Movie: Her (2013)

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The movie Her was released in 2013 and takes place in future Los Angeles, California. The main character is a middle aged man named Theodore who makes a living writing emotional love letters on behalf of other people. Theodore purchases a new operating system called OS1 that is fully voice commanded and much more intelligent than the typical operating systems we know today. The operating system is named "Samantha" and is capable of having full conversations with Theodore in addition to performing tasks such as checking and responding to e-mails, booking appointments, etc. Theodore is quite lonely after a recent break up and finds the conversations he has with Samantha comforting and emotionally satisfying. He start's spending more and more time in conversation with Samantha and ends up falling in love with his operating system.

Samantha exhibits an advanced level of artificial intelligence mimicking human behavior. She is able to learn, make jokes, and even experience human emotions such as anger and jealousy. The movie portrayed artificial intelligence in a positive way by showing how artificial intelligence can enhance user experience while interfacing with technology. The operating system OS1 provided autonomous tasks, offered advice on personal matters, and even made it's own decisions centered on improving Theodore's quality of life. Samantha aided Theodore in nearly all aspects of his life; including emotionally and sexually through surrogate sex.

The artificial intelligence in the movie is integrated into the operating system. Instead of using a mouse and keyboard the O/S interacts entirely through user speech. "Samantha" was the hostess of OS1 and handled any tasks that needed to be completed through speech. Currently, it is unlikely to create a system as polished and sophisticated as OS1 with today's technology. The amount of things Samantha was capable of doing is beyond what our technology of today has to offer. Artificial intelligence is still a new and growing field and has just recently arrived at the point where AI can pass the Turing test. While the concept portrayed in the movie is believable, I don't think we're close to creating a system as polished as the one portrayed in the movie 'Her', however it is very possible in the near future.

We do have text to speech systems available to us now through our cell phones and we do have digital avatars that help us complete tasks such as Apple's SIRI. Given another 10 years I believe we could very well see something like "Samantha" in the real world.

I enjoyed watching this film because it wasn't your typical Hollywood film revolving around action scenes and lacking character development. The film deviated from the norm by providing a plot revolved entirely around a relationship between a human and a computer system acting as if it were human. Human emotions and character development were the focus of the movie with an emphasis on how fragile humans can be emotionally. I would recommend this movie for a glimpse into the future of what we can expect to see in the not too distant future.