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Rural Cell Phone Use-Health Problems Studied

More on the rural home front. Researchers have been looking into potential medical issues with cell phone use in rural areas, and the initial findings are that people who live in outlying areas are more prone to developing tumors from…

By Brad King

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More on the rural home front. Researchers have been looking into potential medical issues with cell phone use in rural areas, and the initial findings are that people who live in outlying areas are more prone to developing tumors from mobile phone use.

Now, the BBC <u>story</u> where this appears makes it clear that this is simply an initial study, with a very small number of subjects, so it's far too early to draw any conclusions – and, they also point out that there are indications that city dwellers and residential users may face similar problems.

What's particularly interesting to me, though, is the attention paid specifically to rural areas, which oftentimes end up being much less than an afterthought in technological circles. And, reading this story, I found it a little bit depressing that I was actually happy to read about this research.

Here's why.

A few years back, when I was working on my book, my co-author John Borland and I had the opportunity to spend a few days in MIT's Media Lab. I was taken aback by the research happening, but stopped even more in my tracks by the technologies being developed for testing in places such as India and Africa. I was happy, on one hand, that our institutions were looking to places that need help, but dismayed that not one program I came across (and, it was only two days – so I may have missed many) was targeting places like Appalachia, where the poverty rate is soaring, population rates are declining, and mining jobs have all but disappeared.

I don't mean this as a knock against the Lab, because as we all know, there are far too many problems to fix, and not enough fixers. And, I love the Media Lab. It's just troubling that the

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