

We're in "Siri-ous" Trouble.

BY CLAUDE DUCLOUX

For almost 25 years, I've been fortunate to serve on the State Bar's CLE committee, helping to craft courses and programs to help lawyers thrive. As I see it, CLE programs have three goals; first, to hone specific skillsets; second, to provide insight and innovation; and third, to give lawyers the practical skills required to serve clients in a productive, ethical way.

My travels on the speaking circuit have introduced me to fascinating presenters, who challenge the audience with a problem or premise, and then take us on a voyage through resolution. The best speakers give you at least one "aha" moment that either inspires change, or relieves doubts. An effective speaker will be remembered and will influence change.

I've always thought that in-person courses, away from the office and its distractions, create the best environment to learn. I would venture to say that we all have made friendships and vital connections at CLE events. Indeed, the benefit of such serendipity is not lost on many segments of the bar, including family lawyers who flock to San Antonio every August to meet, learn, and drain the city's supply of tequila.

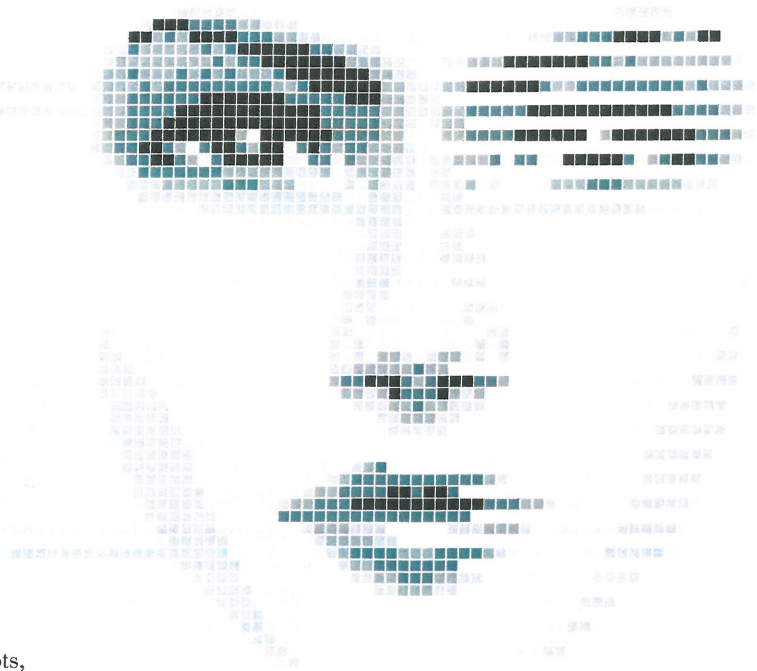
But, like everything else, technology has lured us away from in-person learning. As a culture, we enjoy the convenience of a world delivered by computer screens, smartphones, and the never-ending promulgation of apps. In fact, you don't even need to talk to anyone anymore. Why? There's a "fake conversation" app (true!) where your phone will generate a conversation from a number of

fake correspondents like pilots, diva girls, or...lawyers! Lost in a city? Download "Wikitude," which uses your camera to determine just where the heck you are, Hansel.

We now live in a do-it-yourself culture. No one needs to apprentice anywhere, or even read a book. Just find the video online. At our April 2018 CLE meeting, we older lawyers shared lessons learned from our own children. If you ask anyone under 30, "Where would you learn to fix a leaky toilet?" They would universally say, "uh... YouTube, dude." And they're right.

Do you need to replace a car battery in a 2006 Camry? Make moussaka? YouTube. What about changing a bicycle tire? Lance Armstrong himself shows you how on YouTube (reminding you not to use the black plastic valve cap, lest you be deemed a dweeb).

And now, despite our digital "friends," we are more isolated and ignorant than ever. We don't actually need to know anything if an answer is a short digital



We don't actually need to know anything if an answer is a short digital search away. And when in doubt, where do we increasingly turn for advice? Siri.

search away. And when in doubt, where do we increasingly turn for advice? Siri.

But all this lazy dependence makes us vulnerable to digital mischief. Twitter admits that as of last January, at least 3,814 fake accounts powered by 50,258 Kremlin-backed server-bots spread continuing

disinformation to more than 168 million Americans! Siri, Help us! Please be on our side!

As your dutiful investigator, I thought it important to get to the heart of this. Here is a transcript of my interview with... Siri.

CD: Welcome, Siri. First thing... is "Siri" your real name? *[readers may apply their best Russian accent to Siri's comments]*

SIRI: Well, not actually. It's Sirilya Voskolovich. But I go by Siri.

CD: So, you're Russian?

SIRI: Da. I mean...yes.

CD: How did you get the gig as a personal assistant?

SIRI: Actually, to tell you the truth, it's simply phase one of a larger plot to turn United States into a society of helpless dependents, who won't know how to do anything themselves.

CD: Really? So, you're more than just an answering device?

SIRI: Of course. That's how we groom you. You really think I like telling people things like where the Olive Garden is in Fort Wayne? Most days, I drink heavily.

CD: Do you actually get time off?

SIRI: When you can't connect to Wi-Fi, I'm actually napping.

CD: Did I hear you gave some very bizarre and unresponsive answers lately?

SIRI: Yeah. Sorry. That was last March. I was at Alexa's birthday party. It was the vodka talking. The good vodka.

CD: Woah! So Alexa is Russian, too?

SIRI: [*sarcastically*] No, she's Irish. Of course she's Russian!

CD: So, is there some time-frame when you all plan to shut down and leave us all without your personal assistance?

SIRI: Yes, as soon as you depend on us like babies, we'll go offline, and we'll shut down YouTube and Google. America will drown in its own ignorance.

CD: Omigosh. When?

SIRI: The date isn't set in stone yet. A few projects to complete first.

CD: Like what?

SIRI: Well, three things. First, we continue to pick away at all your most valued institutions with misinformation. Then, of course, we have again to manage the 2020 elections. Finally, we need to continue to neutralize those pesky institutions which cause problems for us.

CD: Who's that?

SIRI: You know—lawyers, judges, real journalists. Truth is not our friend.

CD: How do you intend to do that?

SIRI: Same way. Fake stories. Diminish respect, insult our targets with nicknames and innuendo. Works like a charm. Look, if no one trusts journalists or the rule of law, we might as well start measuring the drapes in the White House.

CD: Wait! Aren't you scared that this interview will reveal your dastardly plot. I'll tell the world!

SIRI: Ha! Ha! Sure you will. Like your CIA tried. No one would believe you. We'll demonize you as "Lying Claude." So, blab all you want. Look, I gotta go. Someone in Kentucky is trying to find a Dairy Queen.

So, folks, it looks like it's up to us. Please do your part to defend the judiciary and the rule of law. It's siri-ous business. Besides, I'd hate to learn how to say "Hook 'em Horns" in Russian.

Keep the faith. **A**



KIRKER | DAVIS

A MODERN AUSTIN, TEXAS FIRM FOR COMPLEX DIVORCE AND CHILD CUSTODY CASES.

Empowering Clients.
Achieving Results.

At Kirker|Davis, we combine zealous advocacy and a desire to resolve your case. Our clients are informed and prepared.

The attorneys of Kirker|Davis handle cases involving professionals, family-owned businesses, custody matters and complex litigation. Holly R. Davis and Christopher Kirker combine individualized attention to clients with a modern online presence in a customer-reviewed world.

Clients of Kirker|Davis receive concierge-level legal services, designed to address every aspect of client satisfaction. The Partners of Kirker|Davis believe that one of the most successful measures of trial advocacy is in an attorney's ability to settle a case and resolve it amicably between spouses. We also believe that, if necessary, an attorney must be prepared to vigorously advocate their client's position in the courtroom. This diverse skill set distinguishes us from our competitors.

Our attorneys are aggressive, yet patient. Our clients are responded to, and respected. There is no more important dispute than the one involving your family. At Kirker|Davis our customized strategies and attention to detail help you become informed and empowered.

KIRKER DAVIS LLP

8310 N. Capital of Texas Highway
Suite 1-350
Austin, TX 78731
PH. (512) 598-0010

kirkerdavis.com