

# Best of Last Week—New theory of gravity gains credence, banning killer robots and a food additive linked to colon cancer

November 14 2016, by Bob Yirka

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Credit: Wikipedia

(ScienceX)—It was another good week for physics as renowned string theorist Erik Verlinde offered [a new theory of gravity that might explain dark matter](#)—he has now shown that his idea of emergent gravity can

explain the velocity of stars, suggesting that there may be no such thing as dark matter. Taking a contrasting view, a team of researchers from Europe and the U.S. suggested that [dark matter may be hiding in a hidden sector](#)—outside the visible realm. Also, a new study by a team at the University of Exeter found that [even physicists are 'afraid' of mathematics](#)—they tend to avoid it whenever possible, just like professionals in other fields. And a team at the Max Planck Institute for Solid State Research found that at [close to absolute zero, electrons exhibit their quantum nature](#)—trickling through a conductor like sand through an hourglass. Also, an international team of researchers discovered [a new method to dissipate heat in electronic devices](#) by modifying the energy spectrum of acoustic phonons by confining them to nanometer-scale semiconductor structures.

In other news, a team of engineers at the University of California, San Diego, showed that [semiconductor-free microelectronics are now possible, thanks to metamaterials](#)—by fabricating the first semiconductor-free, optically-controlled microelectronic device. Also, a team of researchers at the University at Buffalo published a paper questioning whether [banning 'killer robots' actually will stop robots from killing](#)—a particularly relevant topic of debate, considering it was recently revealed that the Pentagon has allotted funds for the development of such robots already. And an international team of researchers announced that they had [restored leg movement in paralyzed primates using a wireless neural interface](#), allowing them to walk again and suggesting that science is getting closer to restoring abilities lost due to neural damage in humans. Also, a team working on the University of Bristol's ThinkBIG project, found that [big data shows people's collective behavior follows strong periodic patterns](#)—reflecting viewing or participating in events such as football, Ibiza or Oktoberfest.

And finally, if you, like many other people, are worried about getting [colon cancer](#), you might want to begin checking the list of ingredients in

some foods you buy as a team with Georgia State University's Institute for Biomedical Sciences found that [a common food additive promotes colon cancer in mice](#)—emulsifiers, they found, altered intestinal bacteria levels, leading to an increased risk of colon cancer.

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