

PHILOSOPHY

THE USEFULNESS OF USELESS RESEARCH

16.11.2018

[Harpers Magazine](#) long ago (1939) 179:544 but still up to date

Finally in 1887 and 1888 the scientific problem [radio/wireless] still remaining- the detection and demonstration of the electromagnetic waves which are the carriers of wireless signals -was solved by Heinrich Hertz, a worker in Helmholtz's laboratory in Berlin. Neither Maxwell nor Hertz had any concern about the utility of their work; no such thought ever entered their minds. They had no practical objective. The inventor in the legal sense was of course Marconi, but what did Marconi invent? Merely the last technical detail, mainly the now obsolete receiving device called coherer, almost universally discarded."

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