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Response to Group 4

Group 4’s presentation focused on *The Physics of the Future* by Michu Kaku. One topic that really stood out to me during their presentation was the idea that the depictions of the future in film are going to be used to predict the future of technology**.** Kaku quotes Weiser in stating, “He calmly replied that computer power was growing exponentially, with no end in sight. Do the math, he implied. It was only a matter of time.” Films like *Star Wars* and *Blade Runner* seem less and less outlandish as years go by. When they first came out, the idea of holographic communication was so far fetched that it seemed extremely futuristic. Now we are not that far from being able to develop technology like that, and in some ways we have developed technology of the same caliber. One thing futuristic films focus on a lot is extreme advances in medical technology. Someone will get hurt and doctors will be able to fix extreme issues with ease, like in *Star Wars* when Anakin’s arm is cut off and replaced with a bionic one. We can actually do that in today’s day in age, and this lead us to the question of, how many technological advances shown in film are left before we are all caught up?

It’s hard to say which technological advances in film are far-fetched or right around the corner. Thinking about the film *Back to the Future* today, it still seems like we are far from being able to master the concept of time travel. Although, Weiser’s idea of computers getting to the level that they are now also seemed outlandish at the time. It really all depends what the great minds of our time choose to focus their energy on improving. Kaku states, “Exponential growth is often hard to grasp, since our minds think linearly. It is so gradual that you sometimes cannot experience the change at all.” So we are technically getting closer and closer to the concept of time travel even if we may not know it.

Another way films can depict future advances in technology is with the idea that technology will soon surpass us. By this I mean technology is going to get so advanced that it will eventually have control over us. In *Blade Runner* the turing test is used to show that, in the film, one cannot tell the difference between an extremely advanced robot and a human. This directly relates to where we are getting to in nanotechnology. If we end up having things like nanobots that can do our laundry or fight our fights, then why would this technology need us?