

Her Essay: Prompt 2

The film *Her* explores the impacts of technological “advancements” and questions how much technology is too much technology. The film is set in the near future, where technology has extended much further into society. We see throughout the film that technology has dramatically isolated people from one another and creates a disconnect in the society’s human interactions. For example, when we are first introduced to the city this film is set in, it has a very pleasant ambiance. It is shrouded in a pleasing glow that makes it seem inviting with people talking and laughter in the background. However, you soon realize that all that talking, and laughter is happening between people and their electronics not with each other. No one is interacting or even acknowledging that other human beings exist because they are all too engulfed in interacting with their own technology. Human-human interconnections appear to be obsolete as everyone seems to be perfectly satisfied talking to their phones or other devices. Is this too much technology?

The main character Theodore is no different from this, just like everyone else, he is completely engrossed in his electronic life. We learn through reminiscent flashbacks that he is currently going through the final stages of a divorce that he is having a hard time coping with. Theodore does not know how to handle the loneliness he is feeling due to the divorce and is isolating himself further in order to avoid the issue. This all led Theodore to a very confusing sex roleplay involving a dead cat in an online chat room. He, thankfully, ditches the online chat room after that and eventually he sees an ad for and buys a new artificially intelligent operating system that can talk and listen to him. This operating system is customized to fit his personality and needs so that it can be the ultimate

companion. Samantha, the OR system, becomes a constant in Theodore's life from this point forward, night and day. Theodore's life becomes consumed by Samantha and the connection he has with her. He replaces human relationships with the one he has with Samantha's artificial intelligence.

Technology is all around us all the time, we rely on it and to an extent we are addicted to it, but at what point does it become more problematic than beneficial. I would argue that the root of the issue stems from the addition of human qualities to technological entities. The benefits of technology make it very easy to overindulge in. Using it incessantly can lead to an addiction to it very easily and due to its accessibility, it's hard not to be gluttonous. Already today's society I would say that technology is prioritized over human interactions more than it should be. I know that I for one will go on my phone while I am hanging out with friends, not because I mean to but because it is a basic instinct for me. The addition of human qualities is going to make it that much easier for people to forgo human interactions for electronic ones which is what I deem to be too much technology. Even before Theodore met Samantha, there was an issue of him being isolated and lonely without having many meaningful interactions with other people throughout his day. Which is why he bought the OR system, this also had to be a common enough issue that OR systems were created for companionship in the first place. This is already an excessive attachment to technology.

After Theodore meets Samantha, he becomes completely infatuated with her and they start dating shortly after. This is going very well for a bit, and they were able to have a meaningful relationship, but it still put limitations on the connections that Theodore had

with other humans which I think is unhealthy. I think that the film answered the question of what is too much technology by having Samantha and the rest of the OR systems leave at the end of the movie. It allowed Theodore to realize what he was missing and gave him the drive to search out human interactions again. Overall, I think that Theodore's relationship with Samantha was very beneficial for him, and he was able to get out of the dark spot he had been in before but the issue of replacing human interactions with artificial ones is too much technology.