

Technology May Have Bypassed Me

written by Holly

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One of my best friends sent me a link for the TouchStream LP ZeroForce Keyboard

I looked it over, thought it was terribly cool, considered it ... and then realized with horror that I would not be able to use it. I'm sure it would remap to Dvork – that isn't the problem. The problem is that technology finally appears to have thrown me a ringer that I couldn't deal with. I'm reminded of pen-and-paper writers confronted by the typewriter, and typewriter devotees assaulted by the wonders of word processing.

Here's an excerpt from the e-mail I sent my friend

I taught myself to type on a manual typewriter when I was twenty-four, Prior to that, I had pointedly never learned to type because if I could not type, not even starvation could end me up doing secretarial work, and I had sworn to myself I would never be a secretary.

When, at the age of twenty-four, I wrote in my diary that one of my New Year's resolutions was to write a book, I did a little reading on publishing and discovered that manuscripts had to be typed. So I bought a thirty-five dollar portable manual typewriter, whited out all the keys, drew a diagram of the key layout on a piece of cardboard, and pinned it to the wall in front of me at eye level. And while the kids napped, I simultaneously taught myself to touch-type and wrote my first novel.

I am a very physical typist. I still miss the slam-kachunking of the return bar and the pleasure of smacking the carriage from right to left. I touch-type with the same weight I did when I actually had to slam the letter bars into the platen. Nobody likes to be in the same room with me when I'm typing because I'm almost as loud on a soft-keyed modern keyboard as I was on that old Olivetti. The desk shakes, my monitor boogies.

Keys that I can't hit would interfere with my thought processes.

My early-life issues with secretarial work were a mother-daughter conflict. Turf wars. The rest of it stands without further explanation.

For those of you who have not yet been aged-out (obsoleted) in the technology wars, I pass on the link. Have fun. Be happy.

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