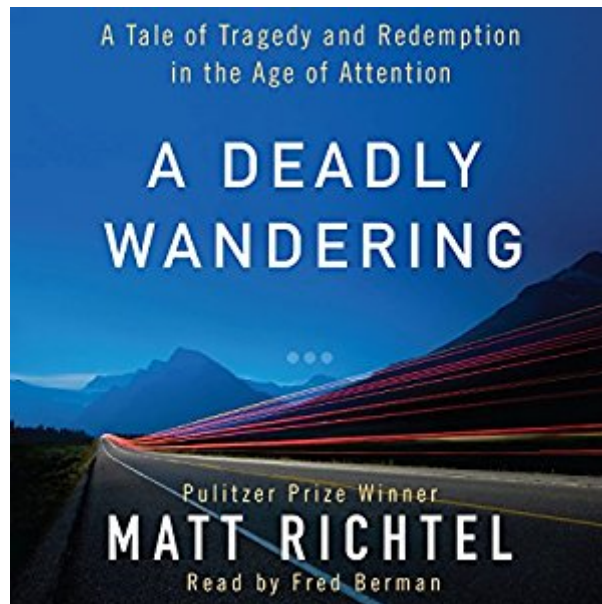


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# A Deadly Wandering: A Tale Of Tragedy And Redemption In The Age Of Attention



## Synopsis

An ordinary Utah college student named Reggie Shaw fatally strikes two rocket scientists while texting and driving. Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times reporter Matt Richtel follows Reggie from the moment of the tragedy, through the police investigation, the state's groundbreaking prosecution, and ultimately, Reggie's wrenching admission of responsibility. Richtel parallels Reggie's journey with leading-edge scientific findings regarding human attention and the impact of technology on our brains. Remarkably, today Reggie is a leading advocate who has helped spark a national effort targeting distracted driving, and the arc of his story provides a window through which Richtel pursues actionable solutions to help manage this crisis individually and as a society. A propulsive listen filled with fascinating scientific detail, riveting narrative tension, and rare emotional depth, *A Deadly Wandering* is an audiobook that can change - and save - lives.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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## Customer Reviews

Heads up, don't buy this book if you have any sort of time sensitive work or activities planned. Once you start it, you won't be able to put it down, so plan accordingly. *A Deadly Wandering* is one of those rare books that manages to convey scientific data in an interesting - riveting even - way. The book is all about attention, our ability to focus on one or more activities, and the impact of attention-demanding devices like phones and computers. It isn't preachy and it isn't dry, instead, Richtel combines the story of a Utah boy who killed two rocket scientists while he was driving his car while texting with the scientific research surrounding attention, focus and our modern

technology. Much of the book takes place in Utah, not only because the story is woven around Reggie Shaw, the boy who killed the scientists, but also because some of the most important research has come out of the University of Utah. I live in Utah and I was incredibly impressed with how carefully Richtel handled the local culture. Normally people writing about Utah fall into one of two camps: vilify the mormons or think the mormons can do no wrong. But Richtel stays fairly neutral even while injecting emotion and life into the story - no easy task. He talks about the insular nature of LDS communities without criticizing them and he mentions the philosophical flexibility of Utah representatives (for example: one individual is against any government interference in private life at all, except when it is government interference that supports their own moral beliefs) without turning them into evil caricatures or heroes. I mention this for two reasons: first, the story is that much better because it is even-handed, but second, the story's main character, Reggie Shaw, is the type of person who requires a very careful hand. In fact, the entire topic does. Neither Reggie nor the people who find themselves distracted while driving are evil - even if they do awful things - and nothing in this life, these situations or this book is black and white. And that's a good thing, because by the end of the book, you find yourself questioning what you know and looking inward at yourself and your own behaviors, rather than passing judgement on the people in the book. More than a story about a tragedy, it is a tale with a cast of characters that will change the way you look at people and will absolutely change the way you look at the technology in your life. Richtel isn't encouraging people to step back into some 17th century tech-free zone. But he is encouraging readers to look at their own behaviors and find the courage to be honest with oneself. Highly entertaining, endlessly informative and gorgeously written.

This captivating book asks important questions: Is technology benign? Has technology surpassed the limits of the human brain? How much are humans capable of taking in, even when they are focused on something else? The book is written in a narrative format, where the scientific information is woven into the stories of several people. The book is centered around a car accident, where two rocket scientists were killed by a teen who was texting while driving. The book is written in such an engaging way, that I could not put it down once I started it. Along the way, I learned about how attention science evolved, beginning with World War II cockpit experiments. How much information can pilots take in, before they start making mistakes? The book goes through the advent of Silicon Valley, PCs, video games, and car phones. Such a rapid increase in technology has an effect on the human mind. Are those effects benign? This book encouraged me to ask questions about science, technology, and the human brain. I will be thinking about it for a long time to come. This is

a must-read book!

I chose this book because I have young text fiends in my extended family and worry about them as they begin to drive. More than a manual of safety tips for parents of inattentive drivers, *A DEADLY WANDERING* closely follows the result of an accident that could have been avoided. We get to know the victims, the perpetrator, the families affected. There are some passages of scientific detail on the brain, the ways that people can multi-task and the ways that they cannot. Though science, especially neuroscience, may be a no-go for some readers, it is definitely something for that latent scientist is me, the wordsmith. *A DEADLY WANDERING*, written by Pulitzer Prize winner, Matt Richtel, will hold your attention as well as any well-written true crime book out there. That it is applicable to each and every family with a driver or a phone addict or a texter among them makes it that much more important. If I were teaching AP Lit or AP Science or a college course, this book would be on my syllabus. It is that important.

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