

One upside of everybody constantly filming everything *with their glasses*

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Years ago I was at a friend's wedding. As the happy couple left the church and we all threw birdseed or blew bubbles or whatever, a family member I didn't know scolded me for taking a spot with a decent view—apparently I was blocking the videographer's shot.

I held my tongue and stepped aside, but I was pretty annoyed. While most of the guests were local, a couple friends and I had flown clear across the country to be there. I'm pretty sure there were no homebound grandparents who couldn't attend. This all-important video was just a memento for those who could.

Like a lot of people, I consume my media and use my sundry gadgets with a good dose of ambivalence. I'm not too interested in debates about the relative merits of e-books and dead-tree ones, and I don't think there's any question that social media has been a net positive. What bothers me is when I or the people around me seem genuinely to value mediated experience more than the thing itself.

This, of course, is nothing new. My memory of that wedding is older than the iPhone or Facebook; I'm not even sure the video camera I stood down for was digital. (See also: hundreds of years of even older technology.)

These days lots of folks are concerned about [Google Glass's privacy implications](#), and with good reason. [Paul Waldman's one of them](#)—but he also makes this offhanded observation:

We've already stopped being amazed or disgusted when at large public gatherings, no one seems content to have an actual experience, but must rather stand holding up their phones so that afterward, they can experience whatever it was through a screen. When your smartphone is contained within your glasses, at least it won't require both your hands and your eyes to operate, so you'll be able to be more present while you're recording things for posterity.

He's being cute, but I genuinely look forward to this. Don't get me wrong: philosophically, I find the prospect of *all but eliminating the difference between*

*witnessing something and documenting it* more or less terrifying. But at a practical level, I'll welcome the ability to witness something in peace without being shoved aside to make way for the documenters.