

Best of Last Week—New way to detect lies, a hybrid unicycle, plastic rocks found on remote island

March 27 2023, by Bob Yirka

The vehicle created by the researchers and its different modes of operation.
Credit: Zheng et al, *arXiv* (2023). DOI: 10.48550/arxiv.2303.00668

It was a good week for biology and human behavior research as a team at the University of Amsterdam's Leugenlab discovered [a new way to](#)

[approach lie detection](#)—studying the words while ignoring the behavior surrounding them. Also, a team with members from Indiana University, Loyola University Chicago and the University of Alabama, found that [healthy men who have vaginal sex have a distinct urethral microbiome](#). During intercourse, some of the microbes in the vagina migrate into the male's urethral tract. And a pair of animal behaviorists with the Australian National University wondered [why do animals living with humans evolve such similar features?](#) Ben Gleeson and Laura Wilson came up with a new theory that suggests it has more to do with loss of preexisting characteristics than taking on new ones due to the presence of humans.

In technology news, a team of environmentalists at the University of South Australia proposed a strategy for developing [environmentally friendly ways of getting rid of solar panels at the end of their useful life](#), which involves introducing incentives to make them more recyclable. A team with members from Switzerland, the U.S. and Sweden [cracked a metal 3D-printing conundrum](#), possibly propelling the technology toward wider application. While testing particle accelerators and X-ray beams, they learned more about how combined metals behave as they cool. Also, a combined team from Jiangnan University and Tsinghua University, developed [a photocatalyst that can produce hydrogen peroxide from oxygen and water](#). And a team of engineers at Zhejiang University designed and built [a hybrid unicycle](#) that can move on the ground and also fly.

In other news, a team of medical scientists at the Institute for Systems Biology used deep-learning models to [more accurately predict variations of biological BMI than traditional measures of BMI alone](#), an approach that could lead to a more useful representation of metabolic health. Also, a team of geologists from several institutions in Brazil discovered [plastic rocks on Trindade island](#), off the coast of Brazil. The island is one of the remotest on the planet and shows the extent to which plastics have

traveled. And finally, a team of medical scientists at the University of Helsinki, developed [a nasal spray that protects against coronavirus infection](#), including recent immune-evasive variants.

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