

# FRIDAY: SMELLS LIKE

*With the lights out, it's less dangerous  
Here we are now, entertain us  
I feel stupid and contagious  
Here we are now, entertain us  
A mulatto, an Albino  
A mosquito, my libido, yeah*

– excerpt, Smells Like Teen Spirit by  
Nirvana

Been a rough week so I'm indulging myself with some double bass – and because it's Friday, it's jazz. This is 2009 Thelonious Monk Competition winner Ben Williams whose 'Teen Spirit' is both spirited and minimalist. Check out this set with Home and Dawn Of A New Day, the first embued with a hip-hoppy beatmaking rhythm.

## More Shadows on the wall

While Marcy has some questions about the recent alleged Shadow Brokers' hack of NSA-front Equation Group and malware staging servers, I have a different one.

Why is Cisco, a network equipment company whose equipment appears to have been backdoored by the NSA, laying off 20% of its workforce right now? Yeah, yeah, I hear there's a downturn in networking hardware sales due to Brexit and the Chinese are fierce competitors and businesses are moving from back-end IT to the cloud, but I see other data that says 50-60% of ALL internet traffic flows through Cisco equipment and there are other forecasts anticipating internet traffic growth to double between now and 2020, thanks in part to more video streaming and mobile telecom growth replacing PCs. Sure, software improvements will mediate some of that traffic's pressure on hardware, but still...there's got to be both ongoing replacement of aging equipment and upgrades (ex: Southwest Airlines' router-fail outage), let alone new sales, and moving the cloud only means network

equipment is consolidated, not distributed. Speaking of new sales and that internet traffic growth, there must be some anticipation related to increased use of WiFi-enabled Internet of Things stuff (technical term, that – you know, like Philips' Hue lighting and Google Nest thermostats and Amazon Echo/Alexa-driven services).

Something doesn't add up. Or maybe something rolls up. I dunno'. There are comments out on the internet suggesting competitor Huawei is hiring – that's convenient, huh?

#### AI and Spy

- Data security firm working on self-tweeting AI (MIT Review) – The software can generate tweets more likely to illicit response from humans than the average phishing/spearphishing attempt. Seems a little strange that a data security company is working on a tool which could make humans and networks less secure, doesn't it?
- Toyota sinks a bunch of cash into AI project at U of Michigan (ReadWrite) – \$22 million the automaker pledged to development of self-driving cars, stair-climbing wheelchairs and other mobility projects. Toyota has already invested in similar AI development programs at Stanford in Palo Alto, CA and MIT in

Cambridge, MA. Funding academic research appears to be a means to avoid a bigger hit to the corporation's bottom line if the technologies do not yield commercially viable technology.

- Steganography developed to mask content inside dance music (MIT Review) – Warsaw University of Technology researcher co-opted the rhythm specific to Ibiza trance music genre. The embedded Morse code buried in rhythm could not be audibly detected by casual listeners as long as it did not distort the tempo by more than 2%.

#### Sci-like-Fi

- New theory suggests fifth force of nature possible (Los Angeles Times) – The search for a “dark photon” may have led to a new theory explaining the existence and action of dark energy and dark matter, which together make up 95% of the universe. I admit I need to hunt down a better article on this; this one doesn't make all the pieces snap into place for me. If you've seen a

better one, please share in comments.

- Sound wave-based black hole model may show Hawking radiation at work (Scientific American) – Can't actually create a real black hole in the lab, but a model like this one created by an Israeli scientist using phonons (not photons) may prove Stephen Hawking was right about information leakage from black holes. The work focuses on the actions of quantum-entangled particle pairs which are separated on either side of the event horizon. Beyond adding to our understanding of the universe, how this work will be used isn't quite clear. But use of quantum entanglement in cryptography is an important and growing field; I wouldn't be surprised to see this finding shapes cryptographic development.
- Pregnant women's immune system response may affect fetus' neurological system (MedicalXpress via Phys.org) – While an expectant mother's immune system may prevent a virus from attacking her fetus, the

protective process may still affect the fetus long term. Research suggests that some neurological disorders like schizophrenia and autism may be associated with maternal infections pre-birth.

*Late adder:* Travel Advisory issued for pregnant women to avoid Miami Beach area according to CDC – Five more cases of Zika have been identified and appeared to have originated in the newly identified second Zika zone, this one east of Biscayne Bay in the Miami Beach area. The initial Zika zone was on the west side of Biscayne Bay. The CDC also discouraged pregnant women and their sex partners from traveling to Miami-Dade County as a whole; the county has now had a total of 36 cases of Zika.

In the video in the report linked above, FL Gov. Rick Scott pokes at the White House about additional Zika assistance, but Scott previously reduced spending on mosquito control by 40%. Now he's ready to pay private firms to tackle mosquito spraying. Way to go, Republican dirtbag. Penny wise, pound foolish, and now it's somebody else's job to bat cleanup.

Longread: Stampede at JFK

A firsthand account of the public's stampede-like reaction to a non-shooting at New York's JFK International Airport. To paraphrase an old adage, if all you have is a gun, everything looks and sounds like a shooting.

Let go of your fear and let the weekend begin.