

science & TECHNOLOGY

A DIGITAL CAMERA DREAM: THE KODAK EASYSHARE C613

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I have had my digital camera for over a year, and I hate it. Even though I paid over \$200 for the camera and a memory card, I still find myself looking at other cameras and wanting to replace my Sony Cybershot. But, alas, I am like you, a college student. I absolutely cannot afford to drop another \$200 on another digital camera. So I made it my mission this week to find an economical, yet comparable (as far as function, anyway), replacement.

I discovered the Kodak EasyShare C613, which boasts 6.2 megapixels,

a 2.4 inch indoor/outdoor color display, and comes in the colors Pearl White or Pink. The C613 features 16 scene modes, including a quite nifty text/document setting and even one for fireworks. Say goodbye to those blurry July 4th pictures! This camera also has a video recording setting that is continuous up to 80 minutes, based on memory card capacity, and records in MPEG4, a format common for most digital cameras.

The zoom capabilities for the C613 are very good: 3X optical zoom and 5X continuous digital

zoom on preview for a combined zoom of 15X—impressive for the price of the camera. Most digital cameras entering the market feature a digital image stabilizer, and the C613 succeeds in this department as well. This camera also anticipates low light and action shots with a maximum ISO of 1250. My 7.2MP Cybershot only reaches 1000.

The Kodak EasyShare software scores points, too, because of its easy upload implementation for email or print. With such a low price, just about anyone can afford

this beauty...I know I will probably invest in one soon. For more information, visit the Kodak website at www.kodak.com, which lists the C613 for a mere \$79.95. ■

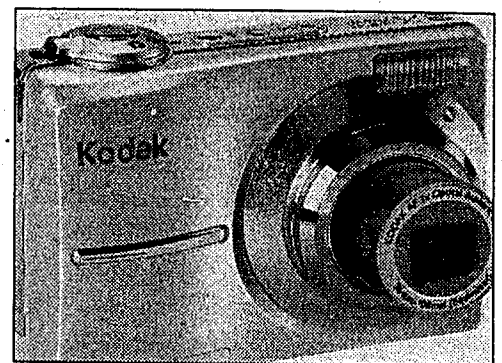


Photo Courtesy Kodak

CAR TALK

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"Well, you've done it again. You have squandered another perfectly good hour listening to Car Talk," an obnoxious voice bellowed out. I certainly felt that way.

"Dad, can I listen to actual music?"

"Don't you want to learn anything, Anna Beavon? You have already heard all those songs before and know all the lyrics. Why don't you listen to something you haven't heard before?"

I never know how to respond. Do I just admit that I have no intention of learning anything new at this juncture, or do I suck it up?

Time passes slowly when all you are allowed to do is laugh—more so if you don't what you are laughing about. The only noise—yes, I said noise—that filled the car was the nasally, northern voices of Click and Clack, the Tapet Brothers, and the clueless callers who don't seem to understand that a "small fender-bender" can, in fact, affect the way the car sounds.

I sat, silently in the passenger seat of my father's car. For the first "wasted hour" I tried to play a game with my father. He, of course, had no idea that we were playing a game.

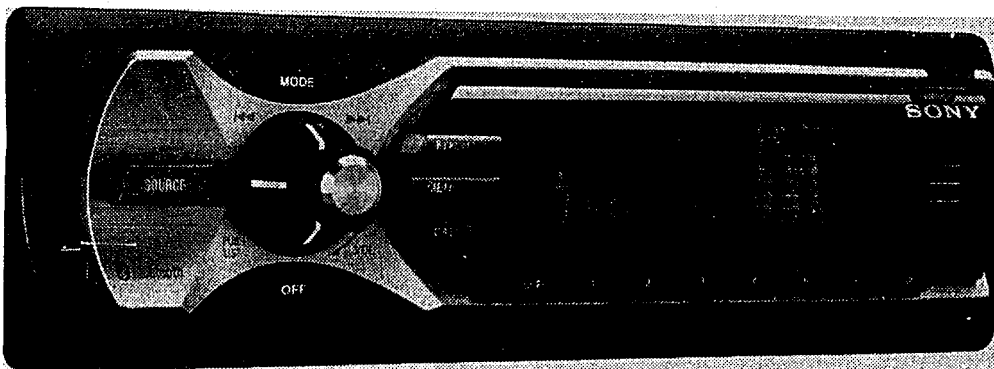


Photo courtesy www.motorauthority.com

I guess it was just for me to play. I would attempt to understand the humor of the radio show while my dad would intently listen. Since the jokes mainly referred to cars and car puns, I did not catch on very well. But occasionally when I understood the joke, I laughed at the right time. It didn't happen very often, but every time it did, all my shortcomings in car knowledge were worth it.

Whenever I tried to speak or ask a question—on the rare chance that I was interested in what the Tapet Brothers were saying—I received only this comment: "SHHH . . . Don't talk. Pay attention, and learn something." My father had a point, a very valid point. I could learn, but how could I learn if I didn't understand what was being said?

During the second "wasted hour," I stopped. I stopped trying to understand, and I stopped caring. I stared at the trees and overgrown grass on the side of the road. I mentally cut the grass because its imperfection bothered me. I don't quite know why, but I always seem to make overgrown grass all the same, perfectly

manicured length in my head. The only thing that was able to divert my attention away from "cutting the grass" was words that sounded amusing. I remember hearing the phrase catalytic converter. I have no idea what a catalytic converter is. I repeated the words in my head over and over again slowly to ensure that each consonant was enunciated carefully—c-a-t-a-l-y-t-i-c c-o-n-v-e-r-t-e-r. I knew that I could not ask any questions about the meaning of the word, so the sound became my obsession.

I looked over at my father. His short, bring-home-to-mom hair cut was combed back flawlessly. He was wearing my mom's favorite light blue button-down with darker blue stripes and khakis—his uniform, for a lack of a better word. The relaxed grip he had on the steering wheel mimicked his body language. The car drove with the same kind of ease and complacency that my father seemed to feel. The car "cuts" the slower vehicles—drawing upon my elementary school years of walking in straight lines and tattling when an-

other student cuts in front of me—in order to not break the cruise control. As we pass the car in the right-hand lane, my heart pounds. I get so excited when our car goes faster than the other car. It never fails; I always turn to look at the car we are passing and shout, "Nah-nah-nah-nah, I'm beating you!" in my head. I feel like I am twelve again.

I looked back over to my father and observed his right hand rub the side of his face, up from his jaw line—against the grain of his facial hair—and down from his cheek. He performed the action methodically, almost as if rubbing his face is calming. My father's facial expression showed intensity, not angry intensity but focused intensity, like he is deep in thought. I guess he could feel me looking at him, because he looked back at me. He looked at me just as he began to laugh, and the smile on his face was one of apprehension. He wanted to see if I was laughing too. So, of course, I laughed, yet again, a couple of seconds after the pre-recorded programmed voices. ■

