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obsessed with the safest drivers - and es killing people

1h • 5 min read





await deployment in 2024. The debate over street safety in San Francisco seems to fixate on autonomous vehicles.

2-year-old girl was walking in the crosswalk at Fourth and Channel streets in Mission stest-growing family neighborhoods - when a car turning right struck her and her for the driver to stop. The child was pinned beneath the vehicle. [She died at the](#) italized.

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rian deaths followed: a man killed on the sidewalk in North Beach after an [SUV](#) d a [woman killed in a hit-and-run in the Outer Mission](#) - at the same intersection n killed just three months prior.

[a pedestrian in San Francisco](#). And just this week, a driver killed a pedestrian in the the scene. Another fatality, another headline, another moment that we can't afford to sponse.

month, police released the driver at the scene. A witness told [Streetsblog](#) that an l on yourself. It's an accident. It happens."

est thing San Francisco has to an official policy on traffic death.

lice searching for driver in fatal hit-and-run (KGW-TV Portland)



plowed through a family of four at 75 mph in West Portal in 2024, killing them all, was [suspension, two years of probation and 200 hours of community service.](#)

[Zero](#) in 2014, promising zero fatalities by 2024. Instead, 43 people were killed in 2024 - [exceeding that year's homicides.](#) Police traffic citations have [collapsed by 95% over the](#) year. Since the program began, 369 people have died on San Francisco's roads. The city replaced the plan, a traffic-calming program due to budget cuts.

Local leaders continue to fixate on autonomous vehicles.

When an autonomous vehicle killed a cat.

A self-driving car ran over a beloved bodega cat in the Mission District. Within days, a [supervisor resolution](#) calling for new robotaxi regulations. The story ran in dozens of national news outlets and New York Times articles.



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e situation from a transportation engineering standpoint on "[KQED Forum](#)," there was 1 facts. I am a professor of transportation focused on roadway design and safety, and I his situation - how the Waymo vehicle responded as it should have by minimizing risk.

for a cat that scurried under a car. [Meme coins were created](#). In Los Angeles, people e spray-painting "Justice for KitKat."

rs or mourners, nor do I dismiss legitimate questions about autonomous vehicles, but ymmetry of the dialogue.

toddler died in a crosswalk. There were no emergency regulatory actions after gh-injury corridors. There have been no meaningful police enforcement responses ations. Yes, there are speed cameras now, but there's also the [San Francisco Police eting](#) of "big, bad dangerous cyclists" instead of "overzealous drivers who keep killing e on Reddit.



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is backward.

intensive regulatory frameworks in the country for autonomous vehicles. The or Vehicles and Public Utilities Commission tightly controls operations. The U.S. y Administration requires detailed reporting of any crash involving injury or property

government [opened an investigation](#) when a Waymo vehicle in Santa Monica struck a child and [went to school the same day](#). When a software issue caused Waymo vehicles to cause zero injuries - the company recalled software from 3,000 vehicles.

[data from over 170 million fully autonomous miles](#), based on federally required data shows that autonomous vehicles show 92% fewer crashes involving serious or fatal injuries compared to human drivers.

Imagine, if this were the COVID vaccine, that would be treated as a breakthrough. Here, it is not.

It is a tragedy that we are applying the same level of scrutiny to a system demonstrating measurable safety gains, while applying minimal scrutiny to a system that continues to produce predictable, preventable deaths. We are debating the merits of different regulatory approaches; regulating performance at the margins while tolerating failure.

When it comes to safety, the focus would not be on constraining technologies that reduce harm. It would be on addressing the dominant source of that harm: human driving behavior, weak enforcement, and a regulatory structure that fails to support pedestrians and cyclists.

The current regulatory environment is the problem. We have created a political and regulatory environment that preferences the most dangerous systems. The safest systems face the highest bar and the most dangerous ones are simply accepted.

This will continue - and at the expense of the most vulnerable roadway users. Not because we are afraid of autonomous vehicles killing people - but because we are choosing to look in the wrong direction.

For more information, contact the University of San Francisco who works to help cities integrate emerging transportation technologies into safe, human-centered transportation systems.

[Professor. I discourage my students from using AI](#)

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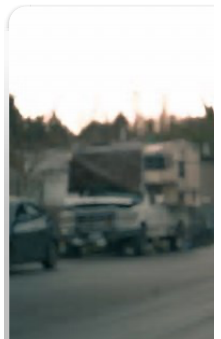
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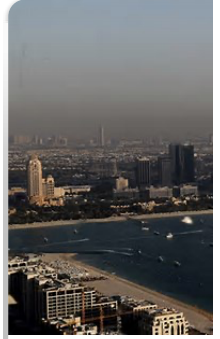
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in shot dead after killing spree in Kyiv

with AFP, Reuters) • 45m • 2 min read





ately clear

ine's capital Kyiv on Saturday, killing six people and wounding more than a dozen

ly and a young woman died in hospital from wounds sustained in the shooting. The
d.

es. He was shot dead after security forces spent 40 minutes in negotiations with him.

es and the loved ones," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in response to the deadly

' about the shooting in Ukraine?

ddress, President Zelenskyy said the mass shooting happened in the city's leafy
at 14 people had been injured.

l authorities had launched a "special operation" to apprehend the assailant, who he
et.

ies and several fatalities," Klitschko said.

vchenko said one of the wounded was a 12-year-old boy whose parents were killed in

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