

A note on Inception the movie

Jimut Bahan Pal
RKMVERI, Belur
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0.1 About Movie

Inception is a **2010 science fiction** action film written and directed by **Christopher Nolan**, who also produced the film. The film stars **Leonardo DiCaprio** as a professional thief who steals information by infiltrating the subconscious, and is offered a chance to have his criminal history erased as payment for the implantation of another person's idea into a target's subconscious. The ensemble cast additionally includes **Ken Watanabe, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Marion Cotillard, Ellen Page, Tom Hardy, Dileep Rao, Cillian Murphy, Tom Berenger, and Michael Caine**. Released to critical and commercial success, the film was named **one of the ten best films of the year** by **National Board of Review and American Film Institute**.

0.2 Plot Summary

Dominic Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio) is the foremost practitioner of the artistic science of extraction, inserting oneself into a subject's dreams to obtain hidden information without the subject knowing, a concept taught to him by his professor father-in-law, Dr. Stephen Miles. Dom's associates are Miles' former students, who Dom requires as he has given up being the dream architect for reasons he won't disclose. Dom's primary associate, Arthur, believes it has something to do with Dom's deceased wife, Mal, who often figures prominently and violently in those dreams, or Dom's want to go home and get back to his own reality, which includes two young children. Dom's work is generally in corporate espionage. As the subjects don't want the information to get into the wrong hands, the clients have zero tolerance for failure. Dom is also a wanted man, as many of his past subjects have learned what Dom has done to them. One of those subjects, Mr. Saito, offers Dom a job he can't refuse: to take the concept one step further into inception, namely planting thoughts into the subject's dreams without them knowing. Inception can fundamentally alter that person as a being. Saito's target is Robert Michael Fischer, the heir to an energy business empire, which has the potential to

rule the world if continued on the current trajectory. Beyond the complex logistics of the dream architecture of the case and some unknowns concerning Fischer, the biggest obstacles in success for the team become worrying about one aspect of inception which Cobb fails to disclose to the other team members prior to the job, and Cobb's newest associate Ariadne's belief that Cobb's own subconscious, especially as it relates to Mal, may be taking over what happens in the dreams.

0.3 Plot Analysis

In Inception, the director wanted to explore the idea of people sharing a dream space that gives a person the ability to access somebody's unconscious mind and what would that be used for. The majority of the film's plot takes place in these interconnected dream worlds. This structure creates a framework where actions in the real or dream worlds ripple across others. The dream is always in a state of production, and shifts across the levels as the characters navigate it.

The mission of the Inception team : to implant an idea deep in the subconscious of a corporate executive (Robert Fischer Jr.) so subtly that he will believe its his own idea, and choose not to follow in his fathers footsteps, thereby leaving business to others and allowing a rival competitor to dominate. Planting this idea requires such intricacy that it must be done on a very deep level, a third-level dream — a dream within a dream within a dream — where minutes in the higher-level dreams expand into months and years, and the danger of never waking up or falling into limbo escalate dramatically.

Some of the complex concepts shown in the movie are explained below

0.3.1 Types of dreams in Inception

The movie has two types of dreams:

1. **The basic dream-within-a-dream**, which Cobb uses to extract information from the subject's mind. An example of this is the opening dream sequence of the movie, where Cobb's team is trying to extract information from Saito's head (and they fail).
2. **The more elaborate multi-level dream** where Cobb's team is trying to perform inception on Fischer. For this multi-level dream you need to be under a powerful sedative.

0.3.2 Time Dilation

When one goes into inner levels of the dream, time will stretch. What is 10 hours in the real world would become 1 week in first level of dream and 6 months in the second level and so on.

0.3.3 Kick

A kick is a sudden jolt that can wake the dreamer up by one level. Usually the kick is a fall. In a basic dream a simple single kick is enough to wake the dreamer up by one level of dream. E.g.: Cobb is dunked into the bathtub which wakes him up by one level – this is a kick given to the sleeping body. A kick can also be given to the dreaming self, e.g. Arthur is shot in the head by Cobb and Arthur wakes up by one level.

Now, however, in a multi-level dream you are under a powerful sedative, so it's not that simple. A single kick is not enough to wake you up. This requires a synchronised kick. A pair of kicks, one kick to the sleeping body and one kick to the dreaming self.

To synchronise a kick, play music into the ears of the dreamer and then provide a kick to the sleeping body. Inside the dream, the dreamer hears music, which means its time to provide kick to the self inside the dream. This will cause two kicks to synchronise.

0.3.4 Limbo

Limbo is a shared subconscious state where the mind might fail to tell that it's a dream and can be lost there forever. If death happens in limbo then the dreamer wakes up all the way into reality bypassing all the levels of dreams. No kicks required.

There are two ways to get into Limbo.

1. If the architecture of the multi level dream consists of 3 levels and if one tries to go one level deeper than what was designed, one can reach limbo. In this case the person will still remember how one got to Limbo and what he or she were doing before that (**eg: when Cobb and Ariadne go from the hospital level further down to get Fischer**).
2. If one dies in a heavily sedated, multi-level dream, the person will be thrown into limbo but in this case he or she will not remember clearly how they got there and what they were doing before that (**eg: when Saito dies and reaches limbo, he ends up living there for many years**).

A person cannot reach limbo in a basic dream.

Finally, the plot analysis of a movie like Inception cannot be ended without an analysis of the amazing ending.

0.4 Ending

The ending scene of Inception leaves us with a spinning top making us wonder if it was all a dream or reality. There is the popular Inception theories around the ending with wedding ring (the ring is on inside dreams and is off

in reality and at the airport Cobb is not wearing a ring – hence that is reality). But besides that, the top wobbles. A wobble occurs when a spinning object changes speeds, especially when it is slowing down. We would not have a wobble on a spinning top if its speed remained constant, just like how the top looked in Mal's safe in their dream. The top wobbles which does mean it's eventually going to stop.

Inception, is a film that asks of its audience to participate in its unraveling. We don't just settle to 'watch' this film as an ordinary spectator; but carefully work it out, piece by tricky piece. If most films, by very definition, are made in order to entertain or engage viewers, Inception does more than that: it challenges them. It requires us to submit our full attention. The film is part sci-fi, part thriller, and part mind-bending psychological puzzle. And chances are one is going to need to watch it at least a second time to grasp exactly what is going on.