

## What I'm Reading (Mar. 13)



By Chuck Dinerstein, MD, MBA — March 13, 2020

*Here's this week's offerings: Why we emotionally attach to Alexa and Siri ... the Pontiff joins the debate on AI ... India can go to Mars (but bathrooms still seem to be a challenge) ... and how do those restaurant buffets turn a profit?*



Image courtesy of [www.Pixel.la](http://www.Pixel.la) on Wikimedia [1]

Despite popular belief, there has been news and stories on issues other than Covid-19 and the market. If for no other reason, here are momentary distractions for that ill-defined discomfort you are experiencing.

**"... we're learning that humans can bond, form attachments and dedicate themselves to non-conscious objects or lifeless things with shocking ease. Our social emotions are now being hijacked by non-agents or jabbering objects such as Amazon's Alexa, Apple's Siri or IBM's Watson, and we're finding it effortless, comfortable and satisfying."**

From Aeon, [Ancient animistic beliefs live on in our intimacy with tech](#) [2]

**"...Pope Francis backed a document that outlines how artificial intelligence, including facial recognition technology, should be regulated. This so-called "Rome Call for AI Ethics" carries the endorsement of the Vatican as well as Microsoft and IBM. Believe it or not, the future of AI is actually one of the pope's passion projects — and greatest worries."**

The Vatican and the Pontiff weigh in, from Vox, [The pope's plan to fight back against evil AI](#) [3]

**“In 2013, India became the fourth country in the world (after Russia, the United States, and the European Union) and the only emerging nation to launch a Mars probe into space. But it remains part of the group of 45 developing countries with less than 50% sanitation coverage, with many citizens practicing open defecation, either due to lack of access to a toilet or because of personal preference.”**

From The Conversation, [Why it's easier for India to get to Mars than to tackle its toilet challenge](#) [4]

**“Few things epitomize America more than the all-you-can-eat buffet.**

**For a small fee, you're granted unencumbered access to a wonderland of gluttony. It is a place where saucy meatballs and egg rolls share the same plate without prejudice, where a tub of chocolate pudding finds a home on the salad bar, where variety and quantity reign supreme.”**

What exactly are the economics behind the Golden Corral? From the Hustle, [The economics of all-you-can-eat buffets](#) [5]

---

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.acsh.org/news/2020/03/13/what-im-reading-mar-13-14631>

**Links**

[1] [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book-reading-learning-letters\\_\(24325683575\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book-reading-learning-letters_(24325683575).jpg)

[2] <https://aeon.co/ideas/ancient-animistic-beliefs-live-on-in-our-intimacy-with-tech>

[3] <https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/2/28/21157760/pope-vatican-artificial-intelligence>

[4] [https://theconversation.com/why-its-easier-for-india-to-get-to-mars-than-to-tackle-its-toilet-challenge-69015?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%206%201554314852&utm\\_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%206%202020%201554314852+Version+A+CID\\_fc7b7b7e4c9883b64bfe27721b2a5fc1&utm\\_source=campaign\\_monitor\\_us&](https://theconversation.com/why-its-easier-for-india-to-get-to-mars-than-to-tackle-its-toilet-challenge-69015?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%206%201554314852&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%206%202020%201554314852+Version+A+CID_fc7b7b7e4c9883b64bfe27721b2a5fc1&utm_source=campaign_monitor_us&)

[5] <https://thehustle.co/the-economics-of-all-you-can-eat-buffets/>