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UCAST NEWS

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Five Signs Stock Market Investors Are Too Bullish

By Lance Roberts Of Real Investment Advice

As investors rush to pile into the stock market, there are 5-signs they may be getting too bullish.

"Every week it feels like we get a new headline about financial markets doing something unusual. Just this week we've had:"

- **A "squid game" crypto token falling 99.99% in a few minutes.**
- **Tesla adding hundreds of billions of dollars in value over a deal with Hertz that hasn't even been signed.**
- **US stock markets hitting fresh all-time-highs.**

"All of which begs the question: are we in a bubble?"

Chartr.com

Whether or not you think the market is in a bubble is mainly irrelevant. What makes a market function is a group of investors willing to buy assets at any price and those that think they are wrong.

As we have noted previously, valuations, by themselves, are a terrible timing metric. However, they tell us a great deal about expected future returns and current market

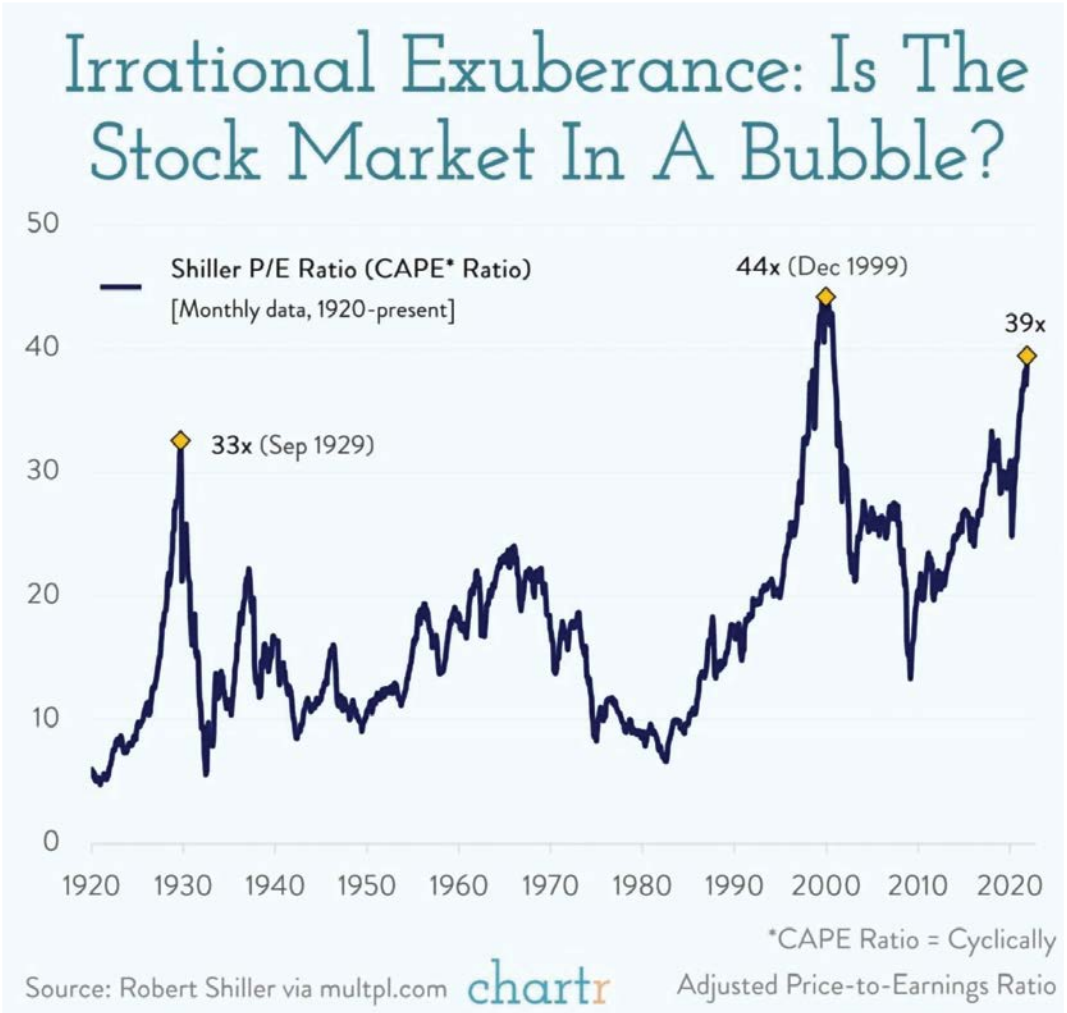
psychology. Moreover, given valuations reflect a buyer's willingness to pay increasing premiums for equity ownership, psychological exuberance is evident.

Last week, I visited with **Charles Payne on Fox Business**, where we discussed market risk. In that discussion, I followed the consistently bullish Brian Belski, who says stay invested as we head into 2022. However, my views are a bit less optimistic, and as Charles notes:

"There are some people who are invested but are making the case that risk has really grown, and we should be paying attention."

That is correct. While markets have had an outstanding year in 2021, there are 5-specific reasons why investors in the stock market should consider reducing risk heading into 2022.

Continued on page 2



The Tuna Scandal

By Marcella Wilroy

Sandwich spots like Jersey Mike's, Blimpie, and Subway have been around for decades. The most famously known of the three, throughout the nation, is Subway. Subway has been an integral player in the make-your-own-sandwich/buffet-type industry for many years. According to an article published by knoema.com, McDonald's and Subway are two of the largest fast-food chains in the world. As of last year, Subway has almost 42,000 locations across the globe. This means that they beat out McDonald's for most locations worldwide.

Needless to say, Subway definitely knows business. How to source tuna? Not so much. In a lawsuit filed earlier this year with the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, the complaint alleges the so-called "tuna," as advertised on Subway's menu and in commercials, actually contains no tuna whatsoever. A representative of Subway purported that this claim was completely baseless. Although, when tested, this "tuna" spoke for itself.

In the progression of this lawsuit, lab results were provided from different samples of

"tuna" purchased from several locations from Subway chains in California. Unfortunately, many things were revealed in these samples. Instead of simply containing tuna, the lawsuit explains that what these

tests found was: "a mixture of various concoctions that do not constitute tuna yet have been blended together by defendants to imitate the appearance of

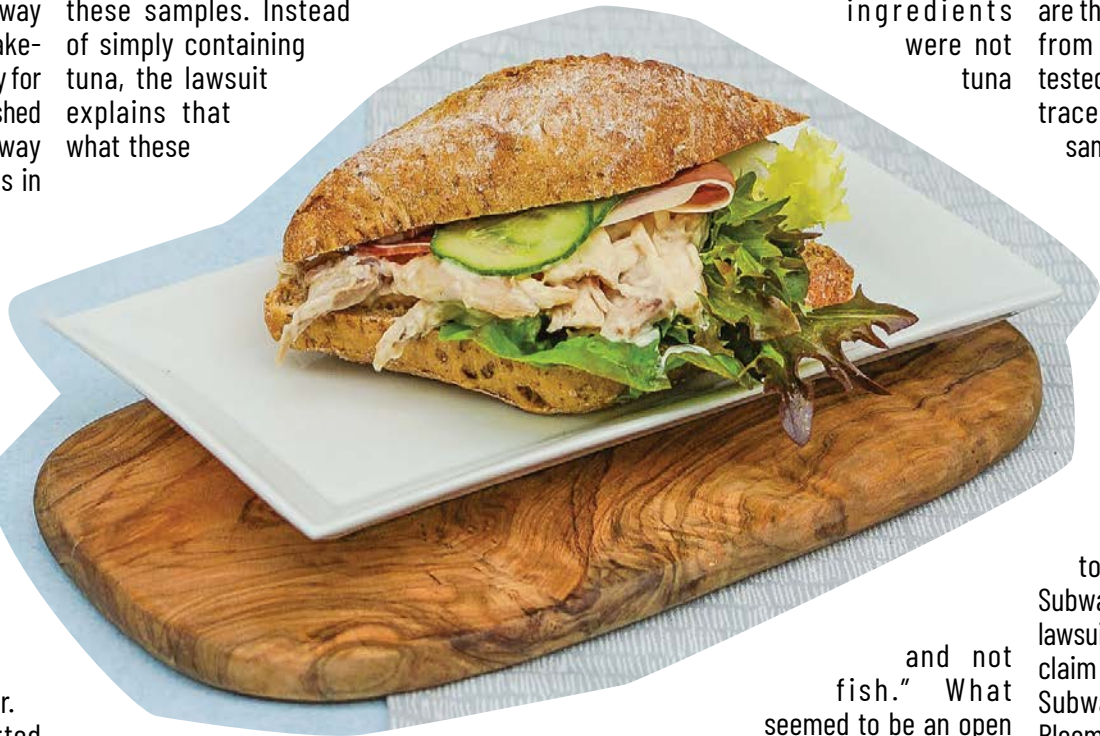
tuna." An attorney on the case emailed the Washington Post stating, "We found that the ingredients were not tuna

and not fish." What seemed to be an open and shut case, has only gotten murkier. If it's not tuna, then, what is it?

Caught up in the suspense of the case, a few media outlets obtained and sent "tuna" samples from various Subways to labs to

get tested. When The Justice System lags, society comes together to get to the bottom of the world's most important issues. Here are the results: Inside Edition had samples from three different Subway locations tested and each contained at least a small trace of tuna. However, a result from a sample of "tuna" sent to labs by the Times claimed, "no amplifiable tuna DNA was present." In an attempt to address this "misinformation," Subway created SubwayTunaFacts.com to clear the air out their dirty laundry. Somehow, in this most important parley, answers lead to even more questions.

Like an elephant in the room, the case was dismissed. Attorneys for the plaintiffs have declined to reveal what this "tuna" really is. Subway might be selling mystery meat. The lawsuit's dismissal was based on the original claim that there is no tuna, whatsoever, in Subway's "tuna." Luckily, according to a Bloomberg Law story, attorneys on the case suggested they could "amend the filing to bring it up to pleading standards" to revisit the case for real answers. Until then, the Tuna Mystery Meat monster remains among us, lurking Subways far and wide.





Five Signs Stock Market Investors Are Too Bullish

By Lance Roberts Of Real Investment Advice

1) Investors Are Extremely Greedy

On August 17th, we discussed taking profits and reducing risk in portfolios, given the rarity of the **stock market having**

portfolio toward normal allocation levels."

Over the last month, investors pushed the stock market to extremely overbought, extended, and deviated levels. Currently,

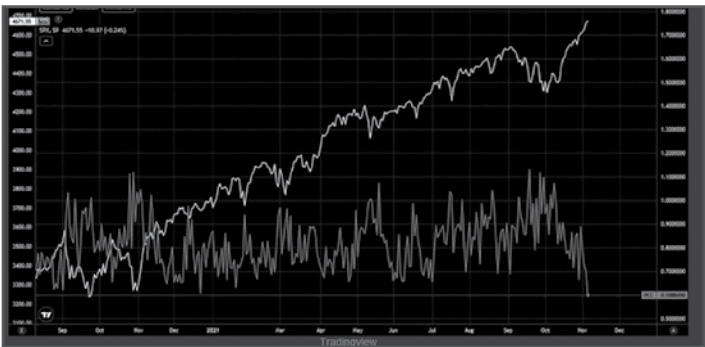
the deviation from the long-term bullish monthly moving average is at the most extreme since 1997. Furthermore, the stock market is now highly overbought, which has typically

of various measures of investor allocation, including the AAI, NAAIM, and Investors Intelligence measures. **Previous market peaks occurred with readings above 90. The current reading is 93.6.**

3) Driving With Your Eyes Closed

Investors in the stock market often discount the risk of something going wrong. We have previously equated this to "driving with your eyes closed." If the road is very straight, you may be able to avoid an accident for a while. However, the longer you keep performing such a feat, the risk of an accident rises exponentially.

The same holds with investors. As the



risk of an eventual reversion becomes.

Currently, investors believe the risk of a correction is non-existent as the volume of protective "put" options has plunged to a new low.

As shown, when investors previously lacked portfolio protection, they often quickly learned to regret it. However, those lessons get quickly forgotten during a bull market.

However, it is essential to remember that one of the most potent forces in the stock market is **"mean reversions."**

It will likely be wise to pay attention to the road ahead.

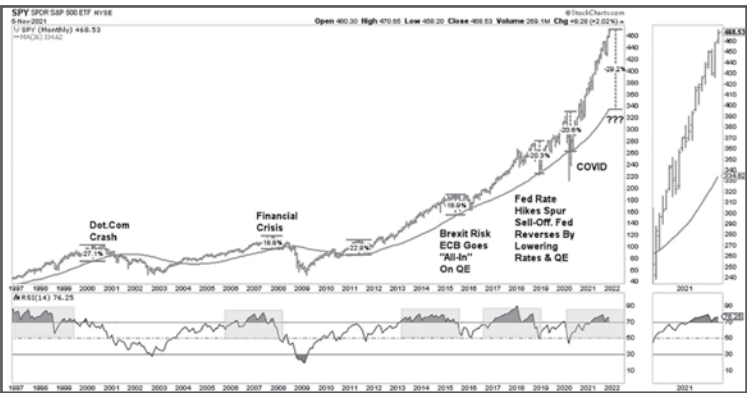
[DMC]

4) As Good As It Gets

As I noted in my conversation with Charles, everything in the market is cyclical. Currently, earnings are surging, supporting the idea of overpaying for equity ownership. However, economic growth is slowing, and the year-over-year comparisons will become exceedingly more difficult next year.



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6-consecutive months of positive returns.

"Currently, there is no concern about 'risk' in the financial markets as the 'bullish bias' remains unfettered. It is certainly possible the market advance can continue unabated into one of the historically lengthier stretches. The only question is when will it end, and how big of a correction will it be?"

In September, we found out as the markets declined by 5%, and CNBC was running daily "Markets In Turmoil" headlines. That month-long correction worked off much of the excessive bullish sentiment and aggressive equity positioning at the time.

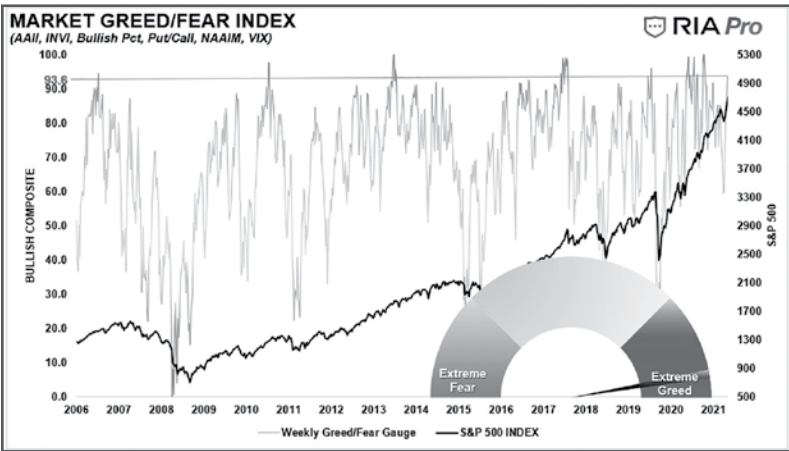
By the end of September, stock market sentiment was negative enough to **increase equity exposure in portfolios. But, of course, that suggestion got met with much criticism at the time.**

"With the markets now deeply oversold on a short-term basis, we deployed some of our cash throughout the week to rebalance the

preceded more significant market corrections.


2) Equity Allocations Are Very Aggressive

Furthermore, with investors aggressively



allocated to equities, the risk of "panic selling" would fuel a deeper correction. The "fear/greed" gauge below gets constructed

market rises, investors begin to discount the risk of a correction. The longer the stock market increases in price, the greater the



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Writers – Jane Miller, Alec Moore, Antarra Belcher, Chris Carnicelli, Dustin Brewer, Isabella Giotis, John Tolson, Turner Stephens, Greg Goodsell, Roberta Nadler, Mariah Jeffrey

Email – UCastNews@gmail.com

Special Thanks – Andrew D. Bernstein, Vern Vegso, Mike Yates, Kevin Banks, Isabella Giotis

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Bengal Tigers To Get A New \$3.5 Million Habitat At America’s Teaching Zoo At Moorpark College

By Moorpark College

Groundbreaking ceremony kicks off construction for Rajah’s Retreat and Habitat

Moorpark, Calif. (November 19, 2021)—Following a groundbreaking ceremony at America’s Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College on Nov. 16, the Zoo’s big cats, Neil and Karma, are one step closer to living in an approximately 4,000-square-foot habitat complete with a tiger tunnel connecting two large enclosures. The project will also feature a water installation where they can splash and play in front of Zoo guests and glass viewing areas for visitors.

The event commemorated the start of formal construction for Rajah’s Retreat Tiger Exhibit and Habitat, the \$3.5 million sanctuary for the Bengal tigers. Planning began in 2017 when Neil and Karma arrived at the Zoo. Each weighed around 50 pounds; today, Neil and Karma are 375 and 275 pounds, respectively.

“When completed, Rajah’s Retreat will be the embodiment of the dreams of our students, faculty and staff brought to life through the support of our community members and

business partners,” said Moorpark College President Julius Sokenu.

Guests included Ventura County Community College District Board Vice Chair Dianne B. McKay, Trustee Stan Mantooth and Chancellor Greg Gillespie. Other special guests included Grammy-nominated performing artist John Ondrasik (Five for Fighting) and his family and Moorpark College leadership and donors.

“I’ve been to the Zoo countless times over the years and always have been impressed with the caliber of the students and staff. This new exhibit is to be celebrated for how it prioritizes the majestic cats’ quality of life and provides the community with an opportunity to learn about the tigers,” said McKay.

“Growing America’s Teaching Zoo to provide our animals with more naturalistic enclosures is high on our priority list,” added Mara Rodriguez, zoo development coordinator. “Completing the lion exhibit earlier this year and launching the construction of the tiger habitat within months of each other is an indicator that our goals are attainable and that the animals will

continue to thrive under our care.”

Following remarks, the group held a “Golden Shovel” ceremony to acknowledge major gifts from Moorpark College and other donors, as well as the hundreds of contributions from the community who helped fulfill the long-awaited dream of building a retreat for the tigers.

Ondrasik and his wife, Carla, are regular Zoo patrons, and their son attends Moorpark College. In September, the couple hosted “Concert for the Cats” at the college. The live, outdoor concert raised more than \$50,000 for the project, which is expected to be completed in June 2022.

Amador Whittle Architects in Agoura Hills designed the 8,700-square-foot development that will be constructed by the Bedrock Group Inc., La Canada Flintridge.

“The Exotic Animal Training Management program and America’s Teaching Zoo provide wildlife education and model

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animal conservation practices for children and adults. Learning in the new tiger habitat will prepare our students for careers in high-wage, high-skill employment in zoos, wildlife rehabilitation centers and aquariums,” said Sokenu.

For more information about supporting the tigers, America’s Teaching Zoo or questions about visiting the Zoo, go to zoo.moorparkcollege.edu or call (805) 378-1441.

Media Contact:

Mara Rodriguez
mararodriguez@vcccd.edu
805.378.1441

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Thanks To Bailouts, Wall Street Banks Are More Fragile Than Ever

By Doug French Of The Mises Institute

The financial covid crash of 2020 came and went in a month as the US government threw every monetary and fiscal trick it had at the government-imposed flash panic. We'll never know which malinvestments would have been cleansed. We live on with goods and labor shortages and with higher prices, we're assured by experts are transient. Supply chain issues, we're told constantly, with no mention of the Federal Reserve's balance sheet having doubled since the 2020 crash.

In 2008, Hank Paulson was a less, shall we say, flexible Treasury secretary than today's person at the Treasury, Janet Yellen. Sure, Paulson oversaw a \$700 billion Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP) bank bailout. But that amount seemed quaint as I was reminded of it reading *A Colossal Failure of Common Sense: The Inside Story of the Collapse of Lehman Brothers*.

The book, authored by the vice president of distressed debt and convertible securities trading at Lehman Brothers, Larry McDonald, with Patrick Robinson, provides an eyewitness account of the nation's largest bankruptcy, a tripped domino which provided some semblance of an Austrian theory-style malinvestment flushing.

McDonald provides no academic theory, just street-level observation of hubris. He describes Lehman as "24,992 people making dough and 8 losing it." The head man, Dick Fuld, a small man with a big ego, would not take Paulson's advice to sell Lehman Brothers, overloaded with \$120 billion in commercial and residential real estate. The company's property portfolio was contained in "no fewer than twenty-four hundred line items" all encumbered with debt. The Lehman leverage ratio had grown to 44 to 1, only to be outdone by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's 65 to 1 leverage.

Fuld never left the thirty-first floor to visit the troops who not only made the firm money trading on the third and fourth floors but who also knew the real estate jig was up as far back as 2006. Meanwhile, the boss made the mistake of many real estate lenders who believe, during a boom, that earning interest isn't enough. Why not be a developer and make easy profits?

McAllister Ranch was a project, located southwest of Bakersfield, California, owned and to be developed by Lehman. The two-thousand-acre site was to eventually contain six thousand homes surrounding a Greg Norman-designed golf course, boating, fishing, and a fancy beach house. McAllister

Ranch by June 2008 was three square miles of fenced-off sand dunes, weeds, and a half-finished clubhouse. Lehman had sunk

In the meantime, the Korean Development Bank's offer per share shrank from \$23 to \$18 to \$6.40, offers that Fuld reportedly

short supply at Lehman, cash.

Never one to take responsibility, Fuld "blamed intense public scrutiny for causing significant distractions among Lehman's clients, counterparties, and employees," McDonald recalled.

Ultimately, Bank of America and the bank from Korea looked to the Treasury for support to buy Lehman. For whatever his reasons, Paulson didn't blink in the case of Lehman. He saved Merrill Lynch, Bear Stearns, Fannie, Freddie, AIG, and others. Government guarantees totaled \$314 billion. McDonald wrote that JPMorgan Chase was the fourth branch of government, Bank of America the fifth. I would squeeze Goldman Sachs in ahead of those two. But Paulson had no love for Lehman and Fuld.



close to \$2 billion in this debacle.

And then there were the credit default swaps. "The issue is the credit default swaps," Pete Hammack told McDonald said as Lehman failed. "There's \$72 trillion of them out there held by seventeen banks, and Lehman must be sitting on \$7 trillion of them."

An especially enlightening episode was Fuld's meeting with the ex-Goldman Sachs partner Paulson, who had "been one of the driving forces that made that bank the source of so much irrational envy in the mind of Dick Fuld," McDonald writes. Fuld's blind need to grow at any cost was his desire to be bigger than Goldman. Paulson was also personally richer. After the two men dined, Fuld "tried to convince himself and others that the meeting had gone his way."

The meeting had been anything but friendly, with Paulson telling Fuld to sell the 158-year-old Lehman and its assets. "He wanted the place to deleverage in a big hurry, and he all but accused Fuld of dragging his feet." Paulson was annoyed that the highly leveraged Lehman was investing in highly leveraged hedge funds. The Korea Development Bank had a deal for Lehman on the table at \$23 per share and the Treasury secretary thought Fuld should take it rather than accessing the Fed window for taxpayer cash.

"I've been in my seat a lot longer than you were ever in yours at Goldman," Fuld told Paulson. "Don't tell me how to run my company. I'll play ball but at my speed." Lehman's goose was cooked at that dinner, with Paulson thinking Fuld "demonstrated something between arrogance and disrespect."

never took to his board. McDonald chronicles the real drama as Lehman's lenders demanded their lines of credit be collateralized with cash, forcing Fuld to look under every seat cushion for something in

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Accelerating CEO Turnover Expected To Continue Heading Into 2022

By ZeroHedge

CEO turnover has become so pervasive in 2021 that news organizations have given it a name: **It's being dubbed "the great resignation."**

The rotating door of executives this year has come as a result of stressed-out executives who navigated their firms through Covid and a desire for companies to bring on new talent to help with post-Covid business pivots, according to Reuters.

Recruiting firm Heidrick & Struggles conducted a study that showed how CEOs are "not immune to the exhaustion that has swept hundreds of millions of workers worldwide since the onset of the pandemic," Reuters recently reported.

And now, heading into the back end of 2021 and the front end of 2022, the executive

exodus is continuing and is expected to continue.

Jeff Sanders, co-managing partner of Heidrick's global CEO and board practice, said: "Our belief is that it will only accelerate going into next year as people have delayed their retirements." Sanders' study showed 103 CEO appointments in the first half of 2021 versus just 49 CEO changes in the second half of 2020.

"Many CEOs didn't have to travel as much," Sanders said, before noting that virtual communication for many CEOs was still "exhausting."

Despite vaccines acting as a somewhat calming presence that allowed many CEOs to step down, boards were still reluctant to meet with new CEO candidates in person.



Image Courtesy Of ZeroHedge

This could be why 66% of new CEOs were internal candidates, the report said.

Two-Thirds Voter Approval Required For Special Transportation Tax

By David Grau

"In part, Proposition 13 and 218 require two-thirds voter approval of taxes designated for special purposes." - HJTA

In September 2021, Ventura County Transportation Commission, the regional transportation planning agency, began the process of seeking community input "to help develop the Comprehensive Transportation Plan for transportation in Ventura County over the next 30 years."

In October 2021 a "citizens group" surprised Ventura County Transportation Commission by asking that they ignore the Comprehensive Transportation Plan process and instead approve an obsolete version of a \$3.3 billion spending plan

voters had rejected back in 2016.

The hurry by the "citizens group" to approve the obsolete spending plan was intended to speed up the signature-gathering required to place a one-half percent special purpose sales tax initiative on the November 2022 ballot.

The tax would cost Ventura County taxpayers \$70 million per year and would remain in effect forever.

One of the commissioners, Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks, said, it's "shortsighted to raise sales taxes to add more freeway lanes" as recommended by the citizens' group.

The California Constitution prohibits local governments from imposing a special tax without two-thirds voter approval. So, the citizens' group is attempting to exploit a recent court decision that said a simple majority is all that is needed to pass multibillion-dollar special-purpose spending initiatives because "citizens have the constitutional right to tax themselves."

We disagree.

Ventura County Taxpayers Association (VCTA) and Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association assert that under Proposition 13 and 281 this special purpose tax requires a two-thirds voter approval.

David Grau, President of VCTA, asked the commissioners at the October meeting to accept the "citizens group" report and take no action now or in the future.

VCTA read a statement from Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association into the record. We firmly hold, "that any special tax, whether proposed through an initiative petition or the local governing body, requires two-thirds voter approval under (California) Propositions 13 and 218."

Furthermore, "Ventura County is in the Second District Court of Appeal where there is no binding decision on this issue in any general or specific case. Thus, litigation can be expected if a voter initiative special tax receives more than a simple majority but less than two-thirds voter approval."

Importantly "for the citizens' group to proceed with gathering signatures to place the tax measure on the November 2022 ballot, it's required to have an expenditure plan that has been approved

by the commission," said Mark Watkins, the commission's interim executive director.

The Ventura County Transportation



Commission, on a 12-1 vote, decided not to approve the "citizens group" plan and instead agreed to file the presentation, as Ventura County Taxpayers Association had recommended.

If the "citizens group" decides they want to move forward with the \$70 million annual sales tax voter initiative, they will do so with a spending plan the local government agency called "shortsighted" along with the real possibility of litigation for not complying with the requirements of prop 13 and 218.

We thank Ventura County Transportation Commissioners for voting to reject the outdated recommendations of a citizen's special interest group while continuing the thoughtful work of updating the Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the benefit of all of Ventura County.

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Chris Pratt Will Now Voice Morgan Freeman

By The Babylon Bee



(*Note, this article is satirical. The point of this piece is parody and light-hearted satire).

Chris Pratt, beloved voice of Emmett the Lego, Mario, and Garfield, has landed

another big voice acting role, taking on the part of Morgan Freeman. Pratt will provide the voice for anything Morgan Freeman says throughout his day, whether he’s saying hello to his kids, ordering a coffee, or narrating his third documentary of the day. Pratt said he’s excited to bring the character and actual person Morgan Freeman to life. “I’m so happy to land this role. It’s always been a dream of mine to voice Freeman,” he said in a statement. “I’m hoping to really bring this guy to life. He’s a total idol for me, and I hope I can do Freeman justice.” The beloved actor, known for his starring roles in *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Parks & Recreation*, and his incredibly hot body—which is just legendarily amazing; have you

seen those abs? And those delts! The sexist man alive!—is studying hard for the role, shadowing Freeman to see what he does all day. He’s even doing some method acting by spending time in Shawshank Prison, sitting on a cloud and pretending to be God, and living in a Batcave designing odd gadgets. At publishing time, Pratt had also been cast as the voice of Shai-Hulud in *Dune Part 2*, the voice of James Earl Jones, and the voice of Woody in *Toy Story 5*.

Scan here to read the original



‘Impossible To Enforce:’ Big Tobacco Exploiting Loopholes In European Menthol Ban

By Ben Stockton, Laura Margottini, Alessia Cerantola, And Andrei Ciurcanu Of The Bureau Of Investigative Journalism

Tobacco companies are finding loopholes in the Europe-wide menthol cigarette ban in order to keep selling products that can get new, younger smokers hooked on tobacco. Japan Tobacco International (JTI) – which owns Sterling, Benson & Hedges, and Sovereign – has been able to work around a ban imposed in 2020 that was intended to prevent young people from taking up smoking cigarettes. Competitors have called for governments to investigate the company’s new “menthol reimaged” products.

A joint investigation by the Bureau and the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) can reveal new details of how confusion across Europe means that almost 18 months after the ban came into force in the EU and UK, nobody knows for sure whether certain types of cigarettes are covered by the ban. A breach of the ban could potentially be a criminal offense. Previously unreported documents show the tobacco industry attempting to press public health authorities as well as mudslinging between cigarette makers accusing each other of undermining the ban.

Once described by the industry as “good starter products,” menthol cigarettes have a minty taste that is less harsh and easier to inhale, making them appeal to many younger smokers. “The industry is circumventing the menthol ban for fear that otherwise, menthol smokers may quit, and so it can continue to provide products it knows are easier for new young smokers to inhale,” said Deborah Arnott, chief executive of the health charity Action on Smoking and Health. The UK and EU banned cigarettes with a “characterizing menthol flavor” in May 2020. But this category, Arnott said, is “hard to measure and difficult, if not impossible, to enforce.”

JTI said: “We are confident that all JTI products are fully compliant with the law and do not have characterizing flavors.” **The sniff test** Before the ban, one in five UK smokers bought menthols. In the months before the law came into force, the industry launched a number of alternative products. JTI, which is the world’s third-largest tobacco multinational, rebranded some

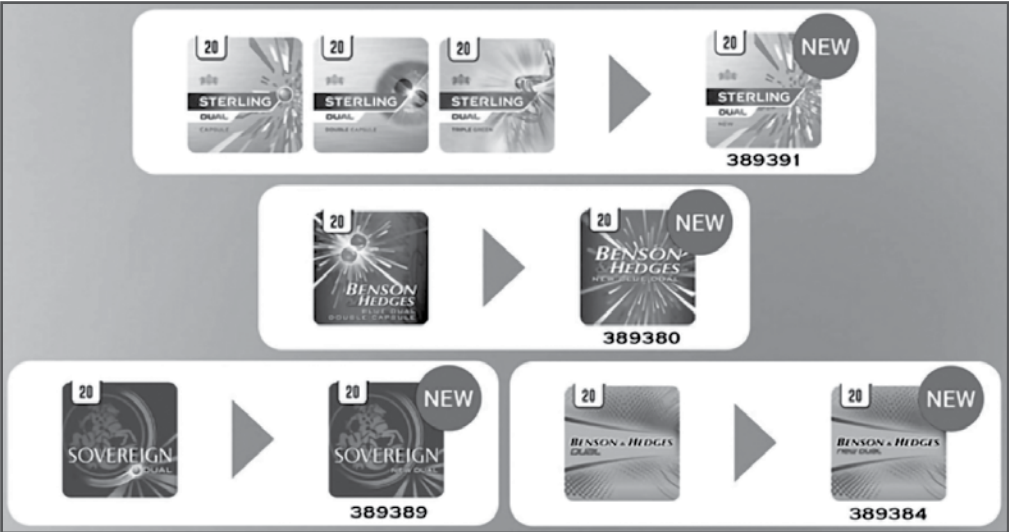
the cigarettes, JTI said that continuing to investigate the products would be in breach of these rules. In the meantime, it has repeatedly stated that it “firmly believes” the blend does not constitute a “characterizing flavor,” the term used in the EU ban. However, in an email to UK Trading Standards last year seen by the Bureau, the company admitted that there was, in fact, no way of knowing. “There is no

by the European Commission. It was established in March, some 10 months after the menthol ban came into force. The solution? A combination of chemical analysis and sniffing. To join the “sensory panel,” applicants had to make it through a rigorous selection process, including a smell test and assessment by a behavioral psychologist. The 34 people selected were then put through a 15-day bootcamp to train them to sniff out menthol cigarettes. A leaked document seen by the Bureau and OCCRP reveals the Swedish government referred 21 varieties of cigarettes owned by JTI to the commission for testing in June 2020. Progress has been slow, partly because it is the first time this procedure has been used, and the testing is ongoing. The EU told the Bureau it would “take further action” against the tobacco companies if they were breaking the menthol ban.

Also in June last year, the UK government announced that Public Health England (PHE) was investigating cigarettes from JTI and possibly other manufacturers for potentially contravening the ban. But EU rules prevented the agency from launching its own testing until the commission’s investigation had concluded or the UK had left the bloc on 31 December.

In September 2021 a PHE spokesperson told the Bureau that testing of “products from a range of manufacturers” including JTI will begin in October and conclude by the end of the year. This will be more than 18 months since the ban came into force. (The investigation has since been taken over by the new Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, after PHE was axed on 1 October).

Scan here to read more



of its menthol cigarettes under its “New Dual” range. Its claim that these cigarettes contained a new blend of tobacco with lower levels of menthol triggered a slew of investigations across Europe. Meet the new box: JTI’s rebranded menthol cigarettes Most of these inquiries have been thwarted by EU rules that prevent multiple member states from investigating the same products at the same time. The first was launched by the Swedish government and, to ensure consistency across the bloc, the EU requires other governments to wait until that investigation is completed before taking any action of their own. Responding to queries from public health agencies across Europe about

mandatory or official testing method that JTI can use to determine whether finished products containing our new blend have a ‘characterizing’ flavor or not,” it said. The term that has led to this confusion was itself proposed by the tobacco industry. A 2007 internal document from the maker of Marlboro cigarettes, Philip Morris International, sets out how the company could respond to the tightening grip of regulation. It suggests the company itself could “propose a ban on ‘characterizing flavors,’” although it added that menthol should be exempt. Although EU member states agreed to the ban in 2016, it took nearly five years for a group of experts to put in place a methodology for assessing flavor approved



A Regional Breakdown Of Millennials Around The World

By MSCI/Visual Capitalist

Eventually, Baby Boomers will cease to be the most influential generation. Of course, it’s bound to happen. But this means that the social, political, and economic terrain will be reshaped for the next several decades to come.

Millennials, defined as those born between 1980 and 1994 (age 27-41 in 2021), are now the largest adult cohort worldwide. They are also the most educated. The big question is, how will this generation influence society?

As millennials get older and gain more earning power, this graphic from MSCI

shows the regional breakdown of millennials around the world and the second-order effects of their rising influence.

Millennials Around the World

Today, there are **1.8 billion** millennials around the world, equal to 23% of the global population.

Here’s how millennials break down by region:

*Totals may not add up due to rounding. Source: Analysis based on the 2019 Revision of World Population Prospects, United Nations (2019)

Asia is unmatched when it comes to millennials. Across the region, there are **1.1 billion millennials**, or 24% of the region’s population. In China, for example, those under 40 own two-thirds of the country’s passports. Millennials and Gen Z are projected to make up **75%** of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) consumers by 2030.

The region of Africa has the second-highest millennial cohort, at **278 million**. Millennials’ control 65% of Africa’s purchasing power through household purchases, valued at \$845 billion.

In North America, millennials are projected to see a 10% increase in spending by 2025. But while previous generations began having children at this age, fewer millennials are becoming parents. One in three U.S. millennials lives with their spouse and a child, compared to 40% for Gen X.

Educational levels and job security are two factors that can help explain this trend. In one survey, over 50% of U.S. millennials were concerned about employment prospects in the future.

Most Educated Generation, Ever

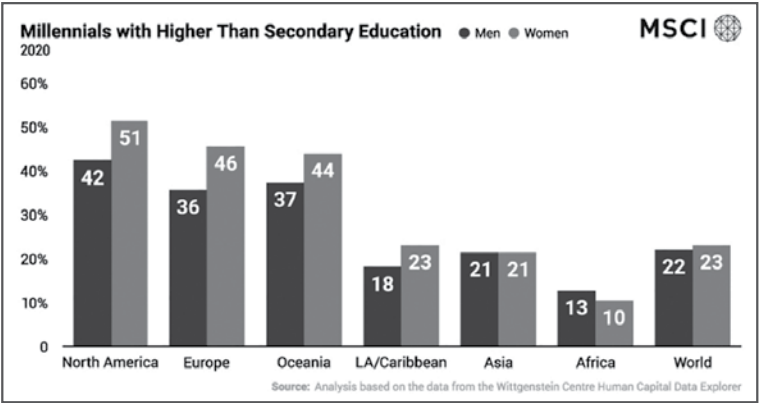
The millennial generation is the most educated in history. What’s more, educational levels of women outpaces men

across nearly all regions for the first time. This pattern suggests that women could play a more concrete role in everything from politics, grassroots movements, business, and public discourse as evidenced by historical trends.

Then and Now

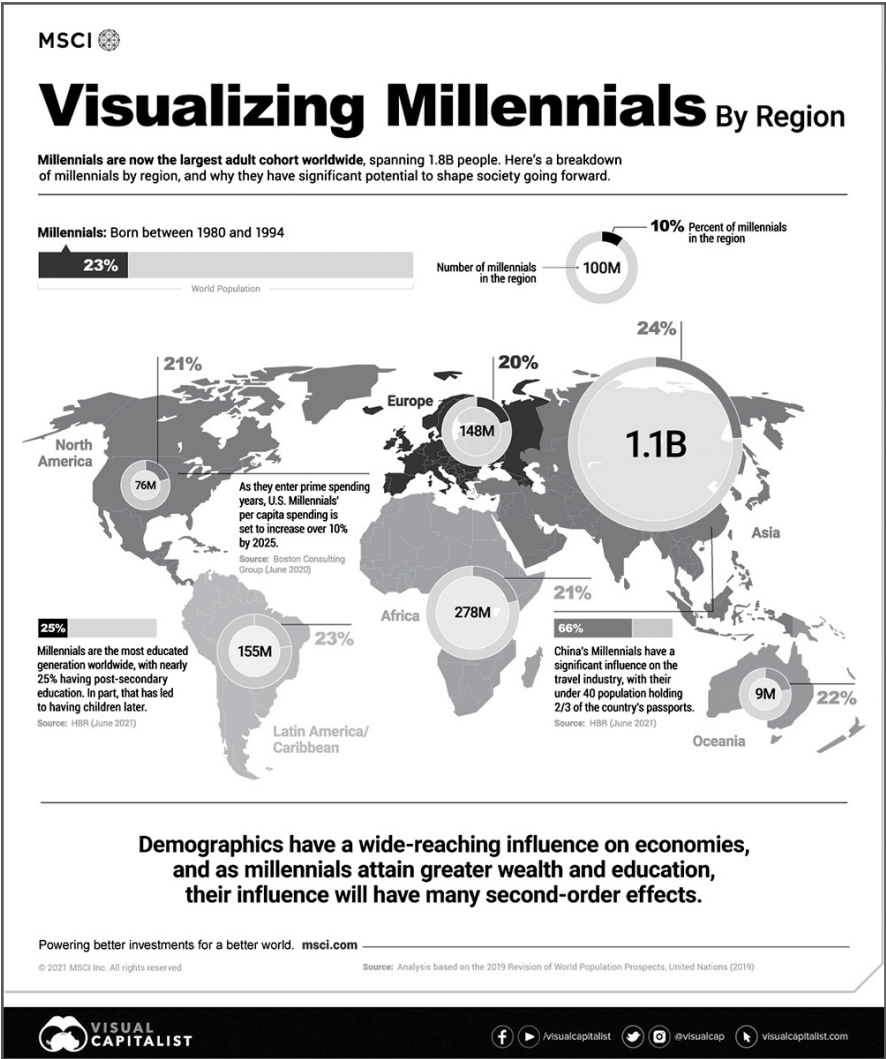
Demographic forces have a powerful effect on society. One prime example is the shifting dialogue in financial markets. Investors are placing a greater focus on sustainable practices,

Region	Millennials % of Region Population	Number
Asia	24%	1.1B
Africa	21%	278M
Latin America/Caribbean	23%	155M
Europe	20%	148M
North America	21%	76M
Oceania	22%	9M
World	23%	1.8B



with alternative energy innovations and solutions gaining serious traction. At the same time, **40%** of new investors in 2020 were aged 30-44.

As social dialogue changes so do investing choices. This presents a critical opportunity for businesses and asset managers, who may consider adapting as demographics change.



Dear Miss Get Real

By Doc Lovelace

Dear Doc Lovelace,

I think my boyfriend has a serious porn problem. We’ve been together for three years, and when we first started dating, you couldn’t keep us away from each other. The sexual tension between us was immediate and magnetic. At the beginning of our relationship, I asked him if he watched porn, and after dancing around the question, he eventually danced up to it and said that he did. I told him that I didn’t care if watched that stuff as long as it didn’t come between us. Fast-forward a few years, and one of my girlfriends told me that when she started dating her new boyfriend, at that time, that he had to either stop watching porn or she wouldn’t date him. I thought it seemed overdramatic, but he did what she said, and they’ve been happy ever since. Over the past few months, I’ve noticed that my boyfriend has been spending a lot of time watching pornography and, um, pleasuring himself to it... like a lot. He confessed to me that he was watching 2-3 hours of it several nights a week. Meanwhile, we’ve

been doing stuff a lot less. We still do it, but it’s not like how it used to be, and it’s a lot less frequent. I’ve kind of given him an ultimatum about it, but that hasn’t stopped him from watching, and I haven’t really put my foot down about it. It’s made me feel less confident about myself, and I’m not sure what to do. What do you think I should do?

Dear Get Real,

Don’t “think” he has a porn problem. “KNOW” that he has a porn problem. Porn addiction refers to a person becoming emotionally dependent on pornography to the point that it interferes with their daily life, “relationships,” and ability to function.

This is something that can definitely get worse with time. He should seek therapy. You should cut and run. Don’t waste another minute feeling insecure while pornboy plays with his ding-a-ling.

If you have to stay with him, ask yourself this; “Is this the guy that I want to

spend the rest of my life with? ” “Do I want HIM to be the father of my children?” “Does this man make me happy?” “Am I proud to be with this man?”

The answer is NO. NO. NO. NO!

You can stay and he can promise to stop, and then he’ll just sneak around with his laptop and God knows what else he’ll do. You can hang in while he goes to a shrink, but there will always be that “thing” in your head and his.

There are plenty of fish in the sea, grab your hook, line, and sinker and catch a decent guy that loves and respects you. A real man, not some loser that lives in fantasy land.

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Having a relationship issue?
Is your significant other causing you problems?
Doc Lovelace can help.

If you have a question, relationship situation, or if you’re seeking advice, please send an email to DocLovelaceUCast@gmail.com

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

You deserve better!

Good luck!
Doc Lovelace



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How ProPublica Used Genomic Sequencing Data To Track An Ongoing Salmonella Outbreak

By Irena Hwang Of ProPublica

For a ProPublica reporter who did Ph.D. work in bioinformatics, data on bacterial DNA helped reveal how a once-rare salmonella strain spread through the chicken industry. Salmonella infantis is multidrug-resistant and is still making people sick.

Recently, ProPublica published an investigation documenting the failures in the U.S. food safety system that allowed the spread of a type of salmonella known as multidrug-resistant infantis. The bacteria has sickened tens of thousands of people, but outdated government policies and pushback from trade groups have left federal agencies with little power to stop infantis from spreading through the poultry industry.

Our reporting relied on public records requests and dozens of interviews, the bread and butter of journalism. But I also made use of a type of data ProPublica has never before tapped into – publicly available genomic sequencing data.

Before I became a data journalist, I was a doctoral student in electrical engineering. Most of my research was in bioinformatics – the analysis and interpretation of genetic data – and for seven years, culturing bacteria, purifying nucleic acids, and writing code to analyze sequencing data were my bread and butter.

America’s Food Safety System Failed to Stop a Salmonella Epidemic. It’s Still Making People Sick.

When my ProPublica colleagues Michael Grabell and Bernice Yeung approached me with questions about genomic sequencing data, I was all ears. They explained that they were digging into a salmonella outbreak investigation that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had closed in 2019, albeit with a warning that “illnesses could

continue because this salmonella strain appears to be widespread in the chicken industry.”

Health officials hadn’t said anything to consumers about the outbreak since then. Bernice and Michael wanted to know if there was a way to track the strain to see if the outbreak was still going on. If the ultimate goal of foodborne illness investigations is to identify and address the source of an outbreak, why had the CDC closed this investigation without finding the cause and while people were still getting sick?

Several experts explained the investigation hadn’t found clear links to any particular

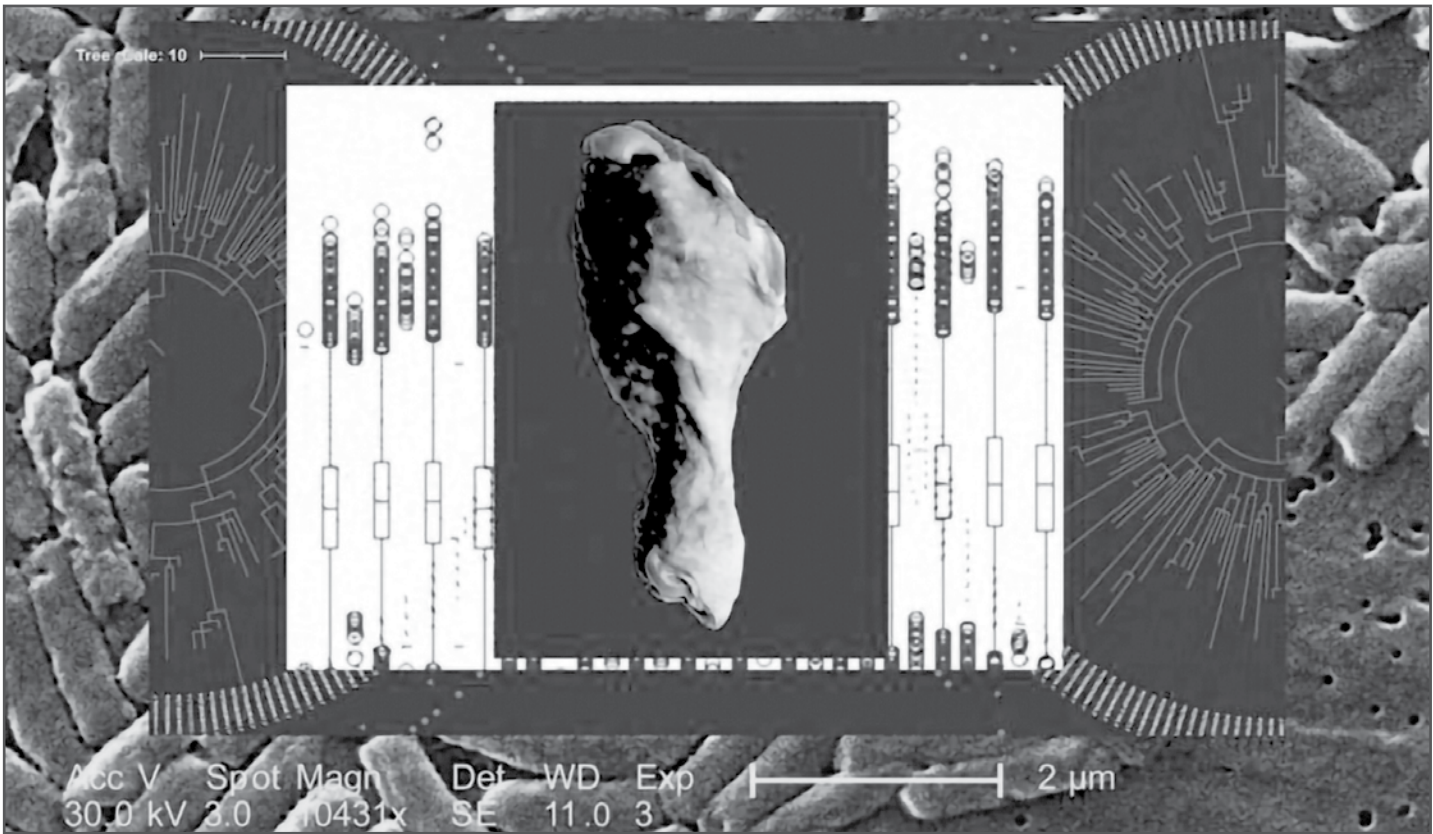
NCBI analyzes data in real time, and the results are monitored by public health agencies, including the CDC and food safety regulators.

We thought we could use the same information to figure out whether multidrug-resistant salmonella infantis is still out there – and if so, why.

weren’t officially documented as part of the outbreak – tell us about infantis? Was it possible that the outbreak never ended, and remained just as rampant as before the CDC closed its investigation? Or maybe this outbreak was challenging the very definition of what an outbreak has always been thought to be?

Look Up the Salmonella Rates Where Your Poultry Was Processed

The NCBI data alone wouldn’t tell us. The database is stripped of key details, like the poultry plant where a salmonella sample was taken or when and where a patient got



product, brand, or food processing plant. But they also mentioned something that would turn out to provide a crucial map for tracking the outbreak’s path. The federal government was compiling data about foodborne illnesses through a system called the Pathogen Detection project. It’s run by the National Center for Biotechnology Information, or NCBI, part of the National Institutes of Health, and it integrates data about bacterial pathogens taken from samples of food, the environment, and human patients. The

The Infantis Chronicles

So, Michael and Bernice started poking around the NCBI database. It was, as promised, a bonanza of bacterial detail. After talking to sources and digging into the scientific literature, they found a unique identifier code that yielded a “cluster” of more than 8,000 salmonella infantis samples, including nearly all of the 300 samples that were designated as part of the outbreak. But some terms were hard for them to decipher, like “phylogenetic trees” or “single-nucleotide polymorphisms.”

Turns out, these are attributes derived from genomic sequencing data, the type of data I worked with during my doctoral studies. Though my background isn’t specifically in bacterial genetics (much less this particular strain of salmonella), I knew enough to let me start digging into these details.

From reviewing the NCBI database’s documentation, reading academic papers, and talking to scientists, I learned that samples are assigned to the cluster based on genetic similarity. But if this is true, what could the other bacterial samples in the cluster – about 7,700 samples that

sick, a shortcoming that industry scientists and consumer advocates have complained about. This is where public records proved vital. Michael and Bernice, along with Mollie Simon on our research team, filed dozens of public records requests with the CDC, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state public health agencies that had worked on the infantis outbreak. Through those requests, we obtained records from the USDA’s microbiological sampling program that revealed how often different types of salmonella were being found at which poultry plants. We also obtained epidemiological information about patients who had been part of the outbreak, including the date they’d been tested for salmonella, details about their illness, and recent food consumption. The records didn’t include patients’ names, of course, but we could match both of the datasets we’d obtained to the sequencing data available on the NCBI database.

The USDA sampling data also allowed ProPublica to create an online tool that consumers could use to check the salmonella records of the plants that process their chicken and turkey.

As we pored over the data and public





records, we learned about how the CDC has analyzed DNA to connect food poisoning cases. From the 1990s to just around the time of the infantis outbreak, investigators used a technique called pulsed-field gel electrophoresis, or PFGE.

The difference between PFGE and sequencing data was crucial to this outbreak and our investigation.

PFGE Is Dead. Long Live WGS.

When a patient shows up at the hospital with symptoms of foodborne illness, a stool or urine sample may be taken. Then, DNA from bacteria found in the sample can be extracted in a lab.

A DNA sequence can be thought of as a huge compound word spelled with only four possible molecular “letters,” or nucleotide bases. PFGE uses a special protein to cut up DNA into smaller sections — imagine breaking up a giant compound word into chunks of words. Then, an electric field is applied, and the segments of cut-up DNA will rearrange based on their weight, resulting in a visible barcode-like pattern.

Scientists can compare PFGE patterns to make informed guesses about how closely related pathogens are to one another. The more similar their PFGE patterns, the more similar their underlying DNA must have been. For years, including the time covered by the infantis investigation, PFGE patterns were used to define outbreak strains.

But in the early 2000s, new technology called next-generation sequencing made it possible to relatively quickly get a readout of the full sequence of nucleotide bases in a DNA sample, a process called whole-genome sequencing, or WGS. Individuals are distinguished by the tiniest differences in the genes we share, but that is beyond the abilities of PFGE. Whole-genome sequencing, though, can reveal the unique “spellings” of our DNA that differentiate you from me — or one strain of a pathogen from another.

Sequencing data is the backbone of the NCBI Pathogen Detection project. NCBI groups genetically similar samples into clusters and then compares each sequence, nucleotide base by nucleotide base, to the other sequences in the cluster.

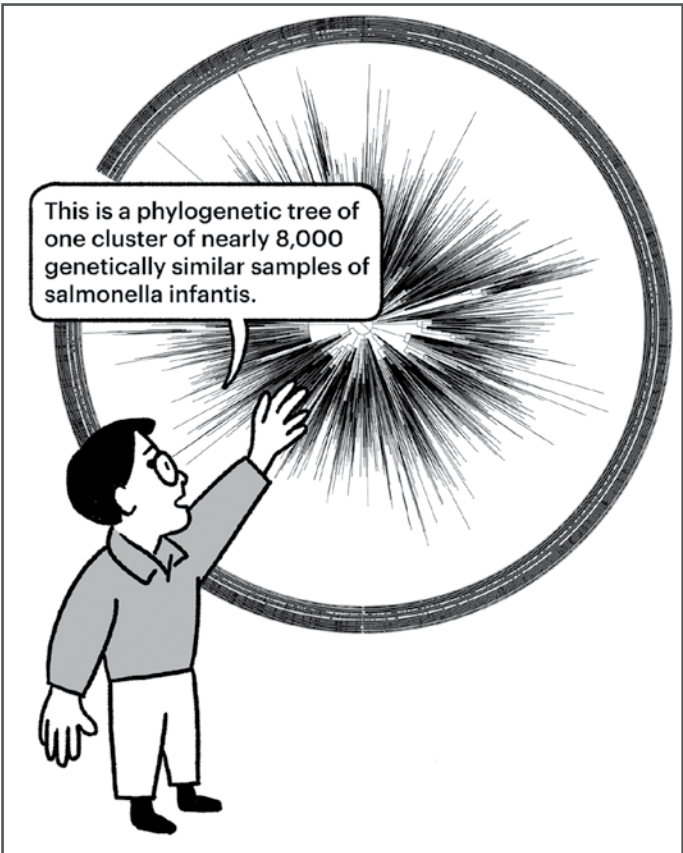
For each cluster of samples, NCBI also creates a phylogenetic tree, an evolutionary biologist’s version of your Aunt Sue’s hand-

drawn family tree.

But phylogenetic trees that are drawn based on hypothetical common ancestors, like NCBI’s, are interpreted differently than known family trees. Genetic changes occur by evolution, but also by chance. In the case of humans, millions of unrelated strangers might have a particular gene that gives rise to a particular disease, but that’s different from knowing that I inherited that gene directly from my parents. It’s largely the same for bacteria like salmonella.

So I wondered: What could the tree for this infantis cluster tell us about how closely related the outbreak samples were to the thousands of more recent food and patient samples in the same cluster?

No Silver Bullet



To find out, I freed up 100 gigabytes on my work laptop and asked my editors for 50 euros. The hard-drive space was for comparing approximately 32 million pairs of samples from the NCBI data, and the euros were for phylogenetic visualization software created by researchers in Germany.

By comparing the bacteria samples found in USDA tests to the outbreak samples, I found that more than twice a day this year, on average, the agency has been finding drug-resistant infantis in chickens destined for supermarkets and restaurants that’s genetically similar to the outbreak strain. We also confirmed that the CDC is

still receiving reports of infantis infections — as recently as last week.

This finding highlights the power of WGS databases like NCBI’s to help investigators draw connections between human illness and foods they may have eaten. Thanks to WGS, public health officials have discovered that certain foods, like raw flour and peaches, were vectors for outbreaks of foodborne illnesses, even though they had rarely been linked to a particular bug. Sequencing data has even helped solve cases that had long gone cold, like a sprinkling of food poisoning cases linked to ice cream that were finally connected after half a decade.

But WGS is no silver bullet. Even a seemingly “perfect” DNA match in NCBI cannot conclusively identify the specific culprit behind a foodborne illness. Bacteria accumulate changes in DNA relatively rapidly and have an annoying habit of swapping genes like Pokémon cards. Bacterial samples might share the same set of genes and mutations because they came from the same source, or they might have acquired them independently under completely different circumstances. So a genetic match between a food and human sample must be corroborated with epidemiological proof to make sure it fits in the outbreak timeline and matches a theorized source of the outbreak.

I’d hoped that visualizing the outbreak samples on a phylogenetic tree would reveal insights about the more recent infantis samples versus the ones collected during the outbreak. Perhaps there would be patterns in the tree showing that newer samples shared more genetic similarities than the outbreak samples did. Or that certain outbreak samples had spawned mini-outbreaks of their own. Instead, the visualization software showed that, evolutionarily speaking, the outbreak samples were all over the place: They couldn’t be tracked back to one particular source.

We shared our findings with numerous experts, including former and current CDC researchers and food safety scientists. They agreed that our analysis indicated something very different from the traditional foodborne illness outbreak that can be traced back to a definitive single source. What we’ve been looking at, they said, is indicative of a bug that’s so deeply entrenched in the poultry supply chain that

it’s hard to figure out where it came from.

A New Landscape of Bacterial Foodborne Illness

The closure of the infantis investigation without any conclusions about the outbreak’s origins is, it appears, a harbinger. Similarities in genetic data are linking seemingly unrelated cases of



people getting sick in different states and consuming different products. At a USDA meeting on salmonella last year, Robert Tauxe, director of the CDC’s Division of Foodborne, Waterborne and Environmental Diseases, described a “new landscape” of foodborne illnesses revealed by WGS: strains that cause recurring outbreaks, that were newly emerging and that persist in a population from year to year.

The very definition of what constitutes an outbreak is in question, experts told US.

Scientists are beginning to answer that question with sequencing data and are piecing together how bacteria are taking advantage of our interconnected food supply chains. A 2015 study on salmonella in fish products destined for sushi in restaurants and grocery stores identified certain countries in the global tuna supply chain where salmonella contamination is more likely to occur.

“Public health agencies,” wrote the authors, “could use this information to determine most effective intervention points to minimize or eliminate outbreak risk.”



Scan here to read more



Christmas Trivia Questions

By Conversation Starters World

1. What Christian group banned Christmas in Boston from 1659 to 1681?

The Puritans

Even though the ban on Christmas was lifted in 1681, Christmas didn't become popular in Boston until the mid-19th century. Puritans also suppressed Christmas in England as well during the Interregnum.

2. Before getting lumped in with Christmas, what was Yule?

A pagan midwinter festival

It was celebrated by Germanic peoples and was connected to Norse mythology. With Odin being the Yule Father who led the Wild Hunt across the sky. Yuletide is about two months long and falls roughly mid-November to early January. In the middle of Yuletide is Yule.

As a fun side note, jolly most likely has its origins in Yule.

origin for the date for Christmas was the Roman feast day Sol Invictus which was also on December 25th. And others insist that the date of conception was the basis for choosing December 25th as the day when Jesus was born. But really what it all boils down to is that there is a lot of controversy on how December 25th was chosen as the date for Christmas.

5. Among Christians who lived in the East, when was Christmas originally celebrated?

January 6th

In the West, Christmas was always celebrated on December 25th. Now, except for a select few, like the Armenian Church, almost everyone who celebrates Christmas does so on December 25th.

6. In what century was the first written use of Xmas?

The 16th century

The "X" in Xmas comes from the Greek letter Chi which looks like an "X". The letter "X" has long been used as an abbreviation for Christ since the Greek word for Christ begins with

what looks like an "X". Christ was often written with the letters Chi (X) Rho (p) which looks like Xp.

7. The modern Santa Claus is mainly a mix of what two figures?

Saint Nicholas (Sinterklaas in dutch) and Father Christmas

St. Nicholas was a Greek bishop who lived in the 4th century and was famous for his generosity and gift-giving. Sinterklaas (Dutch for St. Nicholas) gives gifts on December 5th and is based on St. Nicholas. Father Christmas dates back to at least the 16th century and is the personification of Christmas cheer and is widely considered synonymous with the modern Santa Claus.

And for good measure, there might be some Odin thrown in, especially with the tradition of Santa's long beard. And there is Santa's nightly ride, which is pretty similar to Odin's Wild Hunt. But while it doesn't take much of a leap to make comparisons between Odin and Santa, there's not a lot of direct evidence linking them.

There are lots of other gift-giving figures



around Europe and elsewhere, but as far as I can tell, Father Christmas and Saint Nicholas are the main influences behind Santa Claus as we know him today.

8. What political cartoonist is largely responsible for defining what the modern Santa Claus looks like?

Thomas Nast

Thomas Nast drew a picture of Santa Claus for the January 1, 1881 issue of Harper's

Weekly, and the rest of the media ran with it. It became the visual prototype of the Santa Claus we all know and love. He also drew an earlier version of Santa Claus in the January 3, 1863 issue of Harper's Weekly but it doesn't resemble the modern Santa as much as his 1881 drawing.



Scan here to read more



3. The French word "Noel" is often used around Christmas, but what was its original meaning in Latin?

Birth

You can definitely see why Noel became so synonymous with Christmas!

4. What Roman holiday held from December 17th to the 23rd had a large influence on how Christmas was celebrated?

Saturnalia

Saturnalia was one of the most popular holidays in the Roman calendar. It of course involved lots of feasts and drinking and merry-making. Because, well, they're Roman. But it also involved role reversals where slaves were allowed to be rude to their owners and by some accounts were waited on by their owners. Also, similarly to our modern Christmas, there was lots of gift-giving. Especially on December 19th, Sigillaria.

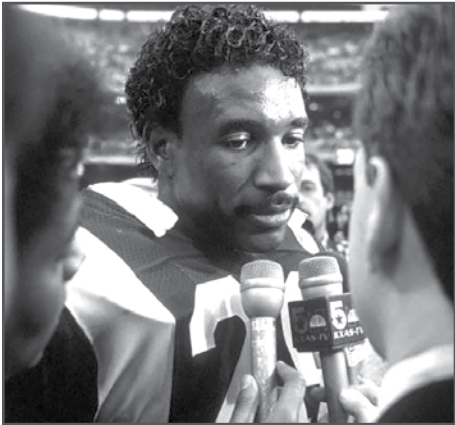
Even though the timing is similar, it isn't believed that December 25th was chosen as the date for Christmas because of Saturnalia. Some people believe that the





This Month In Sports History: December

By Andrew Bernstein (The Official Photographer For The NBA), And Veronica An



Today in Sports History: December 9

On December 9, 1984, LA Rams legend Eric Dickerson broke OJ Simpson’s single-season rushing record of 2,003 yards with a 215-yard performance against the Houston Oilers. Dickerson would finish the season with 2,105 yards. Dickerson was one of the greatest running backs of all time, finishing his career with five first-team All-Pro selections and leading the NFL in rushing yards four times. He was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1999.



Today in Sports History: December 12

On December 12, 1996, the Florida Marlins signed former outfielder Moises Alou from the Montreal Expos as part of an offseason

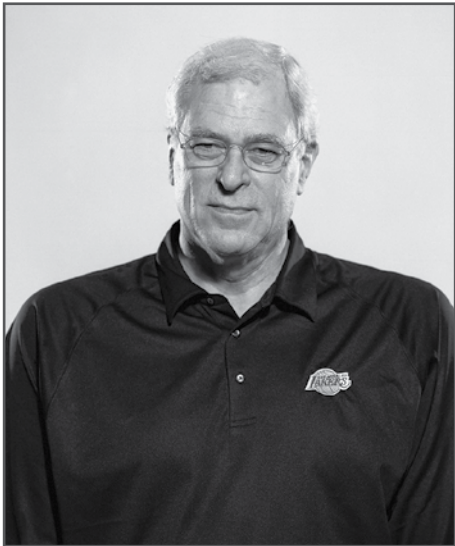
where they went for it all—and won the World Series in 1997. During the 1997 season, Alou led the Marlins in batting average, home runs, and RBI, earning an All-Star selection and a 10th place finish in MVP voting. Alou helped lead the Marlins to a wild card berth, and once in the playoffs, they made an unbelievable run en route to winning the World Series to become the first wild card team to win the World Series. After the season, Alou, along with many of the other top players on the Marlins they signed in the previous offseason, were traded away.



Today in Sports History: December 18

In 1988 the Seattle Seahawks won their first-ever division title with a 9-7 record, after a disappointing loss to the New York Jets they ended second in the AFC West. The franchise has come a long way since then. The team won three NFC conference championships in 2006, 2014, and 2015. The Seahawks entered the 2013-14 season at 17-2 odds to win the Super Bowl. The Seahawks put up a dominant performance in Super Bowl XLVIII, defeating the Denver Broncos 43-8. Seahawks linebacker Malcolm Smith, who returned an interception 69 yards for a

touchdown, recovered a fumble, and made nine tackles, was named Super Bowl MVP.



Today in Sports History: December 23

On December 23, 1997, legendary coach Phil Jackson won his 500th game and became the fastest NBA coach to reach this milestone, in 682 games. Jackson is considered one of the best coaches of all time, holding a record for most NBA championships by a head coach with 11 – 6 with the Chicago Bulls and Michael Jordan, and 5 with the Los Angeles Lakers and Shaq and Kobe. Jackson was a no-doubt Hall of Famer, inducted in 2007 as a coach, and has the highest winning percentage of any Hall of Fame coach, with a winning percentage over .500 every season he coached.

Today in Sports History: December 27

In 1981, Edmonton Oilers player Wayne Gretzky became the fastest NHL player to score 100 career points. He reached the milestone in just 38 games. Gretzky

nicknamed “The Great One” led an unparalleled 20-year career in the NHL. He was never the biggest, strongest, or fastest, but his intelligence and feel for the game were unmatched. Gretzky was great at dodging checks and consistently anticipated where the puck was going to be. He executed plays with perfection and his favorite area to set up was behind the opponent’s net, an area nicknamed “Gretzky’s office.” Gretzky currently maintains 60 official records in the NHL even though he retired in 1999. In the regular season, Gretzky’s records include most career regular-season goals (894), assists (1,963), points (2,857), and hat-tricks (50). In the playoffs, he holds records for most goals (122), assists (260), points (382), hat-tricks (10), and game-winning goals (24). Gretzky has won four Stanley Cup rings with the Oilers, and he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1999.



The Lakers Need Russell Westbrook To Be Russell Westbrook

By Dustin Brewer

When the Lakers made the huge trade at the 11th hour to bring Russell Westbrook to the team, some fans weren’t thrilled. Up until the blockbuster was announced, the Lakers were basically a few crossed t’s and dotted i’s away from landing Buddy Hield, disgruntled on the Kings and one of the league’s top three-point shooters.

While Hield would likely have been a better fit with this team as it’s constructed, the trade for Westbrook makes perfect sense: land a superstar player that can keep the team afloat if Anthony Davis or LeBron James miss games for rest or injury concerns. While both AD and LeBron have already missed games, Westbrook hasn’t quite lived up to his end of the bargain, playing with the relentless energy he’s known for but not scoring at an efficient level and turning the ball over at a blistering pace.

For the Lakers to truly assume their presumptive status as the West’s top threat for the NBA Championship, a lot depends



on Westbrook settling in with his new team and adjusting to what playing along LeBron James means for his game.

Love him or hate him, Russell Westbrook has always been a player that will always leave it all out there on the court. His passion is impossible to ignore and it’s the key to his game. It’s only a few weeks into the new season and acclimating with this level of star power will take some time but this Westbrook doesn’t quite feel right. The turnovers are high, the shot efficiency is down,

and Russ just doesn’t seem like the runaway basketball freight train he’s been the rest of his career.

Teams have been flexible in the past to jump start Russ, specifically the Rockets trading away their only center on the roster to allow Russ to run the show and get to the rim at will. The Lakers won’t be able to give him that luxury and that is going to make his transition a bit harder compared to previous seasons. That doesn’t mean he can’t figure it out, it just means this team may not be the overall #1 seed that everyone had penciled in the moment the trade became official.

Watching this Lakers roster get healthy (Trevor Ariza and Kendrick Nunn have yet to play a game for the team this season) and continue to work to build that chemistry will be a fascinating blend of strengths, tendencies, and personalities. Russell Westbrook will be right at the center of this basketball science experiment, which is exactly where he likes to be.



Beware: Scammers Using Google Ads To Steal Cryptocurrencies

By Saman Iqbal Of Insider Paper

Scammers are using Google Ads to steal cryptocurrencies, which is a new type of crypto fraud that investors should be aware of. Over \$500,000 in cryptocurrency was stolen in a matter of days just this past weekend.

According to a Check Point Research (CPR) report, scammers are placing ads at the top of Google Search that look like popular wallet brands like Phantom and MetaMask in order to trick users into giving up their wallets’ passcode and private key.

“In a matter of days, we witnessed the theft of hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of crypto. We estimate that over \$500k worth of crypto was stolen this past weekend alone,” Oded Vanunu, Head

of Products Vulnerabilities Research at Check Point, said in a statement.

“I believe we’re at the advent of a new cybercrime trend, where scammers will use Google Search as a primary attack vector to reach crypto wallets, instead of traditionally

phishing through email,” Vanunu warned.

Scammers enticed their victims by placing Google Ads at the top of Google Search that imitated popular wallets and platforms like Phantom App, MetaMask, and Pancake Swap.

Each advertisement included a malicious link that, when clicked, took the victim to a phishing website that mimicked the brand and messaging of the original wallet website.

From there, the scammers duped their victims into disclosing their wallet passwords, laying the groundwork for wallet theft.

Traditionally, phishing campaigns start with emails.

Multiple scamming groups are now bidding for wallet-related keywords on Google Ads, using Google Search as an attack

vector to target victims’ crypto wallets, according to the report.

The crypto industry in India claims over 10 crore users and over Rs 6 lakh crore in investment, making it a major asset class.



Is There A Fungus Among Us?

By Antarra Belcher

When most people think of fungus they think of mold or wild mushrooms in some faraway mystical forest. But what if there was a fungus within your body as well as on your skin that is ever-present? That exists in lesser amounts but is always looking for an opportunity to take over your body? This may sound like the start of a cringy horror film, but I can assure you that this is a very natural occurrence that happens daily, for all of us, and no one can escape it.

Candida is the name of this fungi, and it is under the genus as a yeast. It lives in tiny amounts in your intestines, inside of your mouth, as well as on your skin. In the era of Covid-19, we are being given warnings daily to use hand sanitizer and anti-bacterial soaps numerous times a day because bacteria are dangerous. This is an unfortunate fact, as there are both bad and healthy bacteria on the inside and outside of the body. In fact, the only thing keeping Candida overgrowth in check is the beneficial bacteria that also reside in your intestines, mouth, and on your epidermis. Just as most things in nature are meant to be in balance, the ratio of fungi to bacteria is no exception. When an individual has too much Candida inside or outside of their body it can wreak havoc and lead to Candidiasis.

Other than the killing off of beneficial bacteria, what else causes Candida to run

rampant in an individual? The main culprits are Antibiotics, Birth Control Pills, Cancer Treatment, Diabetes, Oral Corticosteroids, and a Weakened Immune System. Many things can go haywire in a body that is overwhelmed by Candidiasis such as, Oral Thrush, Fatigue, UTI’s, Joint Pain, as well as Skin and Nail infections; so be on the lookout if you are experiencing any of these symptoms. Also, chronic sinus infections can be caused by candida and not a bacterial infection so be wise in choosing your treatment plan. Lastly, digestion issues are very prevalent when it comes to a Candida overgrowth ranging from bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhea, all the way to more serious conditions such as Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis.

There is a quick and free test you can do at home to see if you have a Candida Overgrowth. Upon waking up, before eating, drinking, or brushing, fill a transparent glass with water and spit it into the glass. If the saliva remains floating on the top of the water, your Candida is **not out** of control, but if it begins to form lines resembling a jellyfish that then sink, you may have Candidiasis.

So, you may wonder, what can be done to destroy these excess fungi? This may sound harsh, but you starve it to death. Primarily eat non-starchy vegetables and meats and cut out sugar and processed foods.





Manga Publisher Wants To Sue Huge Piracy Network, Needs Google’s Help

By Andy Maxwell Of Torrent Freak

Tokyo-based manga publisher Shueisha has filed an application at a court in the US seeking help from Google and Hurricane Electric to identify alleged copyright infringers. Central to the case is Mangabank, a massive manga indexing platform servicing around 80 million visits per month.

With a fanatical audience that now reaches beyond Japan and around the globe, demand for manga and anime content is soaring. Publishers would prefer fans to go legit but in common with any premium content, there are those who prefer not to pay.

This has led to companies such as Shueisha, Kadowaka, Kodansha, and Shogakukan taking legal action to shut down or disrupt piracy platforms, hoping to send a deterrent message to site operators and consumers of pirated content alike.

This type of legal action generally only becomes public after a complaint is filed but a request filed by Shueisha in the United States effectively provides advance warning of an incoming lawsuit.

Shueisha is Extremely Keen to Identify Pirates

A San Francisco law firm acting for Shueisha has filed an ex parte application at a California district court for an order permitting discovery of information for use in a foreign proceeding (28 U.S. Code § 1782).

It appears that Shueisha’s targets are a number of ‘pirate websites’ (ssl.axax.cloud, ssl.advx.cloud, ssl.akxx.net, ssl.sdox.cc, ssl.standardcdn.net, ssl.lsh.buzz, ssl.appx.buzz, ssl.asiax.cloud, ssl.appsx.cloud) from where an “extensive amount” of its copyrighted works are being distributed without permission.

Testing these URLs directly bears little fruit but according to Shueisha, they all have something in common – connections to Mangabank.org – which appears to operate as a search/indexing site. This platform is insanely popular and according to SimilarWeb stats enjoys more than 81 million visits per month, making it Japan’s 44th most popular site overall.

“[Mangabank.org] is written in Japanese and invites viewers to search infringing material by titles, authors, and other keywords, seemingly catered to Japanese language viewers. The Infringing Websites [those listed above] were likely to be used to store the infringing copies so that they can reduce the traffic of the Main Infringing Website and make it more accessible,” Shueisha notes.

DMCA Subpoena Against Cloudflare

Before filing the request, the publisher attempted to obtain information about the sites’ operators from Cloudflare using a DMCA subpoena. The personal information handed over did not prove useful in

identifying anyone in particular but Cloudflare provided other details that allowed Shueisha to pick up leads.

For example, the domains sdocast.com and sdo.com.tw were used by the alleged pirates after being supplied by Hurricane Electric. According to MX records, the pirates also used services provided by Google, including a specific Gmail address and AdSense account.

IP addresses produced by Cloudflare led back to China but that is problematic. It is not possible to request personal information from Chinese ISPs based on copyright infringement claims. That is not a problem in the United States, however.

Discovery Request to Assist Proceeding Outside US

In its application, Shueisha requests that the “witnesses” (Google and Hurricane Electric) hand over information held in the alleged pirates’ respective accounts so it can track them down. The publisher seeks names, physical addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, and the IP addresses used when the site operator[s] created and accessed their accounts.

“Applicant intends to bring a lawsuit in Japan or potentially in China against the person associated with the Witnesses’ accounts in question as soon as the person’s identity has been ascertained through the discovery sought by this application,” the application reveals.

Shueisha believes that the requested discovery is “narrowly tailored” and limits discovery to materials related to the accounts held at Google and Hurricane Electric that were used by the alleged infringers to breach the publisher’s rights.

Shueisha’s Plan If Discovery Doesn’t Help Identification

Given that false information was provided to Cloudflare, Shueisha believes contact information held at Google and Hurricane Electric may prove equally useless. As a result, Shueisha says it needs to obtain access logs showing the times and dates the alleged infringers accessed their accounts along with relevant IP addresses.

At the time of writing the court hasn’t yet signed off on the request but whatever happens, Shueisha seems very determined



to find out who these infringers are. The company suggests it is planning a civil lawsuit but for more than a year, criminal

penalties have been available too, even for those who only link to pirated content.

WEIRD & WACKY NEWS

By Chris Carnicelli

From around the corner, down the street, and up your alley, here are some stories that are hitting the headlines... and they’re all TRUE!!

Dateline: New York City

I may not know art, but this ain’t it! “*The New York Earth Room*,” a work of art created in 1977 by artist Walter DeMaria, consists of a second-floor apartment at 141 Wooster St. in NYC that is filled with... dirt. That’s right. Dirt. Just dirt. Admission is free to view the 250 cubic yards of soil, but people are not allowed to take photographs or touch the dirt. This oddity welcomes up to 100 visitors a day. Cats are not allowed for obvious reasons.



Dateline: The United Kingdom

Geez, this show has gone to the dogs! Scientists say one out of six dogs suffers from some kind of anxiety. But canines in the U.K. are in for some psychological relief with their own television station! Launched Nov. 8, *DogTV* will air shows to help pooches “feel relaxed and comforted until their owners return home,” said Professor Nicholas Dodman, the chief scientist for *DogTV*. Lassie, Rin Tin Tin, and Clifford were unavailable for comment.

Dateline: Bangkok, Thailand

Rage issues. A 34-year-old Thai woman who lives in a high-rise condo building was apparently very unhappy about some painters outside her building. One of the

painters, a man named Song, said he and his co-worker had lowered themselves from the 32nd floor to repair some cracks when he felt something. He looked down and saw a woman leaning out of her window and cutting their support ropes!! The workers were saved by another apartment dweller while the suspect said later she had no intention of killing the workers. Uh-huh. Right. Sure.

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