

In This Edition...



Source: <https://me.mashable.com/digital-culture/37151/tiktok-is-criticizing-young-girls-who-shop-at-sephora-theyre-missing-the-point>

AfD's Election Preparations Stir Controversy

By Matěj Diviš

In 2024, the ruling German coalition, which consists of the Social Democrats (SPD), Free Democrats (FDP) and Greens, went through turbulent times, ending up torn apart and declaring a snap election. In the race for the Bundestag, one political force is drawing more attention than before: the far-right, pro-Russian and redundant Alternative for Germany (AfD). Known for its anti-immigration stance, skepticism of climate policies, and criticism of the EU, the AfD is directly challenging the traditional political establishment.

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Meet the New Boss: Trump's Inauguration

By Oliver Erben

Trump's inauguration was a glimpse of what his second term could look like. The event blended religious imagery with the rhetoric of power, casting Trump's leadership as a near-messianic mission. The tone of the day suggested not just a transfer of power but a coronation, where Trump positioned himself as the saviour of a nation in decline, destined to reclaim America's greatness.

The ceremony also showcased Trump's ambition to connect with a higher power. Reverend Franklin Graham took the stage, praising God's role in lifting Trump from adversity, declaring that divine intervention had ensured his political resurrection. As Graham noted: "He changes the times and the seasons, he removes kings, he raises up kings. Our Father... today as President Donald J. Trump takes the oath of office once again, O Lord our God..."

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Editor's Note

For the Edition 2 of the *OG Chronicle*, we have decided to change things a bit and return to our beloved newspaper format with some magazine elements. In this edition, you can look forward to a variety of articles.

In our World News & Current Affairs section, you can read up on the German and US elections and politics.

In our newest section, Science & Technology, you can learn more about genetic editing and also autonomous vehicles.

At the same time, in Social Commentary, you can delight yourself with insightful pieces on morality and beauty standards.

Last but not least, you can get to know Open Gate's Business and Economics teacher, Vickey Harris, and a lot more in the Culture section.

Happy reading!

Calista Marikova

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Disgust as The Backbone of Our Cities



Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/01/19/politics/gallery/donald-trump-inauguration/index.html>

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During fall, the government of Olaf Scholz (SDP) collapsed, due to the resignation of all FDP ministers, leading to a no confidence vote, which confirmed the end of the so-called 'traffic light' coalition. This was a major benefit for the AfD, since it can now capitalize on momentum earned earlier and score well in the upcoming federal elections.

The party started its campaign to beat Scholz in early January. Ahead of the AfD congress, Alice Weidel, the co-chairwoman of the party, live-streamed a chat with Elon Musk on his platform X. Musk is very supportive of the AfD, saying, that it is the only party that can save Germany from total economic collapse. Rather than confronting Weidel with controversial topics surrounding her party, Musk provided her with a platform where she could talk about nationalist and ultra-conservative ideals.



Source: <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/2025-german-elections-germanys-far-right-afd-celebrates-historic-gains-in-national-elections-7778601>

Just a few days after this interview, the already mentioned AfD congress took place in Saxony, another strong region for the party. The road to the congress center was firstly blocked by over 10000 activists protesting the AfD. Inside the building, the party members officially elected Alice Weidel as the candidate for the German Chancellor, in the upcoming election.

The AfD has also released their manifesto, which includes calls for a decrease in environmental restrictions, restarting the flow of Russian gas to Germany through Nordstream 2 and remigration, among others.

There were several more important moments in the AfD congress, for instance the disbanding of the party's youth wing, which has been classified as a far-right extremist organization, and instead founding a new, less radical one. However, a more disturbing moment in the congress came after choosing Weidel as the candidate for Chancellor and AfD members created the new slogan "Alice für Deutschland" (Alice for Germany), which sounded uncomfortably like "Alles für Deutschland" (All for Germany) the slogan used by the Nazi regime to celebrate Adolf Hitler.

The party, however, has even more scandals including links to the NSDAP. The AfD has been accused multiple times of having ties to neo-Nazi groups, using far right symbols and showing support for extremist far-right policies and actions of party members. One of these members, Björn Höcke, has been convicted twice for the use of Nazi slogans at rallies. As a result, the AfD is suspected of being an extremist organization.

The AfD's ambitions to join the government are unlikely to materialize, as all other parties have ruled out a coalition with them. However, while it is likely to remain in opposition, it is expected to significantly strengthen its presence in the Bundestag. The fact that an extremist party with ties to the Russian regime will have such an impact on Germany, which today still stands firmly behind Ukraine, should be disturbing for all democratic forces around Europe. While the AfD may end up in opposition this time, it could potentially win future German elections and change the political orientation of the country in the direction of countries like Russia or Hungary.

Matěj Diviš

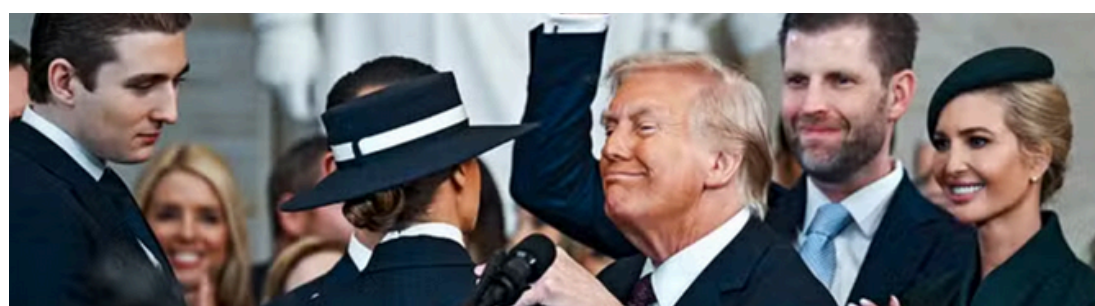
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The ceremony also showcased Trump's ambition to connect with a higher power. Reverend Franklin Graham took the stage, praising God's role in lifting Trump from adversity, declaring that divine intervention had ensured his political resurrection. As Graham noted: "He changes the times and the seasons, he removes kings, he raises up kings. Our Father... today as President Donald J. Trump takes the oath of office once again, O Lord our God. When Donald Trump's enemies thought he was down and out, you and you alone saved his life and raised him up with strength and power by your mighty hand." By echoing Trump's longstanding narrative that he was destined to restore America's greatness, Trump himself declared: "I was saved by God to make America great again," crowning himself with divine authority and framing the inauguration as a coronation.

His speech reflected a dark vision for America, one where the country was in irreversible decline due to betrayal by internal enemies. He invoked a familiar myth of victimhood, accusing the media and his political adversaries of undermining his authority. Trump's rhetoric, full of distortion and outright lies, painted a picture of an America under siege by foreign invaders and a government that had abandoned its people. He stated: "Our recent election is a mandate to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal, and all of these many betrayals that have taken place, and to give the people back their faith, their wealth, their democracy and indeed their freedom. From this moment on, America's decline is over."

Yet, the real focus of his speech was on restoring his perceived birthright, his personal crusade to undo the "betrayal" of the 2020 election and his campaign of retribution. Trump's central claim was: "Those who wish to stop our cause have tried to take my freedom and indeed to take my life," despite the fact that the Justice Department under Attorney General M. Garland did not pursue him for his actions related to January 6th for nearly a year and a half.



Source: https://img.lemdc.fr/2025/01/21/0/0/1500/1049/664/0/75/0/12becca_ftp-import-images-1-13zp5twbee3n-366206-3406675.jpg

Trump's narrative, laced with racial undertones, cast immigrants as the enemy, and he resurrected the myth of the "poison in the blood" that threatened to destroy America. He stated: "It's the lifeblood of a great nation," as he framed his return to power as a purification of the country.

In a chilling post-inauguration spectacle, Trump wasted no time in beginning to shape his vision for the country. He issued pardons for over 1,600 individuals involved in the January 6th insurrection, calling it a "national injustice" and signalling his disregard for the legal consequences of the events. This wasn't just about helping his supporters; it was a way for Trump to solidify his connection to the insurrection and reinforce his flagrant defiance of the justice system.

Trump's second term, should it come to pass, promises a continuation of this purge, targeting those within the government who oppose him. His plans to dismantle the American system from within were already taking shape, as he removed experienced officials and sought to impose a loyalty test on those who remained.

The day ended with an eerie performance at the Capital One arena, where Elon Musk took the stage and made a controversial gesture drawing parallels to Nazi symbolism. Musk, whose recent political affiliations have raised alarm, seemed to confirm the rather ominous direction of Trump's political movement, one that more and more embraces far-right ideologies with very little regard for the historical context or the values of the American democracy. After making the gesture (Musk) later tried to deflect criticism by stating: "The 'everyone is Hitler' attack is sooo tired."

Oliver Erben

Tik Tok Goes Dark After Supreme Court Decision

In its recent joint judgment in the cases of *Tik Tok Inc. et alia v Garland and Firebaugh et alia v Garland*, the Supreme Court decided to uphold the government ban on the social media app, forcing it to close in the US by January 19th. The landmark judgement followed the signing into law of the Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act, which found bipartisan support in the otherwise deeply split Congress. The Act was specifically focused on banning Tik Tok as it had been seen as a threat to US national security due to the connections of its parent company, ByteDance Ltd., to China.

The app is believed to pose a threat as ByteDance, which is headquartered in China, has to comply with Chinese law, which requires the firm to “assist or cooperate” with the Chinese government. The Tik Tok app collects data about the “age, phone number, precise location, internet address, device used, phone contacts, social network connections ... private messages [sent] ... and videos watched” as well as “behavioral data” about its users. This widespread data collection, in the view of the Congress, threatened Americans’ data and posed a national security threat.

Both Tik Tok and a group of American influencers, who include Mr. Firebaugh, using the app decided to challenge the law on First Amendment grounds before it came into force. They received implicit support in this matter by the then-president-elect Donald Trump, who promised to “save Tik Tok,” which he had used during his presidential campaign. He promised to implement a “political solution” in the matter.

The case against Tik Tok started during the Trump administration when the then-president issued Executive Order No. 13942, demanding a prohibition on certain transactions by ByteDance or its subsidiaries. The Executive Order was challenged in courts and enjoined for overstepping the limits on executive power under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. Just days after the Executive Order was issued, Trump demanded ByteDance to divest their interests and rights in Tik Tok. The firm challenged this in court and was directed to seek a mutually acceptable deal with the new Biden administration. After failing to reach such a deal, the Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act was passed in Congress.

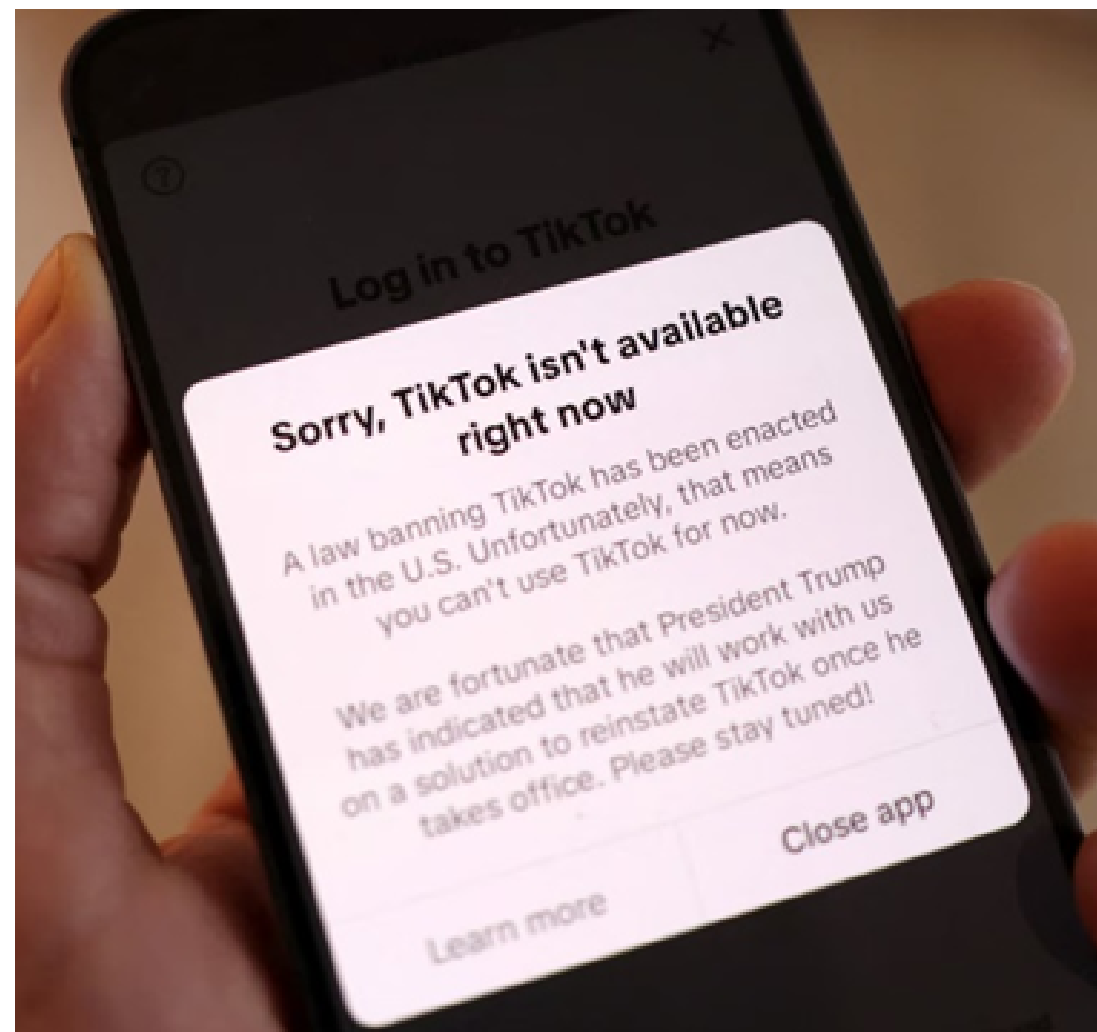
While the Act contains a complex legal test for determining whether a company is controlled by a foreign adversary, ByteDance and Tik Tok, as well as their subsidiaries and legal successors, fall under the Act ex lege as they are mentioned by name in the text of the Act. A company, which is designated as controlled by a foreign adversary, faces potential civil action and substantial fines if it continues to operate in the US. The only way in which these sanctions can be avoided is to engage in qualified divestiture, which forces the current beneficial owner to sell the firm to another beneficial owner so that the company is no longer owned nor has any relationships with the foreign adversary.



Source: https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/24-656_ca7d.pdf

The Petitioners argue that the prohibitions specific focus on one firm and the forced qualified divestiture are contrary to the First Amendment. The Court ruled that while the Act did not directly regulate protected expression under the First Amendment, it did so implicitly by presenting an impossible deadline for the divestiture, in effect triggering First Amendment scrutiny by “imposing a disproportionate burden upon” them.

The Court then considers whether strict scrutiny or intermediate scrutiny should be applied in this case. The legal concept of strict scrutiny presents a burden on the government to demonstrate a compelling interest, while any policy used to achieve the compelling interest must be narrowly tailored to such interest or to achieve the aim with the least possible harm. The Court uses the precedent of *Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. v FCC* to recapitulate that the legal concept of intermediate scrutiny has a substantially lower burden, that being that the policy advances important governmental interests and, in doing so, does not burden substantially more speech than necessary.



Source: https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/24-656_ca7d.pdf

In First Amendment cases, strict scrutiny mostly applies when the regulation of protected speech is content-based, while intermediate scrutiny mostly applies when the law is content-neutral. In this case, the Court uses a two-step test to determine whether the law is content-neutral. First, the Court considers whether the Act challenges Tik Tok due to “the topic discussed, or the idea or message expressed.” The Court argues that the law does not discriminate between users of Tik Tok and thus passes the first part of the test. The second part of the test is to consider whether the law was adopted “because of disagreement with the message that the speech conveys.” The Court also argues that while the government agrees with the message that Tik Tok presents, it bans the app to protect Americans’ data from the Chinese government, therefore passing the second part of the legal test. The Court then addresses the exclusionary nature of the Tik Tok ban in the Act by claiming that Chinese ownership is a special characteristic of the app, and the app is thus not discriminated against. The Court therefore holds that only intermediate scrutiny of the law applies in this case.

The court then evaluates whether the law upholds the demands of intermediate scrutiny. The State posits, and the Petitioners do not dispute, that protecting the data of Americans’ advances important governmental interests. While Petitioners dispute the probability of theft of Americans’ data by Tik Tok, the Court defers this judgement to policymakers in line with the opinion of now-Chief-Justice Kennedy in *Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. v FCC*. Furthermore, the Court holds that the Act does not burden substantially more speech than necessary as the qualified divestiture requirement is only a conditional ban. While Petitioners offer, in their view, equally viable alternatives to the Act, the Court must award the government some latitude in deciding whether the Act is too burdensome, especially so for laws reviewed under intermediate scrutiny.

This judgement has been unique due to the atypical concurrence of all Justices on the final judgement. Seven of the nine Justice joined the opinion of the Court in full. Justice Sotomayor concurred in all but one part, where she emphasized her views on why First Amendment scrutiny applies given this was automatically presupposed by the Court. Justice Gorsuch then expresses her reservations about both the level of scrutiny applied in this case and the, in her view, arbitrary nature of the levels of scrutiny in general. Furthermore, Gorsuch relates the Court’s dismissal of classified state evidence as the Petitioners would not be able to react to this evidence. Nonetheless, the Act, in the Justice’s view, serves both a compelling interest and is appropriately tailored. This case illustrates how the law can have a substantial impact on the lives of 190,000,000 Americans using the app and that the little-known legal rules surrounding various standards of scrutiny play such a key role in the determination.

Daniel Middleton

How Far Is Too Far with Genetic Editing?

Imagine a world where genetic diseases are relics of the past, where parents can choose the traits of their children, and where humanity itself is sculpted by the hands of science. With the rise of technologies like CRISPR-Cas9, we now have the power to alter DNA with unprecedented precision. This advancement promises to eliminate inherited diseases, enhance agricultural productivity, and is able to do much more. Yet, with great power comes great responsibility. The question is where humanity will set its ethical boundaries surrounding genetic modification and its intervention towards other generations. As genetic editing moves from science fiction to scientific reality, it forces us to confront the implications of playing God with our own biology. Are we on the verge of unlocking untold potential, or are we opening Pandora's box?

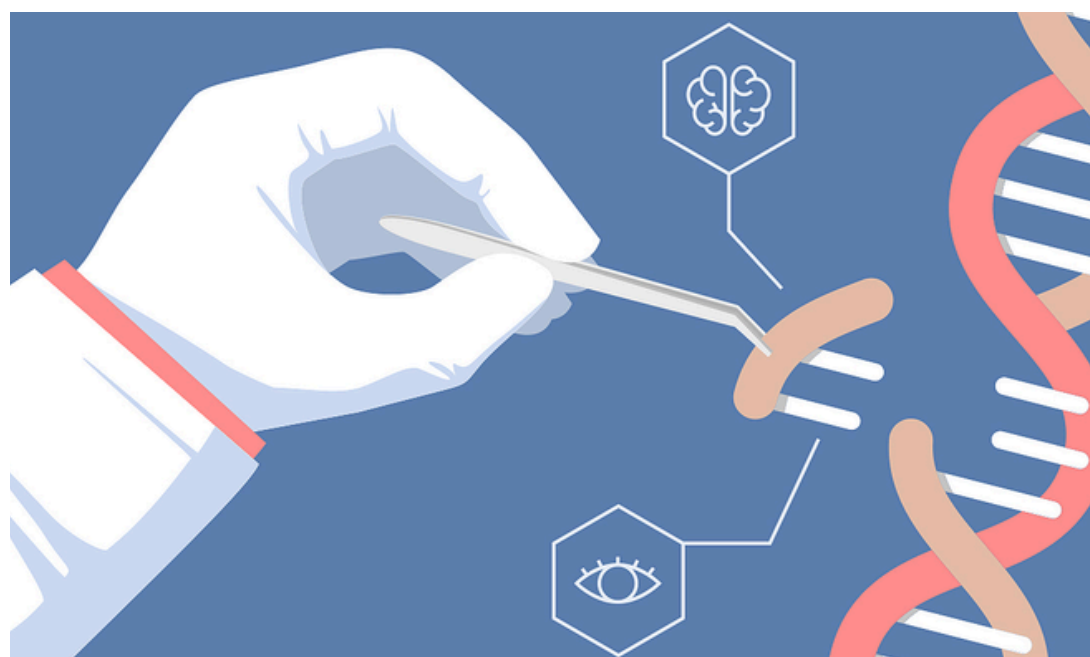
The promise of genetic editing is in its potential to revolutionize medicine. By editing defective genes, scientists are exploring the possibility of curing hereditary conditions such as cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anaemia, and Huntington's disease. These conditions are caused by different types of genetic mutations: cystic fibrosis is often due to a deletion mutation in the CFTR gene (such as the $\Delta F508$ mutation), sickle cell anaemia results from a missense mutation in the HBB gene, where a single nucleotide change replaces glutamic acid with valine, and lastly, Huntington's disease is caused by a trinucleotide repeat expansion mutation in the HTT gene, which leads to excessive CAG repeats. Moreover, genetic therapies are also being researched for possible cancer treatment, where the faulty genes that spread and drive cancer could be corrected or even eliminated.



Source: <https://depositphotos.com/photo/genetic-engineering-23325930.html>

Beyond human health, genetic editing could be applied in agriculture as well. Crops can be engineered to resist certain pests, tolerate harsh environmental conditions, or provide enhanced nutritional value. For instance, gene-edited rice and wheat varieties have been developed to resist disease yields, which address the security of global food. Genetic editing also holds promise for environmental protection. Researchers are exploring ways to modify mosquitoes to reduce the spread of malaria or engineer corals to survive rising ocean temperatures. These advances could aid with the rise of urgent environmental challenges.

Despite these benefits, genetic editing raises ethical concerns. One of the major concerns is the possibility of "designer babies." If people have the ability to choose traits like intelligence or eye colour, genetic editing could go beyond disease prevention and lead to genetic enhancements. This could widen social inequalities, as only the wealthy might afford these modifications. Another concern is genetic diversity. If society starts removing certain traits, the long-term effects on human evolution are unknown. Genetic diversity has historically helped protect populations from diseases, and excessive modifications might make future generations more vulnerable to new health threats.



Source: <https://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/take-no-for-an-answer-on-genetic-engineering>

The risks associated with genetic editing, particularly germline editing (modifications that are inheritable), remain a significant concern. One of the biggest challenges is the possibility of unintended mutations within society itself. CRISPR-Cas9 and similar technologies are highly precise, yet they are not perfect, and off-target edits could lead to unforeseen health complications. Another issue is that genetic changes made to embryos are permanent. If an edit causes harm, reversing it would be nearly impossible. Since genes interact in complex ways, even well-meaning modifications could have unintended consequences that could not be fixed. Beyond medical and ethical concerns, security risks emerge as a significant issue. If genetic editing technology falls into the wrong hands, it could be misused to create harmful organisms, including engineered pathogens or biological weapons, with unpredictable and devastating consequences for society. Malicious actors could exploit this technology to design viruses or bacteria with enhanced resistance to treatments, which could pose a severe bioterrorism threat to the world.

Furthermore, regulations regarding genetic editing could split the world since each country stands by different opinions and regulations. Some nations, like China, have pushed forward with human embryo editing experiments, while others, like the United States have implemented strict regulations to go against and limit germline modifications. The lack of a unified global framework makes it difficult to establish ethical boundaries, but regulation is crucial in balancing innovation with ethical responsibility. The scientific community must work alongside policymakers to establish guidelines that ensure genetic editing is used safely and ethically. Public involvement is also key since other perspectives must be considered when defining the limits of genetic interventions to ensure that decisions are made in the interest of humanity as a whole rather than a select few individuals.

Genetic editing is a double-edged sword. It can help treat genetic diseases, improve food security, and tackle environmental challenges. However, it also raises ethical concerns, such as genetic inequality, health risks, and security threats. The real question is not whether to use genetic editing but how far we should go. Its future depends on responsible research, strict regulations, and open public discussions. Society must set ethical limits to ensure it only benefits humanity without creating harm. By moving forward carefully and thoughtfully, we can unlock the benefits of genetic editing while avoiding its dangers.

Sofia Daňková



Source: <https://www.technologynetworks.com/genomics/articles/genetic-modification-techniques-and-applications-382001>

The Future of Human Colonization: Project Mars

The fourth planet from the Sun, and the seventh largest. It's the only planet we know of inhabited entirely by robots" (Mars - NASA Science) – that is the planet of Mars, the so-called 'Red Planet.' Known for its harsh environment, a dusty and rocky desert where temperatures reach Antarctic levels, Martian soil appears hostile to any kind of life. Nonetheless, extensive research of the Martian terrain found that Mars was once host to biological life – in fact, its environment was once almost like our own. Today, a growing number of space agencies have taken an interest in terraforming the planet and possibly colonizing it, although that begs the question, why should we?

When it comes to arguments for human colonization, the most common one you may hear is the argument (and idea) of having a 'backup' planet in case things go wrong on Earth. I mean, imagine it – a planet that we can tailor to our wants and needs, both from an environmental and social aspect and to which we can turn when Earth is destroyed, be it by a huge global catastrophe or something else – doesn't sound bad, does it?

Even though the idea sounds appealing for now, it might take many years, if not decades, before we even step foot on the planet Mars. The travel to Mars is a complex one at best, requiring special conditions to occur – the so-called 'launch' window is once every 26 months, which is a relatively long time. And once we get to Mars, the actual challenge (aside from getting there) will be the terraformation itself, which may take decades to succeed. Currently, various companies, both national space agencies and international independent companies, are searching for a way to inhabit and transform the hostile planet. From experiments with small vertical gardens to actual soil sampling and mapping, scientists have been searching for a way to enable humans to not only survive but also thrive under challenging conditions. In the past couple of years, a lot of technological improvements have been made, giving lots of hope to the Mars colonization programs of companies like SpaceX or NASA and pushing them one step closer to their goal – that is, making Mars a colony of Earth.

Let's move into the future, into an age when our society succeeds in terraforming Mars. Consider this question: who should govern the Red Planet? And what types of laws should its inhabitants follow? It is rather difficult to think of an acceptable answer and even more challenging to accept.

Many countries would like to hold a stake in this new environment; however, do we really want a planet governed by the laws of nations (or planet) 115 million kilometers away? And do we sign a treaty, just like for the Moon, stating no country has ownership, yet all have equal access? Government aside, let's also look at the ethical implications of the colonization process. Should humans actually terraform the Red Planet? If there is life on Mars, any human intervention (as evidenced by history) would eradicate the existing Martian ecosystem completely, going against all environmental and moral values. And even if there is no life on Mars, to what extent do we, humans, have the right to 'barge' in and tailor the Martian environment to our needs only? Whilst I would love to provide an answer to these proposed questions, I am searching for them myself.

All in all, the potential of human colonization of Mars holds a promising perspective yet a mountain of ethical challenges. While scientific advancements bring us closer to transforming a planet into a suitable human habitat, the moral implications must be considered, significantly when shaping a new world. One final question remains: can we create a Mars society that avoids repeating Earth's mistakes? We are yet to see.

Calista Maříková

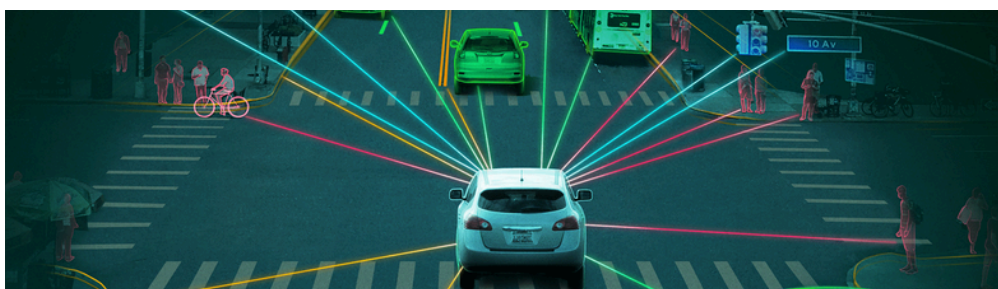


Source: https://kardashev.fandom.com/wiki/Colonizing_Mars

On Autonomous Vehicles...

Autonomous Vehicles, or AVs for short, are vehicles capable of sensing their environment and operating without human involvement. Everyone who is tired of driving themselves around probably read that and jumped with joy, which would probably be a mistake. AVs inherently carry huge amounts of dangerous problems with themselves, and most people fail to realize that. Although I do believe AVs are the future and will eventually become widespread, they are not yet ready due to several reasons, and yet companies are already letting them into "human traffic". Tesla, for example, has launched their Full-Autonomous autopilot mode in 2019. And there are more companies with similar actions, like Rivian, Zoox or GM. So why exactly do these vehicles pose such a danger?

There are a multitude of reasons for this. An immediate one that comes to mind is a malfunction of the vehicle itself, which would endanger the passengers as well as bystanders. In the span of 3 years, 2021 until 2024, there have been close to 4 thousand accidents involving Autonomous Vehicles, which is a small fraction of all the accidents in the world, so at first sight this statistic would not cause much alarm about the dangers and would rather speak of the safety of these vehicles. Sure, the statistics are a bit skewed because AVs are not accessible and are mostly in the US, but this is still such a small fraction it is almost irrelevant to consider.



Source: <https://www.tribotz.com/autonomous-vehicles/>

So, if safety is not the concern, what is? The crucial difference between an AV and a normal car is not what the AV has, but rather what it lacks. It's missing the human being behind the wheel, which is the root of most of the problems with AVs. As a result of this lack of humans behind the wheel is accountability. Say the car malfunctions and blows through a red light. Let's also assume no human was harmed and no damage to property was done. Should the act be punished? And if so, who or what should be punished? If we do not punish the act, we might as well invite injury and accidents to our world with open hands.

Or, say somebody or something did get hurt, should we punish it now? If we do, regardless of the situation, who do we potentially send to prison? I doubt anyone reading this has seen a car in jail for murder. What about the passengers, we could punish them. The innocent passengers who have absolutely no control over the car, as per the definition of AVs, that's probably not a good idea either. I hope everyone reading this can now see the obviously problematic nature of AVs in the way of law and accountability.

That is not the only issue though. Let us look at something called edge cases and ethical challenges. Picture this scenario; an AV is casually driving down a one-way road, cars parked in the next lane. Suddenly a child steps into the road, and the car realizes it does not have enough time to brake. Is it going to hit the child, or swerve and damage the parked cars and potentially endanger the passenger? A very difficult scenario which even most humans would struggle to resolve. It is basically a lose-lose scenario, like the trolley problem in psychology, which might feel like cheating, but these are scenarios that happen, and AVs are not ready for them yet. Say the car decides to prevent hitting the child by swerving, as many people would, damaging property. Firstly, who is going to buy a car that damages itself? And who is going to pay for the damage? If it does not decide to swerve, we reach the same problem as above, who is going to be accountable for the death of the child?

To not make this a hate article against AVs, I must say that they have made massive improvements over the years and are only getting better. The issues above were cherry-picked to depict the negative side of them but are still valuable insight nevertheless. With the statistics mentioned earlier, it has even more impact after realizing how many accidents it might have prevented due to its superior reaction time and its inability to have emotional responses, making them potentially more reliable than humans. Even my small survey amongst my friends confirms this, with the majority thinking AVs are a good thing for the future and might save lives in the long run.

To conclude, I do believe AVs are an important step for humanity to take, however we must be ready for the consequences they bring and prepare accordingly, whether it is lawfully or otherwise. They can genuinely be a rather good contribution, but the issues above are scenarios that might happen, and we are not ready for them yet.

Jakub Kubín

Are Lawyers Obligated to Defend Someone They Believe to be Guilty?

The profession of a lawyer can often appear ruthless to the public; they do defend 'obvious' criminals, after all. However, it is often ignored that the defence of criminals is a way of ensuring equality before the law. This essay will outline the importance of a functioning legal system for both justice and State legitimacy and consider the rights and duties of a lawyer. Are they right in acting upon their own morality, or should their individual ethical beliefs be suppressed for the greater good of the system?

The greater good of the system is strongly promoted by the concept of equality. Even a guilty person deserves equal treatment under the law; whilst the law itself is made to treat every member of society the same way, there must also be a system that enforces said practice. The presumption of innocence until the verdict is passed is essential for guaranteeing equal treatment by the State. It protects individuals from unjust or unconsidered conclusions and gives them a chance to defend themselves. If lawyers were to prematurely form opinions on their client's innocence, they would be appropriating the role of judges. Their belief could lead them to diminish their efforts when defending the accused, and this would, in turn, undermine the entire system of justice in place. This system is based on the presumption that all its members are going to perform their given task thoroughly and wholly, as that is the only way in which equal treatment of the people can be striven towards. The needs of the system can, therefore, only be met if its individual members respect their place within it and the obligations that stem from it.

If individuals were to be falsely accused and there were no lawyers to defend them due to prematurely formed conclusions, many would likely be falsely convicted, creating a distrust towards the entire system. Apart from that, the imbalance of power would grow disproportionately, as the most influential would always find themselves a lawyer, whilst the lower social classes would be left to hope that they will 'appear innocent' enough for a lawyer to trust them. As can be seen from the potential scenario that has been outlined, there need to be certain guarantees given by the State to society. One of these must be defence, which has been argued to its fullest possible capacity because if certainty of a defence is undermined, the public would cease to feel safe within the State.

In their professional careers, lawyers holding certain opinions are expected to suppress these in the field of their work. Through their choice of employment, they inevitably expose themselves to the possibility of defending someone guilty, as that is the basis of the system they voluntarily entered. Whilst lawyers undoubtedly have a right to their own personal beliefs, these form part of their private lives. In their public life, these values should not interfere with the rights of others. Our own freedoms end where the freedoms of others begin, and part of the freedom of others is the right to a defence. Personal beliefs should thus not interfere with a lawyer's contribution to the system of justice in place, as by having entered it, they decided to bear the responsibility of upholding said system.



Source: <https://legaldesire.com/15-reasons-why-you-should-become-a-lawyer/>

So, is it right for a lawyer to defend a client who they believe is guilty? An affirmative answer seems legitimate, as in the system of justice that society has established, everyone is given a role. By deciding to become a lawyer, a person voluntarily takes upon themselves the tasks that are attributed to said profession. The clients' guilt can only be determined by a trial, and prior discrimination must be prevented. The equality of the law and of the system that enacts it also ensures its legitimacy. A lawyer should, therefore, not be seen as immoral for defending an individual he believes is guilty. They personally are not justifying any crime that might have been committed, but rather fighting to uphold (the system of) justice itself.

Jessica Holan

The Dark Reality Behind 'Sephora Kids'

Have you ever been scrolling on your 'fyp' or been in a shop and seen 8 -11-year-old kids talking and trying on skincare and make-up? Yes? Well then you have likely encountered 'the Sephora kids,' a term coined on social media to describe children influenced by social media to buy and use skincare products intended for adults. Typically, it is a preteen girl shopping at makeup stores (Sephora) for products that are traditionally intended for adult women and older teens.

Gen Z and Gen Alpha are more likely to fall down this rabbit hole, having grown up constantly exposed to social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. They have grown up watching their favorite influencer or 'skinflencer' showcase their '20-step skincare routines' or 'get ready with me' videos."

"Gen Alpha is more interested in skincare than toys." - CNN

Multiple sources claim that factors, other than social media, contributing to this phenomenon include the appeal of packaging or scent, as well as the desire to feel and act like a grown-up – what experts refer to as pseudomaturity.

Another significant factor is the pressure to conform to certain beauty standards. While the pressure to look a certain way isn't new, it has increased due to social media. Children today, having grown up with constant exposure to these platforms and are acutely aware of the pressure placed on appearance. Due to this growing awareness, they may be pushed to invest in many beauty products: skincare, make-up and haircare, that they don't actually need.

Popular cosmetics brands include Drunk Elephant, Bubble, Sol de Janeiro or E.L.F. Cosmetics, all of which add to this growing market.

"We're putting our own grown-up fears onto them." - The Today Show

The trend of adopting adult-like skincare routines and makeup has led to a 350% revenue increase for E.L.F. Cosmetics since 2019, with a 203% rise in stock prices. The baby and child skincare market is expected to grow 7.71% annually, reaching \$380 million by 2028, with 160.7 million users worldwide.

"The Sephora Kid trend is a real phenomenon," - Dr. Lauren Penzi, a New York-based dermatologist.

"The market is growing pretty rapidly. There are a lot of new brands launching specifically for tweenage girls." - Jessica DeFino, creator of *The Unpublishable*, a newsletter on the beauty industry.

Brands are targeting even younger generations. For example, Yawn offers makeup and skincare for children aged 3+. Common stores like CVS and Target are placing beauty product displays near children's sections to encourage kids to ask their parents to buy them.

This trend is getting out of hand. Not only are children often rude to the staff working in beauty stores they visit and damage products in the stores, but they fail to realize the real-life consequences.

The issue isn't the fact that they do skincare in the first place, skincare and good hygiene can be good for their skin and build a stronger skin barrier, if done correctly. The problem is the amount and inaccurately chosen products for their skin type. Part of this issue are also parents; they often support this behavior without realizing the harm that the combination of all these products can actually cause to their child's health.

Most of the popular products contain harsh toxic chemicals like retinol, AHAs, and acids, which can damage young, healthy skin. These products mainly aim to create characteristics of a young, elastic and healthy skin that these children already have. So, not only is putting all these aggressive products onto their faces absolutely pointless, but they also risk damaging perfect young skin and instead risk dermatitis and long-term skin damage, which all these substances cause.

In conclusion, in the past years a trend regarding skincare and make-up has taken off between tweens and younger generations. Mainly due to social media and their impact on especially Gen Z and Gen Alpha generation. The main problem is the amount and lack of knowledge regarding the usage of the products, which can cause long-lasting skin/health problems. There are no special campaigns or restrictions aiming for decreasing the impact or solving this problem, yet. Probably because the beauty empires only benefit, from spending of those young kids on their beauty products, in great scales.

Eliška Bastařová

■ A Day As a Footballer's Personal Chef ■

Being a player's home chef is a demanding and very responsible job that involves much more than just cooking. It's about fueling the players for their best performance on the pitch, ensuring they get enough rest and even feel good, all with the special needs and tastes that vary from player to player. Each meal is planned down to the last grain, to cover the nutrients but also taste good and satisfy the players.

The morning starts early, every morning the chef is scheduled to go to the market to get the best quality ingredients for his employer. The individual ingredients are carefully selected with regard to nutritional value and high quality, with a strong preference for white meat over red meat, such as chicken or turkey and fish. Whole foods such as brown rice and wholemeal bread are popular, and we must not forget the incredible amount of fruit and vegetables. At a high level, only the details make the difference, and therefore the food selection is very strict.

The first meal prepared is usually breakfast. It can be avocado and egg toast, a fruit bowl with high protein content and seeds, or oatmeal and almond butter with a banana. All often finished with honey for enough carbohydrates. A smoothie is also added to provide additional carbohydrates and vitamins. All have one purpose: to provide energy in a form that will be very quickly absorbed and make life easier for the player, whose morning consists of high-intensity training and other procedures.

Lunch and dinner follow. They have specific goals to fill the player and regenerate after a hard workout, but also to build muscle. Grilled salmon with steamed vegetables and a side dish such as potatoes or a sautéed, low-meat dish with a side dish of brown rice are balanced meals with a combination of protein, carbohydrates and fat.

For taste, sauces such as ketchup or barbeque are often added. The food is very simple and can be supplemented with a salad, and is also anti-inflammatory, which is extremely important.

Snacks are prepared between meals to balance energy levels. Common options are fresh fruit with nuts, homemade fruit chocolate and protein bars. After training, the chef will prepare meals or drinks with electrolytes, carbohydrates and proteins so that the player can regenerate as quickly and effectively as possible and restore glycogen stores.

This job is not just about nutrition. It is also about knowing the player's preferences, allergies and cravings. Even the most focused player has a craving for sweet or unhealthy food like pizza or burgers, so the chef must create healthy alternatives according to the requirements, such as sugar-free sweets and low-carb pizza.

Although it is a demanding job with long days and constant innovation, and the chef has to move and learn every day, its benefits are obvious. These chefs play a key role in the life of a footballer because we are what we eat and quality fuel makes all the difference on the pitch. For a private chef, it is not about preparing food, it is more about being part of a huge team of people who are behind each player and their success.

Frederick Bawia

■ Remember Me ■

Your hatred feels like betrayal
like when you kiss someone
and they pull away without
looking into your eyes
I opened myself to you
to prove to you I have a heart
I fell into your arms like
an apple from a tree
you took a bite out of me
crushing my bones
and spat me out like you did not
just take my life
who is gonna love me
if not you?
i turned bitter
nobody wants to taste me
no longer
I was already touched by you
your name stands before mine
your word before mine
I will never reach you
I rot alone while she loves you
with her spring laughter
'cause your winter ended
with me and mine began
when you put your hands on me
she is the lantern
in your lightless existence
but will she still love you
when you show her
that painting from me?
when you open your ribs
and there will be my broken
bones mixed with yours?
will she love the taste
of your red waters
from veins connected to mine?
she may love your mind
but she despises your thoughts
and you may haunt me
with your talks and your lies
but no matter where you look
there will be my shadow
even on your tongue
even in your heart
my presence is embodied
in your skin darling
you won't forget me.

Andrea Kočová

■ Social Media's Obsession with 'Glowing Up' ■

We live in a world that is obsessed with physical appearance. We have been living in one since we can remember. Whether it was the extravagant fashion in the Renaissance or the makeup culture nowadays. Our physical appearance has been one of our main priorities for centuries. But it wasn't until the early 2000s that the term "glow up" was first introduced. What started as a positive idea- encouraging self-improvement- has taken a negative turn, becoming mainly about appearance. The constant pressure that you must be "glowing up" and improving the way you look can trap you in a cycle of insecurity and misery. But how exactly does this affect us, and why has bettering yourself become something negative?

The idea was amazing. A motivation to become the best version of yourself and to feel better in your body. However, social media started abusing the idea by making it about unrealistic beauty standards and separating it from its origin, self-growth. For example, Katy Perry's video clip for the song Last Friday Night is when things started to get out of hand. The video clip contains a scene where one of the girls has a makeover and then "glows up". However, the glow-up was simply removing her glasses, putting on makeup, wearing more revealing clothes and changing her hairstyle. This can then make the audience believe that you cannot be considered beautiful (or even be liked by others) if you look like her before the makeover. Through these "makeovers"- in not only music video clips but also many movies recorded in the early 2000s where the girl suddenly becomes attractive after straightening her hair and taking off her glasses- the whole idea became negative. This portrayal makes the obsession with glowing up negative because it changed the perspective and made it all about changing your physical appearance.

Every time the girls had these glow-ups, one thing happened: they became more popular. More specifically, they became more popular to the male gaze. This is, again, completely demolishing the idea of bettering yourself for your satisfaction. It seems as if the only reason why those girls changed the way they look was to gain approval from others- especially men. This is extremely problematic since the young girls watching these movies are then convinced that this is what is expected of them. I have yet to see a positive form of glow-up in movies. These films fail to show the world why they should better themselves. Now, glow-ups are viewed as something purely physical when it is so much more than that.

In recent years, influencers have started to love making content about glowing up. There are two types of these videos, and both of them have a negative effect. First are those unrealistic challenges such as glowing up in 24 hours, getting abs in 1 week and many more. These challenges make it, again, mainly focused on physical appearance and show unrealistic results. They mislead viewers into thinking they can completely transform themselves overnight, setting them up for disappointment. Challenges like these set unrealistic standards for younger viewers and can develop insecurities due to the spread of disinformation.

The second type of videos may seem harmless initially but are also not ideal. The 75-hard challenge seems to be the best of those glow-up challenges since it also focuses on mental health. What the challenge means is that you have 75 days to become unrecognisable and change your life for the better. You give yourself tasks you must accomplish each day of the 75 days. However, what is so wrong about it is that it puts immense pressure on the viewers to set these unrealistic goals. Social media is a mass spreader of disinformation, and it makes lying to a large amount of people easy. People are then motivated to make the most out of this challenge and set unrealistic goals. Unfortunately, these habits are usually very hard to maintain for the whole 75 days. In the end, it only worsens that person's self-esteem because they could not complete the challenge, even though influencers promoting these challenges often do not complete them successfully either. Overall, these challenges have good intentions behind them, but social media's obsession with making unrealistic "glow-up" content has got out of hand and is doing more harm than good.

The term "glow up" started to be used in the early 2000s, and since then, it has developed into a massive trend on social media. However, this content is unrealistic and can develop more insecurities than help get rid of old ones. That is why it is harmful to viewers, especially young and vulnerable ones. Let's shift our focus from being obsessed with "glowing up" to simply becoming the best versions of ourselves.

Andrea Grossová

OG Chronicle Interview: Ms. Harris

She is probably a teacher that comes from the place farthest away from OG. No clue? What if I say New Zealand. It is Vickey Harris, correct, who teaches IB Economics and IB Business & Management. How often does she visit her home? What's it like being the only woman in the humanities department? We talked about that and lot more in this edition's second teacher interview.

What motivated you to become a teacher? Was it your dream job?

No, I became a teacher when I was 55 and the main motivation was because I wanted to live and be able to work in Turkey. My husband is Turkish, and he lived in New Zealand for over 30 years. And when our girls grew up and had their own lives and their own career paths and lived in different parts of the world, it made sense for us to move to Turkey because that's my husband's country where he's from. And Turkey seems central for us. A lot of students in New Zealand, when they finish their studies, and they work for a couple of years there, they tend to go on their OE, which is their overseas experience. We knew that Turkey was central for our girls, because of that, we've got two daughters in the UK, a daughter in Australia and a daughter in New Zealand. Regarding my career move I thought, okay, what am I going to do? Because I still need to work. I did some research, and I thought, oh, I could be a teacher, because I'm not fluent in Turkish. I went back to Uni and did a post grad in teaching.

How often do you go back to New Zealand?

Once a year at Christmas, which is our summer. The school system is different, we start in New Zealand and Australia in January through to November. Our summer break lasts for two months from December till January. We go home, because we have a grandchild, but we're soon to be having another grandchild in Australia so we're going to Australia instead of New Zealand this Christmas.

How hard is to get from here to New Zealand?

Well, from here to New Zealand it's a 24-hour flight time, that's not including the stopover. The most direct way is through Dubai or Qatar, and then it's a 17-hour flight to New Zealand.

Should we visit New Zealand some day?

Of course. The thing is, you can't go to New Zealand without going to Australia and vice versa, because you're going so far. New Zealand is a beautiful country, but there are so many parts of the world that are just as beautiful. Prague, the Czech Republic, it's gorgeous. The weather is similar to New Zealand, except where I live, we don't get the snow.

Do you watch rugby, and is it your favorite sport?

No. I mean, it's ingrained in our sports culture, it's a culture of rugby, but there's a lot of other sports. Yachting, canoeing, wind surfing, we do a lot of sports on the water because when you look at the map of New Zealand you're only about half an hour away from the sea.

Well, now you're here, and this is your second year at the school.

How do you like your life at OG?

The school's culture is amazing. The students are very respectful. It's a real pleasure teaching here. The students want to learn, that means a lot as a teacher, it's quite satisfying. At OG I feel they want to reach their potential, but respect is the number one, it's very rewarding as a teacher because there's nothing worse than teaching, and you don't get that respect from your kids, which is what I had at my previous school. I must say it was quite enlightening coming here.



Source: Ondřej Galyáš, the author

Also, even the little students, the little kids, they go, hello, you're walking around the whole school, and they all say hello to you, and I don't teach them, I only teach IB, so no matter what level of the students that meet me they always greet me.

Why do the IB diploma? How does it enrich the students and the teachers?

IB Diploma is one of the most elite curriculums globally and it does prepare you. There are so many positives that you can take away regarding discipline. It's really for students that want to go down the academic pathway. The skills you will learn you'll take automatically with you to university. I would recommend IB, you come out being a worldly, well-rounded student, it teaches you empathy. You look at the IB learner profile and when you finish the IB, you look at those profiles, and you can see that you can take a bit from it, what you've learned and what you can take with you on to university.

Tell us about your hobbies. What do you do in your free time?

My husband and I love cooking, but we do a lot of that in our home, and we have a beautiful home in Turkey, and we do a lot of socializing. We love exploring, Prague is the most beautiful city. This is Central Europe, so we have access everywhere.

What's it like to be part of this department? Only men around you...

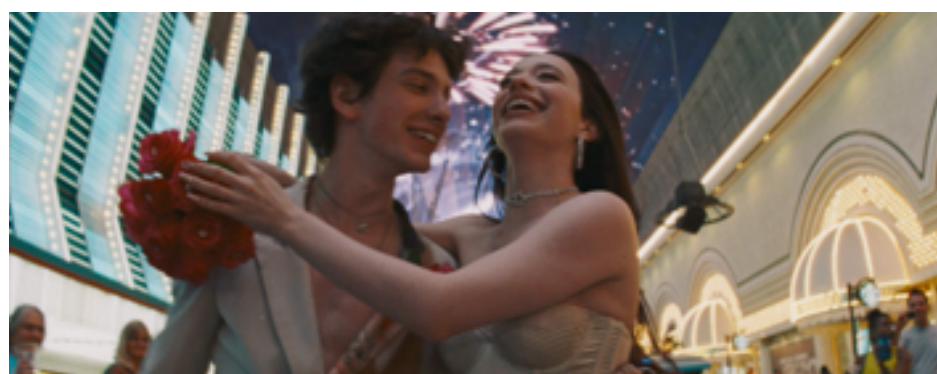
I love it. The boys are really respectful. We have some laughs, I don't know if you see that, but they have these Nerf guns, and I have to get me one. They all have one, but they've hidden them. You know, women tend to be chatty, but the boys aren't. I would choose them from any other department. You know, when I was a first-time grandmother last Christmas, they bought this book, it was in English, and it was of tradition of fairies that are in the forest. I bought them socks and t-shirts from New Zealand.

Ondřej Galyáš

Anora: An Oscar Worthy Picture

The newest romance/comedy film directed by the renowned director Sean Baker has absolutely dominated this year's awards season – the picture called Anora has won five awards (including Best Picture) at the 97th Academy Awards as well as the great Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

The film follows Ani, a twenty-three-year-old sex worker from Brooklyn, who unexpectedly meets her prince Charming – a young man named Vanya, who just so happens to be the son of a Russian oligarch. The two impulsively marry off in a chapel in Las Vegas (where else?). What first appears to be a Cinderella story soon takes on a dark twist for the worse – Vanya's family finds out about the marriage and sets off to annul it. Ani's dream soon starts slipping away as the glitz and glamour give way to drama and chaos, with Vanya's family trying to undo their marriage.



Source: <https://www.wbur.org/news/2024/10/24/anora-sean-baker-film-review>

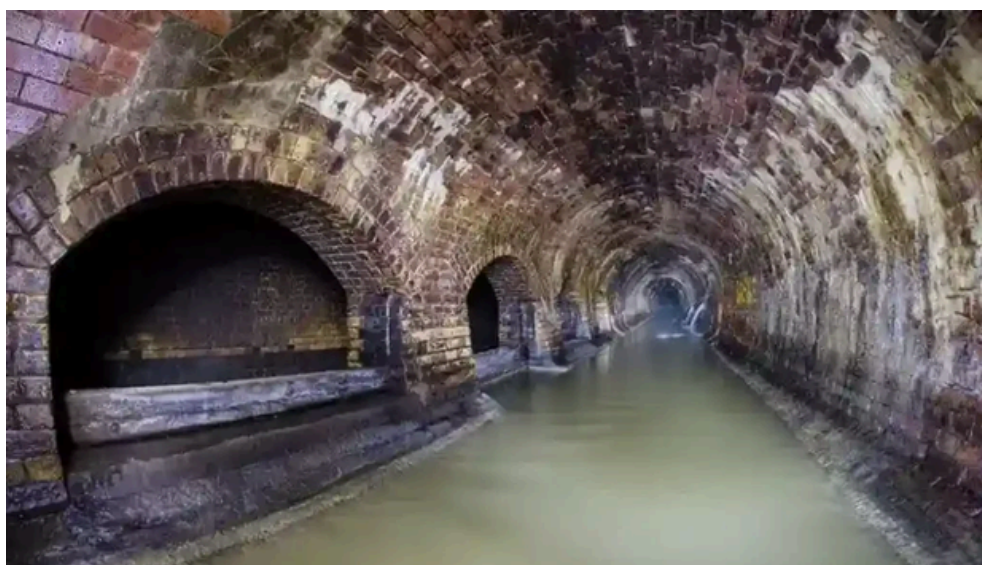
Anora is both funny and heartbreaking – while director Baker sets a playful and humorous tone in most of the film's scenes, his overall message goes beyond that. Anora is not a satirical film about the failed Cinderella story, nor is it 'sex-work propaganda,' as some critics suggest. The beauty in Anora lies in the issues it explores in the background, such as class divide, but also the complex dynamic between body and expression many sex workers navigate.

As one review put it, Anora is a film written by adults for adults – it is a powerful movie with a clever critique of society. Furthermore, Mikey Madison's depiction of Ani is what makes this movie an Oscar-worthy Picture – she can portray all the complexities of Ani's mind so strongly that it stays with you hours after you've watched the film. While Anora does not suit everybody's taste, it is well worth the watch.

Calista Maříková

Disgust As the Backbone of Our Cities

Dégout, 嫌惡, disgusto, घृणा, asco, disgust, the universal feeling of repulsion and becoming ill caused by something unpleasant. As the naturalist Charles Darwin suggested in 1872, disgust is one of the fundamental emotions of human nature and is common, with slight deviations, to all cultures. More than a hundred years later, in 2010, scientist Valerie Ann Curtis continued with Darwin's evolutionary basis for the emotion of disgust but applied it to human reactions to excrement. She concluded that the biological reason for avoiding feces is that things that are disgusting to us have a high potential of making us ill and feces are not an exception, as they usually contain health-threatening bacteria and viruses. Therefore, in our genome, disgust serves as a defense mechanism.



Source: <https://inlocrobotics.com/en/sewage-systems/>

Aversion to any biological discharge seems apparent and does not usually induce any further scrutiny in the context of society. However, this response serves us as an essential indicator for action and drives the mechanisms for survival in our modern-day world. Humanity's necessity to adapt and build waste management systems is rooted in our instinctive repugnance to defecation as it would otherwise become a threat to our health. It seems like disgust only increases our survival and helps us to manage the waste around us, but is it possible that this fundamental emotion prevents us from improving this system? Is it the reason behind society's ignorance towards sewage infrastructure and does our disgust justify flushing our problems away without considering a more sustainable and permanent solution?

The earliest evidence of public sanitation can be traced 3000 years BCE, to the Indus Valley civilization. It included advanced drainage systems connecting homes to a network of drains. The Romans expanded this idea via a network of aqueducts and channels. Some of which are still in use today (Cloaca maxima). After the fall of the Roman Empire, sanitation experienced a dark period as open sewers and waste in the streets became more common. The Enlightenment brought a new view on the importance of health and proper waste disposal, with which began the renaissance of sanitation represented by organized waste removal systems, mainly in cities like London. The biggest steps towards modern waste management were brought about in the 19th century with the Industrial revolution. The untamed urbanization led to many crises like the Great Stink of London in 1858 and sewer systems became essential for progress. This timeline of the evolution of sanitation underlines the technical advancements, but also societal values and approach to public health and importance of functional sanitary sewer system.

Today, sewer systems are at the first line of defense against epidemics. With a world population of 8 billion people, we produce around 810 billion kg of human biomass per year. This needs to be accounted for in all the urban centers around the world. Modern sewer systems vary in size and efficiency in each city, but the basic structure stays similar. Their purpose to transport waste from homes to wastewater treatment plants is facilitated by miles of piping, manholes and pumping stations. After arrival at the treatment plant, waste goes through the first preliminary treatment, where non-degradable and large objects are filtered and usually continue to a landfill. The rest flows into tanks, where the waste undergoes sedimentation, biological processes, and in some cases further filtration, sanitation or organic pollutant removal using hydroxyl radicals. Finally, the treated water can be discharged into rivers and other bodies of water or redirected for reuse. This system has worked for many years and in many cities, supporting our lives and health, but it is not always as perfect as it may seem.

Commonly, our interest in the sewage infrastructure does not exceed the shiny, white surface of our cozy bathrooms and we avoid any encounter with the foul-smelling, dirty underground. The attention to our waste is often given only during crises like floods or contamination, otherwise any improvements are overshadowed by the mentality of "why fix it, if it's not broken". This attitude has created a static environment in the topic of sewage, resulting in neglect and reluctance to change and the formation of more disasters.

As to the specific problems, they are numerous. Raw or partially treated sewage released into the environment contaminates the water, causes pollution, harms wildlife and may result in the spread of diseases. Wastewater entering our waterways aids in the process of eutrophication, the introduction of large amounts of nutrients into the water. Two of these nutrients – nitrogen and phosphorous, are especially dangerous, as they support the growth of algae (e.g. blue green cyanobacteria blooms), which can then block sunlight, supporting bacterial growth and reducing oxygen levels. These imbalances in aquatic ecosystems severely affect delicate organisms. Over 3.4 million people die because of water related diseases. Sewer systems contain harmful chemicals like herbicides, pesticides, medication, paints and provide a base for organisms that thrive in water sources contaminated by raw sewage, which pose a threat to humans and wildlife if they enter waterways untreated. Wastewater pollution affects everyone to a certain level, but the most vulnerable are coastal or river-based regions. Another global problem, amplified by our wastewater systems, is climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has established that water and wastewater utilities account for 5% of world greenhouse gas emissions, of which 70% comes directly from wastewater treatment, without even considering the 80% of wastewater that is released into the environment without treatment. Yet, a recent study from Princeton has shown that municipal treatment plants produce nearly double the amount of methane than estimated by IPCC.

As individuals, we need to realize that our everyday habits and actions are reflected in the common structure of our wastewater management. Given the pressure of global issues like water scarcity or climate change, it is time to consider new ideas, even if they appear repulsive. Disgust may seem overpowering, and as established, innate, but it is not impossible to overcome our inhibitions. That concept was proven at the exhibition "Pooploop" at 21_21 Design Sight gallery in Tokyo, which shows waste can become something new and valuable instead of just another piece of trash. Breaking barriers do not relate only to art. Modern technology and ideas allow us to create things like dry, composing toilets, which take in the raw substance and assist the process of decomposition within itself. Other innovations also include using excrement and other waste for new, practical things, such as drying them for tiles and other construction materials. Modernization continues to the base of the sewer system. The technology for cutting emissions from wastewater treatment plants are still in progress, but the integration of advanced sensors, data analytics, automation is already transforming the traditional systems into flexible networks, capable of self-regulation, reducing the environmental impact and recovering more resources than ever before.

Julie Hoffmanová



Source: Julie Hoffmanová, the author



WORDS HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD,
SO WE'VE BEEN CHOOSING THEM CAREFULLY FOR 18 YEARS.

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