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1. **Week 15:** In Chapter 5 of his book High-Tech Society, Rutsky examines how society now views technology as more than just a tool. He refers to this as "technological fetishism," in which we consider technology to be nearly magical and pay little attention to its construction or operation. Rather, we concentrate on its reputation, standing, and apparent authority. Rutsky connects this notion to Marx's theory of commodity fetishism, which holds that consumers appreciate goods without considering the labor that goes into making them. These days, we're ready to adore the newest technological device while frequently neglecting the more significant problems it may bring, such as inequality or exploitation. Rutsky pushes us to look past the obvious and consider how technology either supports or undermines the power structures that now govern society.
2. **Week 14:** In Chapters 4 and 5, Rutsky breaks down the idea of technological fetishism and how the common perception of high technology has changed. Rutsky connects technological fetishism to Marx's idea of commodity fetishism, showing how the appeal of technology’s appearance can often hide the social and economic factors that go into its production. He argues that items that reside in the high-teche category are not just tools. He discusses that they hold some kind of appeal which challenges the typical way one would think about technology. Rutsky also looks at how culture portrays technology, revealing society's worries about its fast and uncontrollable progress. In the end, Rutsky’s work encourages a deeper look at high-tech as something shaped by cultural values and human experiences. These chapters push readers to reflect on how technology affects our lives and the risks of seeing it in a way that overemphasizes its value
3. **Week 13:** In Chapter 3 of Rutsky’s book, he looks at the different ways people view technology, both as something that could improve society (utopian) and something that could lead to problems (dystopian). He explains that modernism sees technology as both a powerful force in art and something practical we can use. The chapter talks about the struggle between two ideas: one that focuses on the beauty and creativity of art, and the other that reduces art to just useful, functional purposes. Rutsky compares high modernism, which values artistic freedom, with the avant-garde’s desire to make art part of everyday life and use technology to change society. Movements like Futurism and Constructivism tried to bring art and technology together in new ways. In the end, Rutsky argues that the avant-garde’s push for art that is both useful and creative shows a way to combine art and technology, and he encourages readers to think about how these ideas still influence our culture today.
4. **Week 12:** In Chapter 2, Rutsky examines the film Metropolis by Fritz Lang to understand the complex relationship between modernism and technology. The movie highlights mixed emotions about how far technology has progressed, describing it as both structured and chaotic. This contradiction is shown through the ideas of head, heart, and hands, which represent different roles in society. Joh Fredersen represents cold logic and control, treating workers as just parts of a machine. On the other hand, Freder tries to bring together emotion and reason, showing the tension between machines and the human soul. Rutsky also examines the film's portrayal of gender, showing how technology ties into power and masculinity. He argues that Metropolis reflects an internal struggle within modernism, stressing the need to balance reason and emotion. In the end, Rutsky suggests that a balanced society requires combining these opposing forces, encouraging us to think about how technology shapes our identities and social connections.
5. **Follow up question 1:** Battleship Potemkin was great at creating an immersive experience. One of the highlights being through its editing. The montage style he used allowed viewers to feel the tension that had been built up. The Odessa Steps sequence is a strong example. The quick cuts and close-ups help pull the viewer into the moment and feel the chaos. In my opinion Metropolis is a different case as it draws the viewer into its world through visual design. The large sets and use of machinery create a strong sense of place. Instead of focusing on emotional moments, it immerses the viewer in the scale and structure of the city. Both films are immersive, but in different ways. One focuses more on emotional intensity and the other on visual setting.
6. **Follow up question 2:** I would say yes. I definatley feel that as time has passed, cinema has started to influence how people thought and viewed the world around them. Cinema introduced new ways of showing time, space, and emotion. Over time, that visual style of communication may have shaped how people processed information and expressed ideas.Pop Art shows a clear connection to this. Artists like Warhol used imagery from mass media, including film. The repetition of images, focus on well-known figures, and the use of flat, printed visuals suggest a familiarity with how film and television present people and events. Abstract Expressionism is less directly tied to cinema, but it still reflects a change in how emotion is expressed. The large scale and energy of the paintings could be seen as a response to a world where film had become a major part of culture. Even if the connection is not literal, the influence of film on how people responded to art was likely present. So while the two movements are different, both show signs of developing in a world where film had become part of daily life and thinking.
7. **Follow up question 3:** Early montage was very influential, both in film and in how people started to understand time, space, and meaning. Filmmakers like Eisenstein used montage to show that meaning could be created through editing by placing two images next to each other, a new idea could emerge. The impact on art and film along was huge. Overtime this impact spread to advertising and politcals as well. As for Baudrillard, I think cinema likely had a strong influence on his thinking. His idea of simulacra copies without an original fits well with how film often presents constructed versions of reality. In a movie, what one see's might look real, but it is often staged, edited, and shaped to create a certain effect. That kind of manufactured reality is very similar to the world Baudrillard describes, where signs and images replace real experience. So while Baudrillard does not write directly about early montage all the time, the way film creates meaning through images and edits seems closely related to his ideas about simulation and hyperreality. Film helped create a world where the image can feel more real than the thing itself, which is central to his work.
8. **Follow up question 4:** I believe this statement is accurate. Rutsky's argument in High Technē seems to connect ideas like Benjamin's "mechanical reproduction" and Baudrillard's "simulation." Both concepts deal with the relationship between the original and its copy, exploring how technology over time starts to shape its own realities. While Benjamin’s idea of mechanical reproduction targets the loss of the "aura" of an artwork when it is mass-produced, Baudrillard’s concept of simulation describes that what we consume can become its own reality. When this happens it would not be a reach to say it separates from the original. As technology evolved from mechanical to digital, it created a world where simulations and copies were no longer just reflections of reality but became entities in themselves. In the twenty-first century, with the growth of virtual realities an deep fakes, this change seems even more unavoidable. We now live in a world where the distinction between reality and simulation is increasingly unclear and more difficult which is something Baudrillard and Benjamin both recognized back in their time. Today, this still holds true because we are surrounded by technologies that craft new realities, whether through social media, gaming, or artificial intelligence. These technologies consistently challenge the traditional understanding of what is real or fake such as a simulation.