Mother Of Invention Essay, Research Paper

Necessity is the mother of invention? or is it? The real mother of invention is not necessity, but curiosity. From the discovery of electricity, the invention of the light bulb, car, airplane, and air conditioning to Global Positioning Satellite systems curiosity has been the reason behind the invention.

One of the greatest discoveries ever was the discovery of electricity. Ben Franklin has been given the most credit for the discovery of electricity. Before the legendary kite experiment in 1752 electricity was a known force of nature, but it had not been thoroughly studied. Even after that Franklin did not know what potential his discovery of electricity had. It is said that he once tried to kill a Christmas turkey with electricity, but accidentally made contact with the current and received a nice shock. As time progressed Franklin created more and more electrical devices including the battery and the lightening rod (Thinkquest.org). These inventions were discovered through theories and hypothesis that Franklin thought might be true and he tried them and they worked. All of these things are nice, and today people probably would have difficulty living without them, but at the time in the mid-1700’s people had no need for electricity.

There is another wonderful invention called the incandescent light bulb. Thomas Edison was a professional inventor. He wanted to see if he could create a better way to light a home that with candles or lamps. And so Edison invented the incandescent light bulb. Edison tried to come out with an invention every ten days. This invention came about in October 1879 (Thomas Edison birthplace Museum). Although people wanted another way to light their homes they did a fine job by using torches and lamps. They had a want for something better, but not a need for a light bulb.

The invention of the air conditioning unit is a very popular one here in Phoenix. This again was not a necessity; in fact even today it is not a necessity it is actually a luxury. In 1902, after earning a Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering from Cornell University Willis Carrier invented the first air conditioner. He wanted to see if there was a more efficient way of cooling air and making the air cleaner than what the current ventilation systems could do. This was a great invention because before the air conditioner people had good ventilation systems to cool off buildings and this worked somewhat. The air that came in would smell like the vents and the air wasn’t really cooled. But with the air conditioning not only could you control the air temperature, but you could also control the humidity. This was good for scientific experiments (MIT’s Invention Demention website). Even though the air conditioning was a great invention, it is not a necessity. People can and do live without air conditioning units in both cars and homes, they may sweat a lot but they do live.

Another great invention was that of the car. At the time that the car was invented people got around by horse and carriage, or by foot. This was the socially accepted means of travel and people did not need anything more than a way to get from point a to point b. In 1896 Henry Ford built his first automobile. Ford wanted to see if he could make a faster means of travel. In 1903 Ford established the Ford Motor Company. He revolutionized the world with his assembly lines, and the low cost of his cars. His first car the Model T is very well known and for around $200 was affordable. Ford paid their workers an unheard of $5 a day which meant that a worker could afford to buy the cars that they made (National Inventors Hall of Fame website). Although I like my car a lot and I know that many people couldn?t function without their cars, but when Ford invented the car if you wanted to get somewhere you either walked or you rode a horse making the car not a necessity.

The invention of the airplane was a revolutionary one. The Wright brothers invented the airplane in 1903. The Wright’s wanted to see if it was possible for man to fly. They had invented gliders and other flying machines before, but their first successful flight was in 1903. They were given a patent in 1906 for their flying machine (Thinkquest.org). It is nice to know that a person can fly from Phoenix to Las Angeles in just a few hours where it would take 6 or 7 hours by car and days by hose-back or months on foot. While the airplane is a luxury is not a necessity. People can still live full and healthy lives without setting foot on an airplane.

A more recent invention is the Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) system. This is a great invention. The U.S. Department of Defense created the GPS system in 1995. The Department of Defense wanted curious to see if a better navigational device could be created. This is a device that receives RF signals from a GPS satellite. It can provide accurate direction readings while standing still. It can also tell someone if they are going the right direction like a compass (AskJeeves.com). While again GPS is a great piece of technology it is not a necessity people can live their lives without owning one of these devices.

Even though things like Electricity, light bulbs, air conditioning, automobiles, airplanes and GPS systems may seem like necessities at the time that they were invented they were not necessities. Most of these inventions were created with the “I wonder if?” idea. This means that necessity is not the mother of invention, curiosity is the mother of invention.

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Thomas Edison birthplace Museum website. http://www.tomedison.org/

MIT’s Invention Demention website. http://web.mit.edu/invent/www/inventorsA-H/carrier.html

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Thinkquest.org website http://library.thinkquest.org/16541/eng/learn/library/content/airplane.htm

Ask Jeeves http://www.aj.com