



Jeremy Clark

Pokemon woe

Jeremy Clark tries to navigate an airport as tech-addicts impede his progress and virtual cartoon characters get in his way



You wouldn't think Germany and Australia had much in common, other than joking about the Brits, but it seems both have thought to install traffic lights in the pavement for a generation of people who are genetically unable to raise their heads due to overuse of mobile telephones.

If, like me, you are sick and tired of collisions with this species and the glare you get after ramming them with your baggage trolley then brace yourself, it's about to get a lot worse.

It was bad enough when they were just texting. Then along came Twotter, Facetube and Instatwit and other social media that conditioned them to feeling outcast if more than 60 seconds goes by without recognition.

Now we have a new phenomenon with Pokemon, who we thought we'd seen the back of when our kids stopped collecting the cards. Well it's back with the virtual game, Pokemon Go, and apparently airports are great places to seek out a Jogglypiff or a Cheekapoo and to 'take them to Jim' or it could be 'to a gym', who knows!

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"Airports are littered with bodies strewn around like at a 1960s LSD party, while those capable of movement, and with charged phones, are chasing after unseen cartoon wildlife"

As airlines try to get us to book, check-in, gate navigate, and order food all from the same device, it is as if notice boards, information kiosks and humans in general just don't exist.

This brings problems beside creating a generation of kids unable to raise their line of sight beyond your kneecaps. For a start, take a look at any international airport waiting area and see them littering the floors with phones plugged in desperately trying to recharge.

These apps drain batteries at a massive rate and without a charged device, for these people at least, life is over. This means carrying extra batteries, chargers, wires and other technical

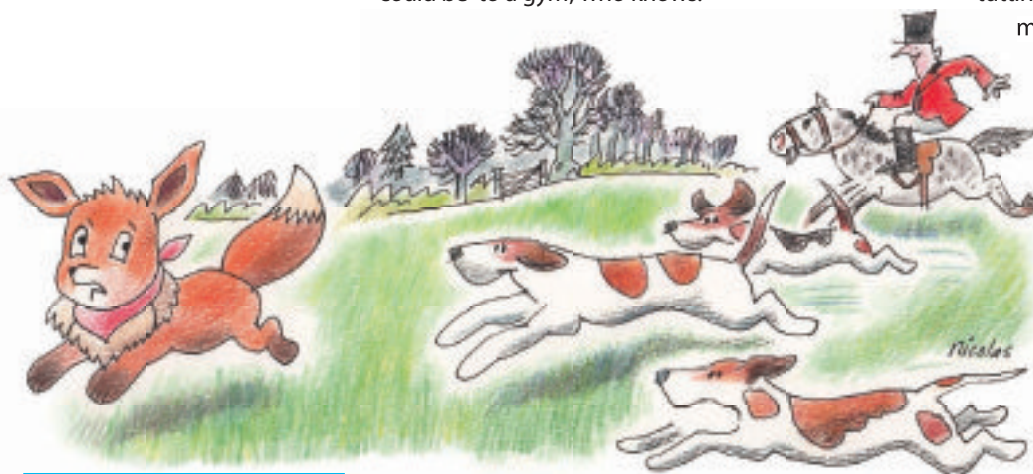
paraphernalia to ensure they don't miss a vital message about their friend's amazing eye-liner or catching a Weedlepoff just seen in Cinnabon.

And of course, they don't look where they're going.

So now you're not just

trying to negotiate your Travelpro around bodies strewn like at a 1960s LSD party, but also users capable of movement, who are chasing after unseen cartoon wildlife on their miraculously charged phones. It seems no amount of tut-tutting or ankle fractures inflicted by my trolley is going to stem the flow.

Let's get the people who created this insanity together and find a way of getting Chookipiff and Jogglypoo to advise the users where their gate is and even order their duty free for them. As for the rest of us, raise your head high. You won't see a Pokemon but the sky is beautiful and the clouds are a joy to behold and, oh look... there's a Departures Board with everything I need to know! •



Pokemon hunting goes global