

Collaborative Interview

Obviously, I am unable to interview someone from the class for this, so I'll just write down my own thoughts on the prompt.

Sleep Dealer brings to light many interesting technological questions, but one in particular is what I was thinking about throughout the movie. Is more accessibility via technology always a good thing?

The protagonist of the film, Memo, is an avid electronics enthusiast. This leads to his little electronics experiment, which eventually leads to the death of his father. In my purview, the film is addressing a key topic with this subject: was the technological advancement of society responsible for the kind of interactions and rules that directly caused Memo's father to die? For instance, the world *Sleep Dealer* is set in is clearly some kind of dystopia where technology has slowly taken over the world. There are AI computers, people can control robots as if they were actually the robots themselves from across the globe, and the actual sleep dealer technology is the type of advancement that is seen as unfathomable in modern society. However, this advancement isn't just beneficial to everyone in society; we can clearly see that the government and the powers that be can exert more control over the general populace. This leads to increased surveillance, increased subordination of the people, and lesser freedom for everyday citizens. We see a clear example of this early in the film, where Memo and his father go to buy water and have to pass by the gate which is guarded by a machine gun. In what fathomable reality does a person have to go by a machine gun operated gate just to buy water? Why would the government even be monitoring someone who is just going to buy water? This same topic leads indirectly to

Memo's father's passing. Memo's communications device is identified by the government for being on the same frequency as military vehicles, and thus the government begins to target the household where they identify the device is. While Memo and his brother are not home at this point, their father is, and they see first-hand how Memo's father dies. While Memo feels guilty for an obvious reason, the greater reason this was even possible was because of increased government control exerted via technological advances.

The same theme is shown in the rest of the movie. We repeatedly see things that are technologically impossible in modern day society and we have to question if those are things that we even want. For instance, Luz literally sells people's memories for money. Why would anyone on Earth want their memories to be accessed, let alone bought by people who more than likely have less than pure intentions? When Luz accesses all of Memo's memories and then sells them to a buyer, we see another huge example of how technological advancement could actually be considered a regression of societal norms and general morality. Increased access does not mean unlimited access, and the general concept of privacy should never be violated to the extent that Luz violates Memo's during the movie.

When it comes to knowledge being produced over different mediums, this movie has definite parallels to technology even in modern society. Obviously a lot of these are conspiracies and memes, but there is so much discourse today about the government and the CIA tracking every movement by people through their phones. There are ways for people to track other people just via their phones or other remote devices (i.e. airtags). This is all new "knowledge" being produced by increasingly advanced technological mediums. The question *Sleep Dealer* brings up: are these advancements ones we even want? At what point does technology start to

fundamentally change society in a way that there is too much knowledge, knowledge that no one should know about one another?