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Case 1: Catch or Release?

People obviously enjoy watching animals in captivity and have for quite some time. There is evidence of what may have been the world’s first zoo five millennia ago in Egypt. The Spanish explorer Hernán Cortés found what is known as Montezuma’s Zoo when he entered the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan in 1519.

According to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), there are over 10,000 zoos worldwide. There are over 230 major public aquariums and an untold number of smaller ones.

Over 175 million people are reported to attend zoos each year around the globe. Zoo attendance in the United States has continued to show a steady increase over the past ten years according to the AZA—a twelve percent increase over that period—and yet there has been a growing disenchantment in media reports about the way animals are confined, exhibited and cared for in captivity.

“Blackfish,” a 2013 CNN documentary about the killer whale program at SeaWorld drew more attention than any other story about animals in captivity. Killer whales, or orcas, typically grow to twenty feet in length, weigh up to fourteen tons and can travel a hundred miles a day living in the wild. But at SeaWorld they are confined to pools the size of a soccer field and only thirty feet deep.

Animal rights advocates say the fate of large predators in zoos is equally grim. The polar bear is an example of a creature that inhabits an area up to a million times the size of its typical enclosures. Outside Magazine contributor Tim Zimmerman said in a radio interview, “No matter how natural the tiger enclosure is, for example, it’s still minuscule compared to the range a tiger in the wild would have to roam. If you want to teach people about tigers and get children excited about tigers, there may be a better way to do that.” For instance, nature programs on television and the internet show animals in their native habitat. Zoos can only show how a creature lives in captivity.

SeaWorld—as a result of unfavorable publicity generated by the “Blackfish” documentary—has seen a decline in visitors and revenue. If the same thing begins to happen to zoos, some zoological experts and zoo advocates warn about negative consequences for animals living both in captivity and in the wild. That’s because SeaWorld and zoos, besides profiting from their patrons, use some of that money to rescue endangered and injured animals and to conduct research and conservation programs necessary to their preservation in the wild. According to the AZA, zoos and wildlife parks, including SeaWorld, contribute $216 million to wildlife conservation programs.

Environmental scientists agree that the world is currently going through its sixth mass extinction event and that this time it's being caused by humans. In the peer-reviewed journal, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, researchers point to die-offs of millions of species around the world. They call it a "biological annihilation."
In their book *The Ark and Beyond*, Ben A. Minteer, Jane Maienschein, and James P. Collins present the case that the work of zoos, aquariums and other wildlife organizations will play a role in protecting and preserving the very animals some accuse them of exploiting.
Case 2: You Want Those Genes CRISPR’d?

CRISPR-Cas9 is a gene correction system that is simpler to design, easier to use, less time-consuming and less costly than previous techniques. Applications of the technology are so broad "that the possibilities for using it to treat disease are virtually endless," according to E. Mullin at the MIT Technology Review.

Researchers across the globe are exploring the uses of CRISPR-Cas9. The Chinese ministry of health has approved all gene-therapy clinical trials in China. According to the Wall Street Journal's article, "China, Unhampered by Rules, Races Ahead in Gene-Editing Trials," so far, "scientists have genetically engineered the cells of at least 86 cancer and HIV patients in the country using CRISPER-Cas9 technology since 2015." Of these eighty-six, there have been fifteen deaths, seven of which were enrolled in the same clinical trials. The causes of the deaths are being attributed to the natural disease process, not to the CRISPR-Cas9 therapies.

CRISPR-Cas9 is a “gene correction” which focuses on replacing disease-causing DNA with healthy DNA. The gene editing process naturally activates the p53 gene, sometimes referred to as the “Guardian of the Genome,” which is part of the body’s natural defense. It works in one of two ways, either repairing cells with damaged DNA or telling the damaged cell to self-destruct. Herein lies the problem: p53 will also defend against genome edits made using CRISPR-Cas9, eventually causing the edited cells to be repaired (remove the edit) or self-destruct. Either way, the outcome is the same: some CRISRP-Cas9 therapies are largely ineffective. In order for CRISPR-Cas9 to reach maximum efficacy the p53 gene needs to be dysfunctional or deactivated. While a dysfunctional p53 may appear to be beneficial for CRISPR-Cas9 therapies there is a caveat: it is known to cause cancer.

Last year, two different biomedical labs published research on CRISPR-Cas9 effectiveness in Nature Medicine. They both came to the conclusion that there is an increased risk of cancer from the use of CRISPR-Cas9. As reported by Scientific American, researchers from Sweden’s Karolinska Institute and from Switzerland’s Novartis International AG have said that cells whose genomes are successfully edited by CRISPR-Cas9 “have the potential to seed tumors inside a patient. That could make some CRISPR’d cells ticking time bombs.” More specifically, “The reason why that could be a problem is that p53 dysfunction can cause cancer. And not just occasionally. P53 mutations are responsible for nearly half of ovarian cancers; 43 percent of colorectal cancers; 38 percent of lung cancers; nearly one-third of pancreatic, stomach, and liver cancers; and one-quarter of breast cancers, among others.”
Case 3: Death Algorithm

In May, 2018, Google's Medical Brain team published a paper in *Nature* announcing a new health care initiative, an Artificial Intelligence algorithm designed to predict patient outcomes, duration of hospitalization, even the likelihood of death during hospitalization. A great deal of attention is being paid to mortality statistics, or the death algorithm, which has been used in two instances. In the first case, at Hospital A, the algorithm was 95 percent accurate in predicting death; in the second case, at Hospital B, it was 93 percent accurate. In both of these cases, the AI algorithm performed significantly better than the more traditional models or techniques of predicting patient outcomes.

Google researchers believe the algorithm will reduce health care cost, increase patient-physician face time, and reduce the burden of current data systems which rely heavily on cumbersome and labor-intensive data mining techniques. The AI algorithm is based on very large amounts of anonymous patient data (one previous algorithm used forty-six billion pieces of data), for which use patients and hospitals had consented and approved. Proper safeguards or data security, privacy, and various other HIPPA concerns are a major issue, especially in light of data privacy concerns with companies in the past such as Facebook.

This technology may also be exciting for health insurance companies. Insurance companies love data because it allows them to better estimate the cost of covering an individual. The AI algorithm is the first of its kind due the large amount of data it uses, and promises to become one of the most effective tools for predicting health care cost and outcomes.

There are, however, many unknowns. How will this new AI affect health insurance and patient treatment? Will health insurance companies have access to the data? How will accessibility and affordability of health insurance change if there is reason to believe an individual has increased risk factors for disease progression, hospitalization, or death? Will physicians still use due diligence for medical diagnoses or will they simply rely on the AI outcomes? What will happen when the algorithm and a physician disagree?
Case 4: Fast Fashion

At one point in *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby explained to Daisy and Nick that he had a man who sent him new clothes each season, spring and fall. He then started pulling shirts out of a cabinet and tossing them on a table, “shirts of sheer linen and thick silk and fine flannel, which lost their folds as they fell and covered the table in many-colored disarray....[H]e brought more and the soft rich heap mounted higher—shirts with stripes and scrolls and plaids in coral and apple-green and lavender and faint orange, and monograms of Indian blue.” Daisy suddenly buried her face in the pile of shirts and sobbed, “They’re such beautiful shirts.”

This memorable scene captures a common fantasy about what unlimited wealth would mean: to have so many fine clothes, one couldn’t wear them all in a lifetime. Catering to this daydream the fast-fashion industry seeks to make Daisy’s tearful swoon come true for many people of humbler means than Gatsby.

The approach to fashion called “fast fashion” has compressed the buying cycle for clothing by increasing the number of buying seasons from Gatsby’s two (spring and fall) to as many as eight or nine per year. At fast-fashion stores like Zara’s, Forever21, and H&M, one can expect a new line of clothing to appear every six weeks. And these new clothes are both trendy and affordable. With such rapid turnover of inventory, some retailers have cut costs by shifting advertising dollars away from media to in-store promotions. This has the added benefit of forcing customers to physically enter the stores more frequently to keep up with new lines of clothing as they arrive.

In order to compress the buying cycle, the fast-fashion concept requires producers to both compress the production cycle and to keep prices low. Accordingly, producers seek out the cheapest materials and labor as well as seeking the most efficient means of distribution.

The results seem to be a win for all players: manufacturers, retailers, and customers alike. Countries like China, Bangladesh, and India provide an enormous number of textiles as well as ready-made garments for export.

There are, of course, downsides to fast fashion. Retailers dispose of unsold inventories and customers clean out their closets. Fast fashions, however, are neither sturdy nor timeless, so they tend not to find their way into any secondhand markets. According to Elizabeth Cline, in an article in *The Atlantic*, “Where Does Discarded Clothing Go?” Americans send 10.5 million tons of clothing to landfills every year, because many of these fast-fashion clothes are made of synthetic materials that can’t be recycled. The production process involves dyes and caustic chemicals that pollute the environment. And, most obviously, the ready and cheap access to ephemeral fashions pushes us to buy and discard at ever increasing rates.

*From a case idea submitted by Yeraldin Villagomez*
Case 5: Glad-Handing Below the Belt

As Conner enjoyed the packed concert, happily swaying with the crowd to one of his favorite songs with a beer in his hand above the fray, he felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned his head to see a very attractive blonde woman he didn’t recognize, about 5’5”, with a coy smile on her face. Before he could think of a witty introduction, she looked him in the eyes, smiled even bigger, and firmly grabbed his crotch in her right hand and squeezed gently. Instinct led him to back up a step, difficult to do in the well-packed crowd, and she smoothly moved forward through the space he created. Taken aback, he watched her do the same to another young man standing near him, leading to the realization that she was grabbing unsuspecting males as a way to move closer to the stage. She reached the front row in short order.

After the show at their favorite bar, Conner and his friends rehashed the concert. Conner told his friends about the strange encounter with the attractive blonde woman and what he guessed she was doing. His friend, Carol, was the first to pipe up, nearly choking on her drink when he made it to the description of the grab, “Well that’s more action than you’ve seen in months, so good for you!” Devin was even more excited for him, “Tell me you got her digits, dude! She sounds hot and fun!” And his roommate Jake added, “Damn! If I had done that, I would have been arrested or had the crap beat out of me or both.”

All of his friends agreed that it was a really good plan for an even moderately attractive woman who wanted to get to the front of the crowd. His female friends contemplated using the tactic for the next concert, if they were stuck towards the back. Although Conner had been feeling a bit violated and offended, his friends’ responses made him think that maybe his initial reaction was wrong and that sexual attention from an attractive woman should always be welcome.
Case 6: Involuntary Commitment

In states like West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky, which have seen a significant number of deaths by overdose during the recent heroin/opioid “epidemics,” an increasingly popular solution to protecting the addicts is civil commitment or involuntary commitment. Research suggests that those who are involuntarily committed have outcomes at least comparable to the outcomes for people who make the decision to seek inpatient treatment themselves.

Shows like *Intervention*, *Recovery Road*, and *The Heroin Triangle* depict the frustration often experienced by family and friends of addicts who want only to protect and help their addicted loved one. Some family members of addicts see involuntary commitment as the last and only chance for their survival. “The only hope that many addicted individuals have is that someone will do for them what they are incapable of doing for themselves,” according to Charlotte Wethington, the mother of Casey Wethington, who overdosed from heroin at the age of twenty-three and is the namesake of Casey’s Law in Kentucky, a law that is considered by some recovery advocates to be a model law for involuntary commitment of substance abusers.

Civil commitment is not a new phenomenon, although it was previously reserved for those deemed a threat to themselves or others and diagnosed with some form of mental health issue. The use of civil commitment is controversial for those with mental health diagnoses as well, and its use has a long and storied history in the United States. Most states allow for involuntary commitment of individuals with substance-abuse disorders or alcoholism and a handful of states in include substance abuse and alcoholism in their definitions of *mental disorder*, making involuntary commitment easier in those states.

In Massachusetts, where approximately 6,500 substance users/abusers were subject to civil commitment in 2017, those civilly committed can be housed not only in treatment facilities but also in prisons. Critics of incarceration for addicts point to the suppression of the rights of the addict, especially when the only available space is in a prison with violent criminals. When addicts are “committed” to prison areas with other prisoners who have actually been convicted of crimes, those other prisoners are resentful of the addicts as they receive special treatment like private cells and extensive therapy.
Case 7: The Oldest Intern

Each summer, Washington D.C. fills with interns and Francisco Joaquin was one of them. He spent the summer of 2018 in D.C. as an intern at the D.C. Mayor’s Office of Veterans Affairs, assisting vets, many of them low-income. His dream is to get his Juris Doctorate degree and pass the Arizona bar exam. His internship came about from attending an on-campus event and he was one of 25 candidates selected.

Francisco is 63. He has already retired once, at age 55.

Francisco might not be that unique. Many are finding that in order to finance retirement or just pay the bills, they have to work longer.

In their book, The 100 Year Life, authors Lynda Gratton and Andrew Scott estimate that many people in their fifties will work into their seventies and those in their twenties may work well into their eighties. This comes when retirement looms for many but more 18 to 34 year olds, settled with student loan debt, a tough job market, and sky-high rents in many urban areas, are living at home with their parents. These trends are disrupting the traditional three-stage life of full-time education, full-time work, and full-time retirement not only for the old but also for the young.

Some argue that those who have had decades long careers need to pass the baton to give younger workers the same chance that they had: to have a career; own a home; and raise a family. That is, by taking up space in the classroom and in the workplace, they are denying the younger generation their chance. Limiting enrollment in higher education and requiring mandatory retirement would ensure that the younger workers get their chance. Others, however, suggest that it is a fallacy to assert that the opportunities, whether for education or employment, are limited but that by providing these opportunities to all we have a more productive society. Thus, there is no need to limit enrollment or make retirement mandatory and that it would be economically detrimental to do so.
Case 8: Ministering to Tyranny

Almost three decades before last year’s summit meeting in Singapore between US President Donald J. Trump and North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-un, another renowned American paid a visit to the so-called hermit kingdom. Reverend Billy Graham was photographed in an historic embrace with Kim’s grandfather, Kim Il-sung, the founder of the ruling Kim dynasty.

The presence of the American evangelical leader in Pyongyang marked a renewed interest by missionary and church relief programs in the totalitarian nation. At the time of Graham’s visit, North Korea was discovering that it needed all the church-related aid it could get and more.

In 1995, North Korea made a plea to world governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including churches, for help dealing with a devastating famine which took the lives of over a half million people. Soon, North Korea was receiving around a million tons of food every year.

The United States, alone, gave $1.3 billion in aid over a thirteen-year period, including food as well as coal and oil for power generation. However, aid workers were reporting finding emaciated children in orphanages into the late 1990s. The US government came to suspect that much of the aid and food was going to the North Korea’s political elites and to the military. Organizations such as Doctors Without Borders pulled out of North Korea, concluding that it was withholding food from those who needed it the most.

This coincided with on-again, off-again nuclear disarmament talks between North Korea, the United States and other nations. President George W. Bush labeled North Korea as part of the axis of evil in 2002 for its alleged support of terrorism and the pursuit of nuclear weapons. From 2006 to 2017, North Korea tested six nuclear weapons in a race to develop warheads and missiles capable of striking its enemies, including the United States. As a result, the United States and other nations imposed severe economic sanctions against North Korea in an effort to force it to the nuclear disarmament negotiating table.

United Nations’ aid to North Korea is down almost 90 percent from its high point in the late 1990’s. Former US Representative to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, was quoted as saying “You don’t starve your own people in order to fund nuclear weapons.”

Despite President Trump’s assurance following the Singapore summit that North Korea no longer posed a nuclear threat, US intelligence agencies reported evidence of expansion of a North Korean missile base close to the Chinese border. At the same time, world health organizations estimate that four in ten North Koreans are undernourished and now, more than ever, are looking for help from Christian and other religious charities. However, in the face of continuing international sanctions, there is no guarantee that any aid to help it deal with its humanitarian crisis may not also strengthen North Korea's hand at the negotiating table.
Case 9: Who’s Up for an Outing?

If someone participates in a Pride march with their same-sex partner, knowing that media will be present, it doesn’t seem problematic for others to assume that they identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community. If the media is able to identify them and names them in a photo, this wouldn’t violate any obvious ethical guidelines. But what if someone developed a website that listed names, addresses, and employers of “Known Gays”?

On August 12, 2017 a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, featured a large number of seemingly angry people, most of whom showed their faces openly, certainly cognizant of the significant media attention present. The most publicized part of the rally involved a purported white nationalist driving his car into a group of counter-protestors and vehicles at the event, killing one woman and injuring many others. On Twitter, *Yes, You’re Racist* called upon people to identify rally participants, and the site then “outed” those who could be identified publicly and listed their information online. *Yes, You’re Racist* incited controversy as some participants thus outed claim they received death threats, while others lost jobs and friends, and many experienced general shunning by family and social groups.

“Outing” traditionally refers to making public an individual’s gender identity or sexual orientation. Outing has a long and storied history, including the outing of Kaiser Wilhelm II’s confidant, Prince Eulenburg. LGBTQIA+ activists and critics alike have used outing on the one hand as a way to either call attention to gay rights issues and hatreds and prejudices, or on the other hand as a way to perpetuate negative reactions and stereotypes involving gay rights issues. Many argue that outing is morally problematic and involves at least a significant privacy invasion. But besides gender identity and sexual orientation, there are many personal issues that people often prefer to keep to themselves, like their ethnic ancestry or sexual history. Further, many prefer to keep their support of causes or groups that are not publicly popular to themselves, like membership in the Aryan Nations, communist organizations, or the American Civil Liberties Union.
Case 10: Pay or Stay

Debtors’ prisons were outlawed in the United States in 1833. And, yet, the system of fines and penalties by many jurisdictions across the country disproportionately affect those living in poverty. The poor are often stuck in jail because they don’t have the money to get themselves out.

Darnise, a twenty-two-year-old single mother, was arrested during a traffic stop. It wasn’t because of her driving or car registration or insurance. She was arrested because she had failed to pay a court fine related to a conviction for possession of marijuana. She spent two days in jail awaiting a hearing. As a result, she lost the job she had recently taken as a waitress and cook, thereby guaranteeing her inability to pay the court what she owed.

A study by NPR radio found that, in 2016, 95 percent of arrest warrants stemmed from outstanding fines. As a result, 640,000 people who couldn’t pay went to jail.

According to Alexes Harris, associate professor of sociology at the University of Washington, “They tend to be people of color, African-Americans and Latinos. They tend to be high school dropouts, they tend to be people with mental illness, with substance abuse. So, these are already very poor and marginalized people in our society, and then we impose these fiscal penalties to them and expect that they make regular payments, when in fact the vast majority are unable to do so.”

The growing number of cases like that of Darnise prompted Texas to enact a law in 2017 that required judges to offer low-income defendants a community service alternative. If paying fines is too difficult or impossible for the individual, they can work off their fine.

Courts across the country, however, run on the revenues taken in through fines and court fees. Michael Day, a court administrator in Allegan County Michigan, is quoted by The Atlantic Magazine as saying, “The only reason that the court is in operation and doing business at that point in time is because that defendant has come in and is a user of those services. They don’t necessarily see themselves as a customer because, obviously, they’re not choosing to be there. But in reality, they are.”

Fines exist as an alternative to incarceration, in many cases. Some would argue that when laws are broken, there must be consequences to maintain law and order. Fines can be one of those consequences. One way to avoid both fines and jail time is to stop breaking the law in the first place.
Case 11: Please Pass the Tissues

In 2014, federal agents raided the Phoenix-based facilities of Biological Resource Center (BRC), a company that referred to itself as a "non-transplant tissue bank." According to one of the people participating in the raid, “We expected two freezers and a few hundred pounds of body parts. Instead, we found forty freezers with ten tons of bodies and parts.” According to Reuters, the frozen human remains included 281 heads, 241 shoulders, 337 legs, and 97 spines: overall, 1,755 body parts. Authorities filled 142 body bags. Plans to cremate the remains were delayed, however, as BRC and some of their clients objected that they were valuable commodities. So, bags containing parts from 851 people remained in three walk-in freezers for three years before they were finally cremated.

The raid at BRC arose from an investigation into one of its clients, Arthur Rathburn, a Detroit body broker accused of defrauding customers by shipping them contaminated body parts without warning his buyers. While it may seem surprising that the main legal charge was fraud, the fact was that the sale of human remains was and is legal and the body-parts industry was and is both extensive and largely unregulated. There are many uses for human body parts, ranging from medical school practicums to so-called destructive testing by the military.

According to a special investigative report by Reuters in December, 2017, body brokers like BRC rely on donors who come disproportionately from the poor or uneducated. BRC offers to cremate the remains of donors for free, which is an attractive offer to those too poor to afford a funeral or cremation themselves. Sometimes, those who sign the consent forms are confused or unclear about what they are agreeing to. BRC, for instance, in their consent forms or in sales pitches to donors, might describe what they do as “retrieving tissue” from donors. To many people outside the industry, “tissue” means skin. The impression is that the donor agrees to give up skin samples in exchange for free cremation. Within the industry, however, “tissue” refers to any body part at all, such as a liver, a spine, or a head.
Case 12: Sexbots

In the video game, *Detroit: Become Human*, a player confronts the unique world of android sex workers. The human patrons of Eden Club (home of the “sexiest androids in town”) rent an android, or androids, and do pretty much whatever they want with it and to it. Business is booming for Eden Club. “The good thing about androids is they’re up for whatever you want, you won’t get any diseases, and they won’t tell anyone. So why not go wild?”

The memories of the rented androids in this particular brothel are reset every two hours, which allows patrons to have privacy, leaving virtually no trace of a patron's actions with the sex worker androids. Although not explicitly discussed in the game, one would assume that if a patron killed a sex worker android (which happens in the storyline) that the patron would be forced to pay for damages or a replacement. Short of killing a sex android or disfiguring it such that it cannot be repaired, whatever a patron does with or to a sex android is their own business. Both male and female sex androids are found at Eden Club. And although also not portrayed in the game world in question, one can imagine that this or other clubs would have child sex androids as well, and animal sex androids, and any other type of android for which someone is willing to pay.

For many critics and supporters of prostitution, this would seem to be an idyllic solution to many of the current-day woes of the sex worker trade. As an example, there is reasonable evidence that individuals with violent sexual tendencies, especially those who want to physically harm non-consenting others for sexual gratification, are unlikely to change. Sex worker androids would allow them to carry out their predilections without harm to any individual person or persons. In this particular game, it is an open question whether or not the androids have evolved into sentiency or consciousness or personhood, but the point remains that sex androids could be a solution to the moral issues associated with the oldest profession in the world—a profession which is not likely to disappear in the foreseeable future.

A sex doll brothel that opened in Paris, France, in 2018 has caused a good deal of controversy, with numerous calls for its closure from various entities, including politicians and feminist groups who claim the brothel encourages rape fantasies. Dortmund, Germany, has had a similar brothel since 2017. And products like Realbotix’s Harmony model, AI Tech’s Emma, Synthea Amatus’s Samantha, and TrueCompanion’s Roxxxy might make brothels like Eden Club a reality in the very near future.
Case 13: Selfieness

While emergency workers offered aid to a woman critically injured by a train at a station in northern Italy, a young man in white shorts stepped up to the platform, held his fingers in a “V for victory” sign, and snapped a selfie.

Voted Word of the Year by Oxford Dictionary in 2013, “selfie” denotes a picture one takes of oneself. Self-portraits are not new, of course. Humans have created pictures of themselves since cave drawing. The only change over centuries has been the medium and publication format.

Today smartphone owners around the globe snap digital self-portraits on a daily basis with seemingly little consideration for whether doing so may be morally inappropriate. When tourists take selfies at sites associated with evil, like the monuments to the Trail of Tears in the southeastern United States or the village of My Lai in Vietnam, it is questionable whether the ethics of doing so is even a fleeting concern. In 2017, a firestorm of criticism erupted around a figure of Hitler in a wax museum in Indonesia, in part because so many people wanted selfies with the figure.

Although police caught the selfie-taker and forced him to delete his picture, the journalist’s photograph of his act ignited a news and social media controversy across Italy and throughout Europe. Journalists, radio hosts, and social media postings characterized selfies as a “cancer that corrodes the Internet” and the selfie-taker as “an automaton of the Internet” and feared the human race was “galloping toward extinction.”

According to Giorgio Lambri, the journalist who photographed the selfie-taker at the train station accident, “We have completely lost a sense of ethics.” Lambri himself wrote about the experience in the Italian newspaper, Liberta, under the headline, “The barbarism you don’t expect: the ‘self’ in front of a tragedy,” and later posted on his Facebook page about the young man’s apparent lack of moral compass.

Moral philosopher Jonathan Pugh argues that selfies can remove us from our own experiences and quotes Sartre’s novel, Nausea: “Man is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his life as if he were recounting it. But you have to choose: to live or to recount.”
Case 14: Driving People Away

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is generally thought to refer to software-guided machines that respond to stimulation in ways that seem almost human, without the human capacities for contemplation, judgment, and intention. Researchers indicate these software systems make decisions normally requiring a human level of expertise and operate in a seemingly intentional, intelligent, and adaptive manner. Since AI does not require sleep, food, or other human essentials, there are obvious economic benefits to be realized through it, and PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates that such systems could increase global gross domestic product by $15.7 trillion, or 14 percent, by 2030.

According to the Brookings Institute’s report of April 2018, “How artificial intelligence is transforming the world,” AI is not a futuristic vision but is already being integrated with and deployed across a variety of economic sectors. In the area of autonomous vehicle technology alone, $80 billion was invested between 2014 and 2017. Ride-sharing companies, such as Uber in the United States, Daimler in Great Britain, and Didi Chuxing in China, are very interested in autonomous vehicles and their future potential. On the other hand, some foresee a dystopian future of mass unemployment and cite reports such as the 2013 “The Future of Employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation?” by the Oxford Martin School that predicted that 47 percent of jobs in the United States could be under threat of automation by 2033 due to advances in AI technologies.

Interesting debates are erupting around Uber’s impact not only on the traditional taxi industry but on the estimated one million drivers in its own ride-sharing business after it recently inked an agreement with Volvo to purchase 24,000 autonomous cars. Autonomous vehicles use numerous advanced technologies, including automated vehicle guidance and braking, lane-changing systems, use of cameras and sensors for collision avoidance, AI to analyze information in real time, and the use of high-performance computing and deep learning systems to adapt to new circumstances through detailed maps. The technology behind Uber’s driverless cars has not yet been perfected and the ride-sharing company suffered a setback when one of its autonomous cars hit and killed a pedestrian in Arizona in March, 2018. The accident brought an immediate halt to the testing and launched investigations into what went wrong with the technology. Given the concern for safety in technology and the demand for convincing answers, this accident alone could slow AI advancements in the transportation sector.
In her 2018 acceptance speech for the SAG Award for best actress in *Big Little Lies*, Nicole Kidman addressed the lack of roles for women over 40 in Hollywood. After thanking some actresses over 40, including Susan Sarandon, Jessica Lange, Meryl Streep, and Judi Dench, Kidman continued: “I want to thank you all for your trailblazing performances you have given over your career and how wonderful it is that our careers today can go beyond 40 years old. Twenty years ago, we were pretty washed up by this stage in our lives, so that's not the case now.”

Hollywood’s problem with casting actresses over 40 is well documented. Research shows that female characters are consistently younger than their male counterparts, and film history provides a lengthy list of examples, from 44-year-old Woody Allen paired with a teenage Mariel Hemingway in *Manhattan* to just about any modern-day Scarlett Johansson or Jennifer Lawrence movie. For example, the chart below shows the age gaps, ranging from two to 31 years, between Emma Stone and her leading male counterparts.

According to a San Diego State University Study of the top 100 grossing films in 2014, just 30 percent of female roles were written for characters age 40 and older, whereas the rate of male roles for characters

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over the age of 40 was nearly double. Similarly, the percentage of male characters in movies increased between the ages of 30 and 40, while it had the opposite effect for female characters within that same age range. Meryl Streep has called out Hollywood’s attitude toward older women, telling *Vogue* that the industry sees them as “grotesque on some level,” while Helen Mirren called the aging double standard for actresses “outrageous.”

There is a saying that art imitates life, but when it comes to Hollywood is it the other way around with life imitating art? Every time we see older man paired with younger women are our stereotypes and prejudices about aging reinforced? Some would argue that people can vote with their pocketbook. That is, if audiences wanted to see older actors, they would demand it. Others suggest that that lack of representation of older actors shapes our perceptions and how our society views older people and that actors should “act their age.” To remedy this should Hollywood be mandated to include those over 40 in equal representation to the population?