



The Governor Who Parodied Himself

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Political campaigns are hard. Presidential campaigns in which your Selected Candidate is mediocre at best are harder. So wouldn't it be good to be able to outlaw all things that highlight this mediocrity?

Things like, say, effective parody?

This seems to be the thinking—I hope I'm channeling it accurately—of the governor of California, unhappy with a popular [video](#) available at the Mr Reagan YouTube channel.

The video's maker may have thought he was covering

every base by calling it a parody in the very title, an indignity of self-labeling that Jonathan Swift would never have permitted. People consuming Swift's satire were left to figure out for themselves that when he [proposed](#) that the children of poor people be eaten to render them "beneficial to the publick," he was engaging in satire.

In contrast, the Kamela Harris campaign ad parody in question is called "Kamala Harris Campaign Ad Parody." Clear. Unmistakable.

Like the [content](#).

Still, this video has not escaped the agenda of would-be censors like Governor Gavin Newsom. The parody uses a "deepfake" AI-generated voice that sounds like Harris. It's even got the Harris Cackle. So Newsom wants to outlaw it.

"Manipulating a voice in an 'ad' like this one should be illegal," he says. (Why?) "I'll be signing a bill ... to make sure it is."

But as Reclaim the Net [points out](#), California has *already* outlawed certain uses of deepfake media.

These forbidden uses do not, however, include parody, which is constitutionally protected speech.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.