerous similarities, and what happens in the classroom necessarily impacts courtroom strategies. The basic structure, purpose, and methods of the university have remained strikingly static over the course of its twelve-century existence: “Other than adding books, electricity, and women, it is still primarily an older person lecturing to a set of younger ones.” Similarly, for all the change the courtroom has undergone, its fundamental modus operandi has remained static. A lawyer still stands before jurors and relies heavily on oratory to persuade them. The emphasis on oral communication has been one of the strongest common analogies between the classroom and courtroom. Until recently, the American education system has trained students to learn by in-person verbal instruction.

221. See supra notes 205–18 and accompanying text.


223. See infra notes 225–31 and accompanying text.

224. See infra notes 225–31 and accompanying text.


227. See supra note 60 and accompanying text.

228. Compare supra note 60 and accompanying text, with supra note 225 and accompanying text.

229. See FUTURE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET ON HIGHER EDUCATION, supra note 225, at 3 (“[T]he standardized knowledge-transmission model is primarily the same today as it was when students started gathering at the University of Bologna in 1088”). Jeff Jarvis summed it up this way:

[O]ur current educational system, start to end, is built for an industrial era, churning out students like widgets who are taught to churn out widgets themselves. That is a world where there is one right answer: We spew it from a lectern; we expect it to be spewed back in a test.

Id. at 5.
However, “[e]xperimentation and innovation are proliferating” in the classroom.230 Courtrooms should similarly adapt to new learning styles or risk impeding juror competence.231

If education experts can accurately predict how future students will learn, legal professionals can more effectively adapt future litigation to maximize juror understanding.232 The Pew Research Center recently asked experts to speculate on the state of higher education in the year 2020.233 Those who predict dramatic changes outnumbered those who predict relative stasis nearly two-to-one.234 The experts holding the less popular view contend higher education is “‘one of the most resistant social institutions ever created,”’235 in part because “[a]ll learning is not reducible to sound bytes, video clips, and PowerPoint graphics.”236 They claim the educational system is too large and cumbersome to quickly adapt to changing technology and learning preferences.237 Finally, they insist the purpose of higher education is not simply to impart knowledge, but rather to “develop [people] as social beings, in some quite specifically institutional ways” the Internet cannot do.238 If these experts are correct, students will continue to be trained to learn through the traditional oral lecture—which closely resembles how attorneys teach jurors239—and courts will have fewer fundamental shifts to which they need to adapt.240

230. Id. at 3.
231. See generally Jaquish & Ware, supra note 226.
232. See infra notes 233–49 and accompanying text (summarizing current predictions on technology’s impact on future education).
233. FUTURE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET ON HIGHER EDUCATION, supra note 225.
234. Id. at 3–4.
235. Id. at 7 (quoting Hugh F. Cline).
236. How Technology Changes Everything, supra note 222, at 456.
237. See FUTURE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET ON HIGHER EDUCATION, supra note 225, at 7.
238. FUTURE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET ON HIGHER EDUCATION, supra note 225, at 7 (quoting Matthew Allen).
239. See supra notes 225–31 and accompanying text.
240. Logically, if jurors are raised in schools that train them to learn verbally, traditional verbal-based litigation should pose fewer problems going forward. But see infra notes 241–49 and accompanying text (suggesting this optimism is unwarranted).
However, the three-fifths of survey respondents who predict extraordinary changes in education are likely correct. Simply put, bricks will be replaced by clicks. Demand for traditional lecture-based education will decrease, and, because of its cost, “[t]raditional face-to-face higher education will become a privilege of a few . . . .” Higher education, these experts say, simply must change. Technology is pervading students’ lives so much that concentration is giving way to stimulation, and cognitive effort is yielding to instant gratification. Technology is pervading children’s homes and their classrooms. If litigators ignore the reality that tomorrow’s jurors increasingly crave instant gratification without being trained to exert sustained focus for long periods of time, academic critics of lay juries might very well be correct.

2. Litigation Must Keep Up with Technology

If education must change in the wake of ubiquitous technology (as most

244. See id. at 5 (citing Donald G. Barnes). The cost of higher education has ballooned at nearly five times the rate of inflation over the past thirty years, and student debt has doubled since 1997. Not What It Used to Be, supra note 242, at 29.
246. Id. at 4 (citing Charlie Firestone).
248. Steve Kastenbaum, Helping Kids Cross the Digital Divide, CNN RADIO (Oct. 5, 2012, 10:27 AM), available at cnnradio.cnn.com/2012/10/05/helping-kids-cross-the-digital-divide/. Though it would seem that children from lower-income households might suffer from “digital inequality,” ubiquitous technology seems to transcend economic status. Id. However, there is a “huge gap in knowledge of how to use that technology.” Id.
249. See, e.g., Higher Education: Not What It Used to Be, supra note 242.
believe), so too must litigation. The responsibility for jury preservation should fall on the bench and bar. First, as law student Laura Lee recently wrote, judges must solve the problem of the “twittering juror.” Jurors’ “digital misadventures,” such as tweeting during deliberations and Googling outside information, threaten to undermine the legitimacy of trials. To that end, jury instructions need to be more explicit: “[O]ld cautionary prohibitions—such as barring jurors from ‘outside research’ or ‘external discussion’—are no longer specific enough” for Millennials who may not even realize that the current instructions apply to social media. Because judges and their courtroom rules are not keeping up with technology, jury critics gain increasingly more fodder as misconduct is unveiled. While a complete technology ban “is not the wisest approach”—it will likely cause unnecessary frustration—uniform, specific instructions tailored to

250. See supra note 234 and accompanying text.
251. See infra notes 252–69 and accompanying text.
252. See infra note 264 and accompanying text.
253. See generally Lee, supra note 237.
254. See Lee, supra note 237, at 182–83; see also Grant Amey, Comment, Social Media and the Legal System: Analyzing Various Responses to Using Technology from the Jury Box, 35 J. LEGAL PROF. 111, 124 (2010) (“[T]he problem of jurors’ misuse of technology looms large and shows no sign of decreasing.”). In Apple, the trial judge specifically asked the jurors about their social media habits. Sandoval, supra note 5. The results: six used Facebook, one Tweeted, and no one blogged. Id.
255. Lee, supra note 237, at 183.
256. Id. at 195 (“Jury’s insatiable appetite for immediacy clouds their sense of propriety.” (internal quotation marks and alterations omitted)).
257. Only about 6% of the bench and bar tweet, id. at 184, so it is no wonder that judges have not incorporated social media-specific jury instructions.
258. See id. at 184–86.
259. Id. at 206.
technology-savvy jurors are vital.  

Second, litigation’s increasing complexity demands that lawyers competently use the Federal Rules, jury instructions, and technology to create the most comprehension-friendly environment.  

A lawyer’s job is “‘to make . . . [jurors] understand, and if he has not achieved that objective, he has failed, not the jury.’”  

Perhaps the academic critique is misplaced—maybe we should be focusing on attorney, rather than juror, competence.  

At least one writer thinks so, asserting that the Model Rules for Professional Responsibility should reflect attorneys’ obligation to be at least minimally competent in using courtroom technology.  

The use of courtroom technology is becoming standard practice in today’s courtroom, so the Model Rules (or at least their comments) should address lawyers’ ethical obligations pursuant to this new reality.  

This makes complete sense.  If lawyers must be minimally competent in filing motions and presenting cogent arguments to the jury, there is no reason to resist extending minimal competence to something that will eventually be just as common as paperwork or oral arguments.  

After all, lawyers are the professionals, not jurors.  Academic critics should expect more of those who have dedicated
their lives to litigation than of jurors temporarily called away from their daily lives to serve on a single trial. 269

The introduction of technology into the courtroom is beneficial, 270 especially in light of technology’s increasing role in education, 271 but it is not without its dangers. First, while attorneys are adapting to technology, 272 judges lag well behind the general populace in their technology use. 273 Until they get up to speed, they are unlikely to appreciate new courtroom uses for technology or to effectively combat jurors’ “digital misadventures.” 274 Second, it is possible that litigants might use increasingly advanced technology to mislead jurors. 275 For instance, defense teams are using neurotechnology to explain away any and every criminal action. 276 But perhaps jurors’ technological understanding will outpace that of lawyers, or maybe the jury will reject “junk science” 277 based on its collective common sense. 278 Based on current statistics, 279 it is likely that tomorrow’s jurors—who have grown up with technology—will be competent to judge technological evidence for themselves. 280

C. Juries: Legitimate?

Attorney competence aside, academics have long focused their concerns on juries. 281 This section explores questions surrounding the merits of two

---

269. See id.
270. See supra notes 157–63 and accompanying text.
271. See supra notes 242–49 and accompanying text.
272. See supra notes 157–61 and accompanying text.
273. See Lee, supra note 237 and accompanying text. Similarly, Justice Souter famously did all of his work only in fountain pen, eschewing technology altogether. TOOBIN, supra note 166, at 51.
274. See Lee, supra note 237 and accompanying text.
275. See Sease, supra note 138, at 621.
277. See Sease, supra note 138, at 621.
278. The Supreme Court seemingly views jurors as having more common sense and sympathy than judges. See Duncan v. Louisiana, 391 U.S. 145, 156 (1968) (“If the defendant preferred the common-sense judgment of a jury to the more tutored but perhaps less sympathetic reaction of the single judge, he was to have it.”).
279. Compare supra note 257 and accompanying text with supra notes 117–23 and accompanying text.
280. See infra notes 314–23 and accompanying text.
281. See supra notes 97–101 and accompanying text. This finger pointing at jurors might be
specific critiques in light of the recent technology revolution: first, whether juries are competent to adjudicate complex litigation; and second, whether the traditional advantages to jury trials still apply in the modern era.

1. Competence

Whether the jury is competent to evaluate mountains of evidence over the course of weeks or months and arrive at a fair and correct verdict is a matter that divides legal observers. Many authors decry juries as inept and biased, while others defend them as perfectly adequate. This section wades through the arguments with an eye toward how modern technology strengthens or weakens certain assertions.

because many writers in the legal academy are lawyers who do not want to blame themselves for contributing to the perceived problem of jury incompetence.

282. See infra notes 284–341 and accompanying text.
283. See infra notes 324–31 and accompanying text.
284. See infra notes 285–341 and accompanying text.
285. See supra notes 97–101 and accompanying text. “Trial lawyers warn . . . that the broader story often matters as much as evidence in complex patent cases. ‘The winning party is usually the side that convinces the jury that they have been wronged . . . .’” Vasellaro, supra note 4.
286. Authors like Edmund Sease emphasize overwhelming juror bias against corporations, saying that 89% of jurors think large corporations “will use unfair tactics to squeeze out a small competitor.” Sease, supra note 138, at 608. Nearly just as many think corporations “take advantage of independent investors.” Id. They also tend to hold the Patent Office “in very high regard” and “have a natural and very dangerous instinct to make device-to-device comparisons . . . .” Id.

Sease makes no qualms about using dubious evidence to persuade what he evidently considers to be a gullible jury. See id. From this, it appears that the perception of incompetence leads to greater temptation to use “junk” evidence—after all, who will know the difference? Id. If lawyers considered jurors competent and perceptive, perhaps they would think twice before using ethically questionable evidence. This shows the importance of perception over fact: even if juries are not, in fact, incompetent, the perception that they are may lead to practices that, like a self-fulfilling prophecy, hinder their ability to properly adjudicate cases. See id.

287. See generally Elrod, supra note 19.
288. Much existing literature is based on anecdotal evidence, see David J. F. Gross et al., You’re Still Killing Me: How to Prevent Your Expert Witness from Destroying Your Patent Case at Trial, in PATENT LITIGATION 2012, at 273, 293 (PLI Patents, Copyrights, Trademarks & Literary Prop.,
a. Arguments Against Competence

The more popular position, it seems, is to denounce the jury as incompetent.\(^{289}\) In one rather doomsaying analysis, Roger W. Kirst wrote, “Because of the learning curve, the civil jury system probably could not be set up successfully in the United States today and could not be reinstituted if abandoned for even a short time.”\(^{290}\) A recent University of Cincinnati study showing that juror comprehension decreases as complexity increases bolstered Kirst’s position.\(^{291}\) Although scholars should logically expect an inverse correlation between comprehension and complexity, the study surprisingly showed that comprehension does not improve with higher levels of education or prior jury experience.\(^{292}\)

Critics also bemoan the jury’s inability to properly follow expert witnesses.\(^{293}\) The expert’s role is to translate complex subject matter into a readily understandable format for lay jurors.\(^{294}\) In theory, it seems reasonable to think that the most qualified experts would command the most respect from jurors. This is not necessarily true in complex litigation.\(^{295}\) In one study, expert witnesses’ personal characteristics, like their credentials, became significant only when jurors had difficulty evaluating complex evidence.\(^{296}\) Other studies show that jurors are least trustful of the highest-

---

\(^{289}\) See infra notes 294–302 and accompanying text.

\(^{290}\) Kirst, supra note 132, at 38. It seems that Kirst argues the jury has outlived its usefulness—after all, if the jury could not be set up in the United States today, why bother keeping it? The answer: the Seventh Amendment.


\(^{292}\) Id. More studies need to be conducted in this regard. At the very least, scholars need to ascertain the minimum amount of education that correlates with ability as a juror, because if juror comprehension does not correlate with education level at all, then comparing methods of teaching college students with methods of teaching juries may be moot.

\(^{293}\) See Neil Vidmar, Expert Evidence, the Adversary System, and the Jury, 95 AM. J. PUB. HEALTH S137, S137 (2005) ("For a jury [expert testimony] is especially difficult, because its members usually have no competence in the area. They are often left to make judgments largely on the basis of emotional appeals of the lawyers and their expert witnesses."


\(^{295}\) See infra notes 296–98 and accompanying text.

\(^{296}\) Gross et al., supra note 288, at 299 (quoting Sanja Kutnjak Ivković & Valerie P. Hans,
paid expert.297 The bottom line is that “charisma has an effect on jurors. . . .
[D]uring patent cases that stretch on for weeks, witnesses with captivating personalities can wake up everyone in the courtroom and attract the jury’s attention.298

Technology’s impact on attention spans and information processing will likely bolster jury critics’ arguments.299 As traditional verbal education declines300 and the demand for constant entertainment increases301 jurors likely will have an increasingly difficult time translating long hours of orally communicated complex material into understanding.302

b. The Other Side of the Story

Others, however, have come to the defense of juries.303 First, jury supporters claim they rely on empirical studies more than their counterparts,304 whom they criticize for basing their assumptions on nothing more than their own elite biases.305 Even when subject matter becomes

---

297. Gross et al., supra note 288, at 299.
298. Id. Attracting the jury’s attention is an even greater concern in the technology age, in which attention spans are increasingly short. See Carlson, supra note 181, at A36.
299. See supra notes 189–200 and accompanying text.
300. See supra Part IV.B.1.
301. See supra notes 124–30 and accompanying text.
302. See supra notes 186–200 and accompanying text.
303. See infra notes 304–13 and accompanying text.
304. For instance, federal judges who oversee juries have supported their capabilities. “I emphatically reject the idea that ‘ordinary folks’ are not up to the task of judging complex cases . . . . [I]n my opinion, juries almost always get it right. . . . [M]ost judges—those most familiar with jury trials—share my confidence in the jury.” Elrod, supra note 19, at 320. When polled, 96.5% of judges responded that juries award disproportionately high tort verdicts less than 10% of the time. Id. This kind of empirical study is rare. Because the jury deliberates in secret and is not compelled to discuss what happens in the “black box” of the jury room, see generally Moore, supra note 95, judge surveys are one of the few pieces of empirical evidence available to the academy.
305. David Gross writes:

The idea that jurors are not capable of comprehending complex issues, such as those presented by expert witnesses in patent cases, is a widespread misconception. . . . Criticisms about juror competence are based largely on anecdotal evidence, and those anecdotes are contradicted by empirical studies. . . . Generally speaking, jurors have taken the same number of science and math classes as federal district court judges. . . . Studies have shown that jurors are motivated to research a correct verdict, and will therefore attempt to evaluate expert testimony on its merits rather than relying on an
complex, lay juries “are usually capable of finding the facts and applying the law if judges make full use of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Federal Rules of Evidence.” 306 Second, some place the blame for any complexity problem on federal judges who expect juries “to play an impossible role” in disregard to the jury’s limited historical responsibilities. 307 Third, proponents of traditional lay juries contend that expert witnesses are valuable assets to whom juries give proper attention 308 despite technology’s adverse effect on attention spans. 309 Fourth, even if, arguendo, jurors might struggle with complex material, 310 appellate affirmance rate comparisons between jury trials and bench trials demonstrate that judges are no better at patent adjudication than juries. 311 Finally, proponents also caution that “[t]his sort of end-of-history approach is dubious . . . that we have reached a watershed and we have to throw everything aside and come in with new approaches.” 312 They emphasize that

---


307. Kirst, supra note 132, at 3. This argument fits more squarely with holding courtroom professionals, and not once-in-a-lifetime jurors, responsible for any systematic inadequacies. See Quigley, supra note 264 and accompanying text.

308. See Gross et al., supra note 288, at 296 (“[R]esearchers concluded that the jurors were indeed engaging in ‘central processing’ (which involves analysis of the substantive argument) rather than ‘peripheral processing’ (which involves mental shortcuts and reliance on factors tangential to the substantive argument).” (citing Shari Seidman Diamond, How Jurors Deal with Expert Testimony and How Judges Can Help, 16 J.L. & Pol’y 47, 54 (2007–2008))).

309. See Carlson, supra note 187 and accompanying text.

310. See supra notes 291–302 and accompanying text.


312. See Carlson, supra note 181 (quoting Michael Gorman). Perhaps we are not at a watershed,
juries are not “bewildered and unengaged during complex trials. Rather, . . . jurors are hard-working and competent students, albeit somewhat skeptical of their expert teachers.”

Though there is ample room for debate on the topic, what little empirical data does exist supports jury competence. Appellate affirmance rates of both verdicts and punitive damage awards support the jury’s ability to “get it right.” Furthermore, academic critiques lack a firm foundation in fact. Aside from juries being unduly influenced by expert witnesses’ peripheral factors, critics offer little other verifiable data. Many judges who comment on the issue support the continuing vitality of the lay jury. Studies show that juries are not, in fact, less educated from the general population, and that even if they were, it would not impact competence. In sum, the academy should presume juries are competent until proven otherwise, and critics simply have not proven their case. Instead, it seems that jurors take seriously their responsibility to fairly adjudicate cases, even if their outside lives are immersed in Tweets, bullet-point news, and multitasking.

2. Advantages of Juries

The jury was instituted because it offers several distinct advantages. First, the jury is a “powerful reminder of the basic democratic principle of American government.” The United States, often heralded as the pinnacle but at the very least, we must be willing to adapt to changing circumstances.

313. Gross et al., supra note 288, at 296.
314. See infra notes 315–23 and accompanying text.
315. See Nguyen, supra note 311 and accompanying text.
316. See supra notes 304–05 and accompanying text.
317. See Gross et al., supra note 288, at 299.
318. See id. at 293–94.
320. See Levin & Emerson, supra note 87 and accompanying text.
322. See supra notes 303–21 and accompanying text.
323. See supra notes 314–21 and accompanying text.
324. Kirst, supra note 132, at 28. John Adams called the jury trial and popular elections “the heart and lungs of liberty.” Elrod, supra note 19, at 308 (internal quotation marks omitted).

Thomas Jefferson identified the jury “as the only anchor ever yet imagined by man, by
of modern democracy, allows its citizens to participate in civil government in more ways than simply voting. That their civic engagement also involves legal decisions of guilt, liability, and fault sets this country apart from nearly every other. Second, judges hear cases day in and day out, possibly fostering a bias and encouraging stereotypes. Jurors, many of whom presumably serve only once in their lives, do not suffer from these propensities. Third, jury trials allow our common law to develop in ways that Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) does not. Judge Jennifer Elrod argues that the increase in ADR, and corresponding decrease in jury trials, deprives our common law of precedential development. None of these advantages has diminished to a level that warrants replacing the lay jury. As long as democratic government, long-tenured judges, and a common law-based judicial system exist, the lay jury remains vital. The legal profession must seek to strengthen it.

V. IMPROVING LITIGATION BY LEGITIMATING THE JURY

Though Americans are unique in their adherence to the jury system...
(and show no signs of willingly abolishing it), their enthusiasm is waning. One commentator put it this way: “The modern American jury has a bipolar presence in the popular consciousness.” On the one hand, we hear that the jury is a vital component in our democratic system. On the other, there are scores of academic critiques condemning the jury system as nothing more than an unpredictable roulette for litigants.

A. Juries on the Decline

The critics seem to be getting their way, at least in practical terms, because, even though litigation is on the increase, fewer disputes are reaching the jury. Jury trials are becoming “vanishingly rare” for several reasons. First, the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure have fostered a legal environment “in which litigants have found it not in their interests to exercise their right” to a jury trial. Second, Ashcroft v. Iqbal and Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly have made it more difficult to survive motions to dismiss, and cases that do survive are being increasingly resolved via summary judgment. Third, “businesses perceive jury trials as being

335. See Elrod, supra note 19, at 303 (“[T]he American jury system is under assault . . . . [I]t is being used to settle disputes less and less, and . . . it has become commonplace to deride the very idea of the jury. After all, why leave justice to the untrained public when almost every other trade has been the subject of increasing professionalism, when almost none of our global competitors have chosen the jury system for their own, and when our nation’s business leaders seem to have chosen alternatives to the jury system?”). 336. Dooley, supra note 75, at 325. 337. Justice Scalia called the criminal jury trial the “spinal column” of American democracy. Neder v. United States, 527 U.S. 1, 30 (1999) (Scalia, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part). 338. Both legal commentators and the general public are growing increasingly negative about the jury. See Elrod, supra note 19, at 317–18; see also supra notes 97–105 and accompanying text. 339. See infra notes 340–46 and accompanying text. 340. John H. Langbein, The Disappearance of Civil Trial in the United States, 122 YALE L.J. 522, 524 (2012). 341. Langbein, supra note 340, at 542. Prior to the introduction of the Federal Rules, one-fifth of all civil cases went to trial. Id. at 524. Today, that number is below 2%. Id. 342. 556 U.S. 662, 681 (2009) (requiring more than “bare assertions” in order to survive motions to dismiss). 343. 550 U.S. 544, 556 (2007) (increasing plaintiffs’ burden to survive motions to dismiss). 344. Elrod, supra note 19, at 319. These pre-trial motions are the meat and potatoes of today’s litigation. As one Texas trial lawyer said, “'Litigation is what lawyers do on the east coast to keep out of court.” Id. at 323.
unpredictable, slow, and costly,” which has led to “provisions for binding arbitration of disputes . . . [being] employed in virtually all kinds of contracts, making arbitration a wide-ranging surrogate for civil litigation.”

In sum, most cases simply are not reaching juries.

B. Suggestions Moving Forward

The civil jury need not be abandoned, even though, in practicality, it seems to be. As one recent article explained:

[S]cholars should jettison measures to reduce or eliminate lay decisionmaking in civil cases and turn their attention instead to improvements in the trial process that increase the likelihood that lay jurors will understand the case and, as a result, reach more-informed decisions. This should include empirical studies of decisionmaking, both by individuals and groups, as well as the techniques currently used in the educational context that might be applied to the trial setting.

The Seventh Amendment still exists, and as long as it does, so will juries. Instead of bemoaning the current jury system and insisting it be composed only of the most educated citizens, the bench and bar should take steps to increase the lay jury’s legitimacy in the eyes of both the academy and the public.

A good start would be implementing several of Matthew Reiber and Jill Weinberg’s easy, rather noncontroversial suggestions. First, judges should eliminate unnecessary confusion by allowing jurors to take notes. Students are used to multitasking, and early concerns that note-taking

345. Id. at 318.
346. Id. at 319. If corporations continue to increase their use of binding arbitration agreements—which courts generally uphold, see, e.g., AT&T Mobility LLC v. Concepcion, 131 S. Ct. 1740 (2011)—there will be less complex litigation and less reason to worry that juries are incapable of adjudicating it.
347. Reiber & Weinberg, supra note 291, at 944.
348. “In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved . . . .” U.S. CONST. amend. VII (emphasis added).
349. See, e.g., The Case for Special Juries, supra note 19.
351. Id. at 965.
352. See Carlson, supra note 181, at A36; see also supra notes 182–88 and accompanying text.
would distract jurors\textsuperscript{353} are increasingly unwarranted. Second, instructing
the jury at the beginning, middle, and end of trials would help keep jurors
mindful of both what they should and should not be doing.\textsuperscript{354} Professors
give their students syllabi on the first day of class; jurors should not have to
wait until the end of trial for the judge to outline their task. Third, complex
trials would also profit from interim juror discussions and counsel
summations.\textsuperscript{355} Today’s students spend much of their time in group-based
discussion, yet today’s juries have no opportunity to learn from one another
until deliberations.\textsuperscript{356} For particularly lengthy trials, giving counsel an
opportunity to summarize what has and will happen, and then allowing intra
jury discussion to clarify confusion, would properly focus the litigation and
prevent early questions from translating into incompetent decision-making
days or weeks later.\textsuperscript{357}

Next, and perhaps more controversially, courts should allow jurors to
submit written questions to the judge as the trial progresses.\textsuperscript{358} As
technology develops, jurors might even electronically submit questions in
real time, which the judge could immediately evaluate.\textsuperscript{359} This would both
streamline proceedings and allow the litigants to ensure that jurors
understand witness testimony before they step down.\textsuperscript{360} On that note, those
courtrooms that are not yet fully equipped with modern technology must get
with the times. Modern Americans “are used to technology and expect its
use to help them understand difficult concepts.”\textsuperscript{361}

Attorneys must also adapt. To compensate for a perceived shaky
educational foundation\textsuperscript{362} and the misleading influence of litigation dramas
on TV,\textsuperscript{363} it is essential for the bar to understand how today’s juries process

\textsuperscript{353}. See Reiber & Weinberg, supra note 291, at 965–66.
\textsuperscript{354}. See id. at 963; see also supra notes 256–61 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{355}. Reiber & Weinberg, supra note 291, at 966–67.
\textsuperscript{356}. See id.
\textsuperscript{357}. See id. at 966–67.
\textsuperscript{358}. Id. at 967.
\textsuperscript{359}. See Sonja Thompson, 10 Innovative Ways Businesses Are Using the iPad, TECHREPUBLIC
(May 25, 2012, 3:12 AM), http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/tablets/10-innovative-ways-
businesses-are-using-the-ipad/1489 (describing increasingly diverse uses for the iPad). There is no
reason to stop such innovation at the courthouse door.
\textsuperscript{360}. See Reiber & Weinberg, supra note 291, at 967.
\textsuperscript{361}. Elrod, supra note 19, at 329–30.
\textsuperscript{362}. See Lilly, supra note 86, at 64; see also supra notes 93–105 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{363}. See supra notes 189–200 and accompanying text.
information and to adapt appropriately.\footnote{364} One tool has remained constant over time: the expert witness.\footnote{365} Juries continue to “depend on experts to explain complicated technical, scientific, financial, and legal issues.”\footnote{366} Since attorneys’ fundamental job is to educate the jury about the facts and law of their particular case,\footnote{367} expert witnesses should view their jobs similarly.\footnote{368} The best educators understand the characteristics of their students,\footnote{369} and they should know of modern students’ affinity for technology.\footnote{370} They should also know that though experts remain necessary, they are now insufficient.\footnote{371} For instance, one tool that was unthinkable just decades ago, but is now essential,\footnote{372} is the computerized display.\footnote{373} Jurors are “almost uniformly in favor of computer animation in the courtroom.”\footnote{374} So, asks one commentator, “[W]hy do trial lawyers spend the majority of courtroom time teaching factfinders in a manner that burdens the auditory system and draws upon visual sensitivities to a far lesser degree?”\footnote{375}

Finally, because there is no practical way to make media depictions of litigation true to life (imagine conforming TV shows to the Federal Rules of
Evidence!), America must do a better job with civic education. Fewer than half of Americans can name the three branches of government, and only one-third of eighth graders can explain the original function of the Declaration of Independence. The United States can, and must, do better if the lay jury is to survive. Future education must build on the principles discussed above by incorporating interesting, informative, and engaging formats—inevitably, this will involve up-to-date technology that students want to use. Justice Sandra Day O’Connor has dedicated a great deal of effort to this end, publicly endorsing “a nonprofit organization called Games for Change, which created video games placing children in positions of decision-makers, like judges.” If American litigation were to abandon lay juries, there would be much less incentive to provide civic education—there would be no point in teaching ordinary Americans about a system into which they would never be invited. Instead, we must encourage ordinary Americans to actively participate in both the classroom and the courtroom—and give them the tools to do so. As Justice Breyer said, “pessimism is not the complete order of the day. . . . Our democratic Constitution assumes a public that participates in the government that it creates. It also assumes a public that understands how government works.”

VI. CONCLUSION

Both technology and litigation are becoming increasingly complex, and juries are becoming increasingly interconnected. In the courtroom,

377. Id.
378. See infra notes 379–84 and accompanying text.
379. Elrod, supra note 19, at 330.
380. Id.
381. Toobin, supra note 166, at 398.
382. Recognizing the importance of the jury and its educational impact, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, “I do not know whether a jury is useful to the litigants, but I am sure it is very good for those who have to decide the case. I regard it as one of the most effective means of popular education at society’s disposal.” Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America 275 (J.P. Mayer ed. & George Lawrence trans., Harper & Row 1969) (1848).
383. See supra notes 379–81 and accompanying text.
385. See supra notes 111–71 and accompanying text.
386. See supra notes 111–30 and accompanying text.
gone are the days of homogenous, well-educated men listening to short oral arguments. Instead, attorneys are beginning to cater to diverse juries’ desire for technological instruction. Juries themselves are changing, both in their demographics and in the way they process information. This transformation is far from complete; indeed, scholars are unsure of what future education—and, by extension, litigation—will look like. The consensus is that traditional, lecture-based university education will likely decline as new modes of education, such as distance learning, sharply increase. All the while, jurors are becoming more and more dependent on ubiquitous technology that shortens their attention spans. Soon, the concept of sitting in a room for weeks listening to complex material could be a wholly foreign concept to the average American. Some might consider the jury doomed.

Fortunately, there is cause for hope. If attorneys can harness technology to present information to jurors in effective ways, and if jurors are willing and able to forego the momentary instant gratification of every new tweet and status update while they listen to the litigants, the American lay jury can survive. Legitimizing the jury, like all great American problems, is a holistic, collaborative endeavor. It requires cooperation from the academy, bench, bar, educators, and society at large. Though empirical studies are few, they do establish that juries are sufficiently educated, take their responsibilities seriously, and seem to arrive at the “correct” decision as frequently as judges do. Academic critiques—
largely outdated in this new era—should not lessen America’s faith in its jury system that, so far, has lived up to its task. Embracing technology and adapting to modern methods of communication will ensure that the jury system does so far into the future.

Andrew J. Wilhelm*