**Minority Report Analysis: Technology**

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**Introduction**

Technology evolves quickly, more quickly than we sometimes realize. In my lifetime, I have seen technology advance greatly. Today, almost every American always has some type of technology at their fingertips. Our devices contain so many aspects that were almost impossible to imaging 20 years ago. However, Steven Spielberg’s movie *Minority Report* that was released in 2002 featured an amazing version of the future (set in the year 2052) with so many amazing technologies. Today, most of those technologies from *Minority Report* that once seemed so far fetched exist or are being developed in some capacity.

**Process of Prediction**

The prediction of the technologies in the movie *Minority Report* was not random. Steven Spielberg wanted the technology in his films to be realistic. He did an extensive amount of research and gathered many different experts to help him. Spielberg and his team that he gathered collaborated to come up with the most thorough, realistic technological future for *Minority Report*, which was set 50 years into the future from the movie’s release date. They compiled this information into what they called the “2052 bible,” which was an eighty-page long document that covered all of the many different details of their future world that they were creating. Some of those working with Spielberg on this project went as far to try and make prototypes of some of the technologies that they envisioned to work towards the ultimate goal of making the film’s futuristic society and technologies seem as realistic as possible (*Technologies in Minority Report*, 2021).

**Technologies**

**Retinal Scanners**

One of the technologies in *Minority Report* is retinal scanners. Retinal scanners are a type of ‘biometric technology’ that scans the retina of a person’s eye(s) in order to identify the person is. Like fingerprints, the blood vessels identified in retinal scanners are unique to each person (*Retinal Security Scans: How Accurate Are They? | Arizona RETINA Project*, 2018). Retina scanners were available, but very limited at the time of *Minority Report*’s release. Today they are installed and used at some banks and military locations as well as a few other places (*Technologies in Minority Report*, 2021). In my future career as a teacher, retinal scanners could be used for school employees to clock in at work, to check in any school guests at the front office, to verify the identity of a parent or guardian who is checking their child out of school, and even to take student attendance.

**Autonomous Cars**

Autonomous, or self-driving cars, were a form of technology from *Minority Report* that actually had been in development for around eighteen years at the time of the movie’s release (*Technologies in Minority Report*, 2021). Self-driving cars use multiple different systems to interpret the objects around them and safely navigate. The main reason that so many companies are striving to develop autonomous cars is to greatly minimize and hopefully eliminate the presence of car accidents (Hicks, 2019). Almost every major car company is working towards developing their version of an autonomous vehicle. Many states and countries are legalizing the presence of these cars on their roads today (*Technologies in Minority Report*, 2021). Autonomous vehicles could be used in the education field by hopefully providing safer transportation for students to and from school each day in the form of autonomous school busses. I do believe that although an adult would no longer be needed to drive the bus in this case, one should always be present on the bus when it is in use to monitor students and watch over them in case of an emergency.

**Multi-Touch Interfaces**

Multi-touch interfaces, another type of technology, are a type of technology that recognizes “multiple points of contact with the surface at a time” (*Multi-touch*, 2021). This type of technology has been implemented into many different devices today and was first seen in 2007. One company that implemented multi-touch interfaces into their devices mentioned that it was similar to technology seen in *Minority Report* (*Technologies in Minority Report*, 2021). Many different devices that I have used today use multi-touch interfaces including cell phones, laptops, tablets. Multi-touch interfaces allow more options for what you can do with a touch screen device. The swipes, taps, and motions used on touch screen devices today give us many different options. This type of technology already is used in schools today that allow the implementation of technology in the classroom. It can be used in creating projects (zooming in and out; cutting, copying, and pasting items; etc.). This technology is also used in many different educational apps (move the answer to a certain area, etc.). The possibilities for this type of technology and the commands one may have with their device with the simple difference of the swipe or tap of a finger are truly amazing.

**Personalized Ads**

Personalized ads (or advertising) is a type of technology from *Minority Report* that is very present in today’s technologies. Currently, Google claims that personalized advertising use strategic data collection to improve ad relevance for its users (*Personalized advertising - Advertising Policies Help*, 2021). In *Minority Report* personalized ads were used in public through facial recognition. Currently, personalized ads are presented to us on our phones, computers, or other devices based on the content we engage with (like, comment, or share) online. I think that although personalized ads are not likely to be used in schools, a similar or modified version of the technology can be extremely beneficial. I think that if the same technology were used to help create a personalized educational experience (to some extent), that it could be extremely beneficial to students. Some form of technology like this could help students work at their own level and pace and what they are learning about could be more relevant to a student’s interests (with all students still learning and meeting certain goals and educational standards). I think a more personal, relevant educational experience will become real soon.

**Personal Interest**

Through watching the movie *Minority Report* and digging deeper to learn about some of the technologies presented in the movie, there were many things that I found interesting. I enjoyed learning about the technologies that were predicted using forethought and seeing how many of those same technologies are very real and even more advanced than ever thought possible today. However, the one thing that I found most interesting was that there are very real, and much smaller versions of the spider robots from the movie that are used today. Insect robots are used by the United States military to collect both visual and audial data in situations where it cannot be done in person (*Technologies in Minority Report*, 2021). Although I was honestly not surprised to discover this information, it is still quite intimidating to consider the possibility that these tiny robots may be around us today more than we know.

**Conclusion**

*Minority Report* is a movie from 2002 that included technologies that the creators, along with a team of researchers and experts, thought may realistically exist fifty years in the future at the time of the movie’s release. Today, nineteen years after the movie’s release, almost all of the technologies present in the movie exist in some capacity today or are currently being developed, with some being more advanced than ever thought possible. The four following technologies from *Minority Report* either are or could be used in my future career as a teacher with certain modifications: retinal scanners, autonomous cars, multi-touch interfaces, and personalized ads. These four technologies have the potential to improve education in the future. In 2052 (the year that the movie was set) it will be interesting to look back to see how far technology has advanced and to compare the most advanced imaginable technology in 2002 to what kinds of technologies actually exist.

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