

Best of Last Week– Stabilizing fusion plasmas, privacy becomes a selling point and advantages of short bouts of exercise

January 14 2019, by Bob Yirka

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It was a good week for physics as a team at the U.S. Department of Energy's Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory [discovered a process that stabilizes fusion plasmas](#) by revisiting work from the 1980s that focused

on using radio frequency waves to stabilize tearing modes. Also, a team of quantum scientists at the University of New South Wales [demonstrated the world-first 3-D atomic-scale quantum chip architecture](#)—marking another step towards the development of a useful quantum computer.

It was also a big week for technology as a team at the University of Michigan developed [a way to carry out 3-D printing that was 100 times faster, using light](#)—the new approach involved lifting complex shapes from vats of liquid. Also, a team with members from the University of Wollongong, Deakin University, Monash University and Kyushu University announced that they had developed [a framework for AI-powered agile project management](#). They will be presenting their project at this year's International Conference on Software Engineering. And a team with members from Technion and the University of Haifa announced that they had developed [a new algorithm for solving archaeological puzzles](#)—it helps to reassemble ancient artifacts. Also, a team at the University of Central Florida unveiled [a steam-propelled spacecraft prototype that could theoretically explore celestial objects "forever"](#)—the water to keep it going would be extracted from asteroids or other celestial bodies.

In other news, press reports from this year's Consumers Electronics Show suggested [that privacy has become a selling point](#) for makers of consumer devices. From routers to smartphones and other connected devices, buyers have made it clear they want products they can trust from makers who value their privacy. Also, a team with members affiliated with several institutions in the U.S. made headlines when they announced that [dental flossing and other behaviors had been linked with higher levels of toxic chemicals in the body](#)—specifically toxic PFAS chemicals. And a team at the University of Southern California reported on two groundbreaking discoveries they had made as [science continued its race against a tick-borne virus](#). The researchers suggest their

breakthroughs could lead to effective treatment for hemorrhagic fever.

And finally, if you are one of the millions who exercise in the hopes of staying healthy, you might want to check out a study conducted by a team at Arizona State University—[they found that short bouts of intense activity may have more benefits than hours of lower exertion.](#)

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