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# FINAL PORTFOLIO

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English 181 Wenxin Lu



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# **Cover Letter For English Final Portfolio**

## **Preface: A new way to behold writing**

The first-year writing class I took this semester not only improved my writing techniques, but also gave me a new perspective on writing. Before I came into this class, my idea of writing was that writing was just a process of putting my idea and imagination down onto the paper. However, during this semester, through adjusting to different genres, citing others' work to increase my paper's credibility and revising my writing under suggestions from the Writing Center, I realized that writing, as a complex process, is much more than expressing myself externally. It is also about absorbing outside information, organizing my logic and making them understandable internally. Moreover, writing is social. It is a way to interact with others and learn from others' thoughts. Reflecting upon this semester's studying, I believe that I have achieved all three outcomes.

## **Outcome 1 Compose texts in multiple genres.**

Throughout this semester, I have learned and practiced writing blog posts, a literary analysis letter, a Pecha Kucha presentation, a paper proposal, a paper bibliography and a formal researched argument paper. Specifically, I learned how to adjust to two extremely different thinking modes for the literary letter and the researched argument paper. While the literary letter was very personal, informal and emotional, the researched argument paper was more analytical and objective. Firstly, for a literary letter, I need to be enough familiar with the book in order to draw from and expand the story. The goal of this letter is to rewrite a same paragraph under a different background to see whether the differences of media that one story is written in might

affect the content and tone of the story. For example, the story written by a person in his diary would be more personal and contain much more information than the same story he writes in his letter to his friend. During the writing process, I learned to stand in one fictional character's shoes and think from his perspective so as to create a real and genuine feeling that could fit the character's personality. In my letter, empathizing with the character, imagining what would he think with no one around and unifying this imagination with the original story, I wrote:

The world now belongs to younger generations and I may die in another short forty years which, compared to the lifespan of the Earth or the universe, is as transient as a blink of the eye. It is not death that I fear. I always imagine that time is like a river, flowing forward and forward, and our lives are walking in the streams; when deaths come, people simply walk out of the river and are abandoned by the time. But how can I endure this? I worked so hard for half of my life to climb to this position, to make this amount of salary and to attract penniless girls like Eunice. Oh, Eunice, Eunice. Can you feel me? Can you understand me? or can you? My dear, dear diary?

On the contrary, a researched argument paper should be more formal and scholarly. To achieve that, establishing an appropriate theme and keeping connected with and responding to this one theme are not enough. Thus, for the purpose of making my paper be more credible and convincing, I also explored the topic through citing some professionals' work and integrating them into my arguments. In my researched argument paper, being careful with every word choice to avoid informal words, using citations from professionals and expressing my opinions objectively, I wrote:

Nevertheless, communication through electrical devices also has its disadvantage. For example, the constant pings of texts and twitter notifications are huge distractions because whenever our phones flash, we can't help turning to our phones to check out the newest information. Even when we are in a conversation with others, we might also instinctively reach out to our phones. This behavior implicitly shows that we are more inclined to use phones instead of talking with our conversation partners and thus make them feel uncomfortable and devalued. As MIT professor Turkle Sherry recollects an experience in her speech "The Flight from Conversation: How technology is shaping our relationships" that when her communication partner consistently picks up the phone during a conversation, she feels "terrible—I'd never say that, but it does. I feel I'm being put on pause. It's bad when I do it to other people, but then I don't really think of how they feel when I do it to them." That is to say that the absentmindedness created by incoming messages on electrical devices might distract and hinder the following communication and the indifference and inconsideration expressed when one picks up his phone can hurt people easily.

In sum, during the writing process of these six kinds of genres, I gradually gained a flexibility to deal with different kinds of writing in the future.

### **Outcome 2 Critical thinking and Reading resulting in writing.**

There are two parts in this outcome. The first one is about where and how to find scholarly and reliable information and how to use the abstract to understand the essence of one article instead of reading the whole passage. Throughout this semester, I learned to differentiate

scholarly journal articles, popular reading and other types of resources; also, from the professor's and classmates' recommendations, I got familiar with several scholarly websites such as JSTOR and Google Scholar and learned to read the abstract of one article first to ensure this article is relevant and useful. The second part of this outcome is about how to correctly and ethically cite others' work in my paper and how to artfully integrate these citations in my paper in order to better illustrate my points. In this class, my professor introduced me to the very helpful Purdue Owl website, which contains sufficient information about citation structures for different sources and now I can skillfully use the MLA formatting style. Furthermore, in addition to how to correctly cite a source, I also learned a very distinctive and useful way to integrate citations into my paper: quotation sandwich structure. Using this structure, I would first introduce the citation and then after the citation, illustrate the relationship between the citation and my thesis and its application in my paper. This way can make my arguments more clear and convincing.

My bibliography of my final paper can show the first part of outcome 2 that I have grasped the way to cite one source:

Turtle, Sherry. "Connected, but Alone?" Online video. Ted2012. Feb. 2012.  
Web. 26 Oct. 2015

This video talks about how social media redefines the way people communicate to and connect with one another by seemingly shortening the distance but in fact increasing the distances between human's hearts. This speech illustrates a very good point about why even when people feel lonely and isolated, they still prefer online chatting than face-to-face communication. I believe that this point complements my idea that online chatting can not only provide closeness but also distance which makes people more comfortable. In

this way, this video can further help me develop the meanings behind changes in relationship between human and technology.

One of the blog posts can effectively show this part of outcome 2 that by using writing techniques like quotation sandwich, I could effectively integrate citations into my paper:

In the article, when the author talks about the nature of limitations, he mentions one main critical idea of his opinion that “by developing technology, our life can have new meaning and experience, so we should regard this extension of limitations as cultural growth.” However, the author strongly refutes by pointing out that “this extension is not enriching but disintegrative and people’s increasing natural tolerance towards drunkenness is an example.” In other words, the author believes that though developing technology and extending human life are seemingly amazing breakthroughs in human history, there is always a cost behind those progressions.

To sum up, by this whole semester’s writing practice, I believe that I was getting better in analyzing and summarizing others’ opinions, developing my own ideas based on these opinions and using logic and citations together to make arguments.

### **Outcome 3 Writing as a process**

This outcome contains three parts: drafting my own work, evaluating and analyzing it and finally reediting it. This process might be repetitive and exhausting, but this is also a process during which I can objectively evaluate my work, recognize its weaknesses and try to revise it. When I was in my first period of drafting my paper, in order to get a better idea of what I wanted

to write about, I answered several crucial questions like how to build my thesis, how to support my thesis and what kind of information should I include in my paper. According to my answers, I drafted an outline for my rough draft of the final paper. The following is one part of it which can clearly show a potential structure of the final paper:

How I will support and expand on my thesis: I will first list two examples to support my thesis that technology is changing people's way of communication from the movie 'Her' which are people avoiding direct conversation by finding specialists like Theodore to write love letters and instead of having relationships with human, many people fall in love with artificial intelligence. And then I will divide my body paragraphs into three parts, each talking about one aspect from the relationship between human and electrical devices; the relationship between human and human; and the relationship between human and inner selves. Totally, body paragraphs made up by these three points can summarize and illustrate my thesis.

Then, after I had the outline, I moved forward to the second part: evaluating and analyzing my work. This second part was indispensable because only during this period could I read my work from a third person's perspective to examine whether an outside reader could understand my paper and whether there were some loopholes in my logic or reasoning. If there were, then I would search for and learn from some professional articles to improve my thoughts. During my evaluation, I listed all the weaknesses of my paper and then I revised it according to this list. For example, in my rough draft for the final paper, there were not enough connections between my arguments and the movie that I wanted to talk about. Thus, I added more direct citations and more scene descriptions from the movie to my paper. Moreover, since I talked about three

aspects of relationship that technology has changed, it was very easy for readers to get confused if there were no clear boundaries between each aspect, so I revised my paper by adding subheadings before each aspect. The following is one paragraph of my rough draft which compared to the version of final paper, was a little unclear and lack of structure:

First of all, regarding to the relationship between humans and electrical devices, the emergence of smart phones has triggered a significant change that communication through various kinds of electrical devices and mobile phone software has gradually taken over face-to-face talk. Just like how Samantha is introduced to Theodore in the movie: “This is the first artificially intelligent operating system, an intuitive entity that listens to you, understands you and knows you. It is not only an operating system. It is a consciousness.” [...] To start, electrical devices are accessible whenever we feel lonely, anxious and unsure about ourselves. This accessibility gives us a false feeling of companionship. Moreover, as contradictory and complex as human nature is, we are afraid of not only lonesomeness, but also intimacy. Devices can just provide us with appropriate amount of concern and a comfortable distance with which we can feel private and in control. Additionally, living in a world changing so fast, people can hardly feel safe to tell their innermost thoughts and feelings to anyone but their exclusive devices which, under no circumstances, would betray them. [...] From these descriptions from the article, it is clear that reaching out for our phones has become an involuntary and automatic impulse when we are confused or stressed as if grabbing a phone in our hands can bring mental power and relief.

After repeated revisions, the following is one part of my final paper in which I cut original one paragraph into two parts, one exclusively for citations from the movie and the other one for second resources and my arguments:

#### The relationship between humans and technology

In the movie, technology represented by computers, phones is so prevalent that it is a crucial and indispensable component in people's lives. When Theodore is at work, he uses his computers and software to write love letters for clients. When he gets off work, he immediately puts on his earplugs, listening to music, checking voice box or hearing news report. When he gets home, he starts to play online virtual games. There is hardly one moment that he stays away from technology products. However, Theodore is not the only one who builds his life on technology. No matter they are in the elevator, on the street or in the subway, instead of talking to each other, people are all wearing earplugs and talking to their phones. Moreover, when Theodore talks to Samantha about his writing, he says: "Sometimes when I write something good, I become my favorite writer." Samantha responds: "I like that you can say that about yourself." Then Theodore continues: "I don't think I can say it to anybody, but I feel I can say it to you. I feel like I can say anything to you." Next Samantha answers: "But I don't have a body you know. I can't..." Theodore quickly cut her sentences: "You feel real to me. I wish you were in this room with me right now. I wish I could put my arms around you. I wish I could touch you." From those fragments in the movie, it is very clear that the development in technology has made electrical devices a pivotal and necessary element in humans' life; lifelike personification techniques

in voice and thinking mode has facilitated technology to be more acceptable and even created a illusion of real people talking.

Technology has exerted similar effects on our real world. Our reliance on technology is growing day by day. For example, even when people are sitting closely to one another, they prefer using phones to start a communication rather than greeting each other by making eye contact. How does technology have such a huge impact on people's life? To start with, nowadays, electrical devices are so universal that they are accessible whenever we feel lonely, anxious or unsure about ourselves. This accessibility might give us a false feeling of companionship. Moreover, as contradictory and complex as our human nature is, we are afraid of not only loneliness, but also intimacy. Electrical devices can just provide us with an appropriate amount of concern and a comfortable distance with which we can feel private and in control. Additionally, living in a world changing so fast, people can hardly feel safe to tell their innermost thoughts and feelings to anyone but their exclusive devices which, under no circumstances, would betray them. Just like how writer Paul Barnwell says in his article "My students don't know how to have a conversation" that "students look perplexed, or even fidget in their seats when the teacher proposes a project of holding a conversation. Without a student facilitator asking a question first, those kids are unable to converse effectively. At that time, they subconsciously reach for their phones." From Barnwell's descriptions, it is clear that our reliance on technology has already grown to a point where reaching out for our phones has become an involuntary and automatic impulse when we are confused or stressed.

In sum, both in the movie and in our real world, technology has greatly elevated the importance of electrical devices to human life and thus redefines the relationship between human and technology.

In sum, by objectively evaluating my rough draft to find out my weaknesses and trying to revise them in my final paper, I gradually gained the ability to think from a third person's perspective and make my paper understandable at the first time.

**Conclusion: My journey has just started**

I have successfully completed all three outcomes in this semester and gained many new abilities which were all very helpful in constructing my paper. I believe that I can further use those new writing techniques to explore more writing genres and topics. My journey of improving my writing and enjoying writing has just started.

## **Showcase**

### **Blog Post #1**

The radio introduces a Persistent Surveillance System which uses planes with cameras to video the whole city. There are obvious benefits of this system: In big and populous cities like New York, there are crimes like homicide, rape and assault happening everyday. Compared to traditional police operations, this system can go back in time and locate the criminals in minutes, hugely retrenching the cost of manpower and resources. More importantly, when a crime organization is too big to tackle, this 'sky eye' is essential in providing comprehensive details of criminal members' traces in order to crack the crime cartel at one stroke. Furthermore, as common sense indicates that people would not dare to commit a crime when they know police are watching them, this system can not only trace malefactors, but also deter potential criminals.

However, many people object, on the grounds that as conventional wisdom shows, the system would soon trickle from military use down to ordinary people's daily life. Because of the cameras, we will actually live under total exposure. With access to this volume of information, this system actually asks us to give an exorbitant level of trust to government which, as history can prove, may bloat to totalitarianism or even worse. In addition, not everybody can stick to moral choices. For instance, J. Edgar Hoover, with unparalleled status and power as the first director of FBI, committed personal assaults, blackmails and even assassinations in the name of protecting people and fighting crimes, the same excuses might given by any government. Now, with government's loosened policy about surveillance and the abusive actions by special agencies, handing more information and power to government is unimaginable.

In sum, though the benefits of this system are concrete (decreased crime rate) and the weaknesses are conceptual (invisible privacy invasion), we still need more careful consideration.

## **Blog Post #2**

Through depicting four kinds of relational trajectories (familial, homosocial, sexual and racial) and using psychoanalytic theory, Hale addresses Shelley's implicit concern on the forces of globalization, imperialism and New World slavery in her article, "Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*". My favorite part is the familial part in which Hale illustrates that the domestic and extra familial spheres are not mutually exclusive. She uses the relationship between Alphonse and Caroline and between Vitor and Elizabeth to prove her idea that this family in *Frankenstein* is an embodiment of the universal gender inequality in which wives submit to husbands' protection and care and young girls are given like prizes to men.

One close reading of *Frankenstein* is about Victor's thoughts when he encounters the gaze of the monster, "A new species... would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs." This quote shows completely Victor's narcissistic quality. Actually what he loves about the creature, the monster, is his own psyche reflected in the monster's gaze. In addition, the secondary source that Hale uses is a quote from Schoene - Harwood, "men who feel secure enough in their masculinity to display feelings of domestic affection...who seem perfectly balanced in their manliness which incorporates rather than categorically excludes the feminine." This quote explains the homosocial relationship between Alphonse and Henry and reason that men exclude feminine from their own companionship. However, Hale does not use the quote to explain her idea; instead, she develops her own idea based on part of the quote.

This quote only serves to as a beginning of her point that Henry and Alphonse both have feminine,nurturing qualities.

When I first saw the word 'homosocial', I misunderstood it to have a similar meaning as 'homosexual'. But as I read the following paragraphs, I find that homosociality actually does not mean an erotic, sexual relationship between same sex but rather an most intimate and intense relationship in which both men express a longing for one another without actual sex drive. This is my understanding of this word but I was not very sure about it so I looked it up in wikipedia. In wikipedia, 'homosociality' means same-sex relationships that are not of a romantic or sexual nature, such as friendship, mentorship, etcetera.

In sum, by using close reading, secondary source and appropriate terms, Hale expertly analyzes the four trajectories in Frankenstein.

## Blog Post #3

The scholarly source that I am very interested in is called 'Technology and the Human Limit'.

The author is Baker Brownell. Here is the link:

[http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.emory.edu/stable/1976553?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=technology&searchText=human&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dtechnology%2Bhuman%26amp%3Bprq%3Dher%2Bmovie%26amp%3Bgroup%3Dnone%26amp%3Bwc%3Don%26amp%3Bacc%3Don%26amp%3Bhp%3D25%26amp%3Bfc%3Doff%26amp%3Bso%3Drel&seq=1#page\\_thumbnails\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.emory.edu/stable/1976553?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=technology&searchText=human&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dtechnology%2Bhuman%26amp%3Bprq%3Dher%2Bmovie%26amp%3Bgroup%3Dnone%26amp%3Bwc%3Don%26amp%3Bacc%3Don%26amp%3Bhp%3D25%26amp%3Bfc%3Doff%26amp%3Bso%3Drel&seq=1#page_thumbnails_tab_contents)

This article mainly illustrates the relationship between current technology development and human's inherent limitation. The author believes that there are both physiological and psychological limitations conditioning human being. With no measure in our expansion into environment and no boundary in our ambitions, we have already transcended our due limitations by overusing thousands of mechanical contrivances to change the world by our wishes.

In the article, when the author talks about the nature of limitations, he mentions one main critical idea of his opinion that "by developing technology, our life can have new meaning and experience, so we should regard this extension of limitations as cultural growth." However, the author strongly refutes by pointing out that "this extension is not enriching but disintegrative and people's increasing natural tolerance towards drunkenness is an example." In other words, the author believes that though developing technology and extending human life are seemingly amazing breakthroughs in human history, there is always a cost behind those progressions.

The ideas about technology overuse and intemperate human extension can help me develop my paper. With a similar technology theme, this article mainly focuses on modern aggregations of industrial power's improper, unconfined dynamic patterns and functional structures in the physical world. Differently, the reflection on technology in 'Super Sad True Love Story' contemplates on the technology's irreversibly mental influence on the way people get in touch with each other and the degree people rely on technology in a soon future. These two aspects can perfectly complement each other. I think that combining both the physical and mental influence of technology, my paper can form a more complete analysis about a progressing relationship between human and technology.

## **Blog Post #4**

How I will build to my thesis in my introduction: I will first introduce the movie 'Her' in which technology is so developed that it is intervening and perpetually changing the ways people communicate with one another. Based on the movie, I will lead to my thesis about how technology renovates and redefines three aspects of human's connection to the world.

How I will support and expand on my thesis: I will first list two examples to support my thesis that technology is changing people's way of communication from the movie 'Her' which are people avoiding direct conversation by finding specialists like Theodore to write love letters and instead of having relationships with human, many people fall in love with artificial intelligence. And then I will divide my body paragraphs into three parts, each talking about one aspect from the relationship between human and electrical devices; the relationship between human and human; and the relationship between human and inner selves. Totally, body paragraphs made up by these three points can summarize and illustrate my thesis.

The information needs to come first: I believe that firstly I need to introduce the main story of the movie 'Her' and the conflicts of communication ways as opening words. Because I want to start from an exaggerated future way of communication to trigger people's reflection on how in reality technology is altering our world.

The examples of passages I will focus on from my primary source (movie 'Her') are: "You seem like a person, but you're just a voice in a computer." and "Theodore: I can't believe that I am having this conversation with my computer. Samantha: You are not. You're having this conversation with me." And examples of the quotes that I plan to use from my secondary sources are "we're setting ourselves up for trouble -- trouble certainly in how we relate to each other, but also trouble in how we relate to ourselves and our capacity for self-reflection." from "Connected

but alone” and “Text messaging – 92% of teens in romantic relationships spent time text messaging with their partner at least occasionally. Talking on the phone - 87% spent time talking on the phone with their significant other.” from “How Teens Incorporate Digital Platforms and Devices Into Their Romantic Relationships”.

## Blog Post #5

I want to talk about Outcome 2 which is about critical thinking and reading resulting in writing.

Throughout this semester, I have learned how to find a scholar and reliable article and information sources, how to use the abstract to understand the essence of one article instead of reading the whole passage and how to correctly and ethically cite others' work in my paper. For example, in the rough draft of my paper "Mirroring our reality: how people desire closeness but hide behind electrical devices in 'Her' ", I cite several sentences from an article called "My students don't know how to have a conversation" in which the author describes a situation when his students can not have a conversation without phones. And then I evaluate his description by saying that "From these descriptions from the article, it is clear that reaching out for our phones has become an involuntary and automatic impulse when we are confused or stressed as if grabbing a phone in our hands can bring mental power and relief."

By using a structure of quotation sandwich which first introduces the article I want to cite and then after the citation, integrates this citation into my own paper by illustrating the relationship between the article and my thesis and its application in my paper. This is a new skill I have learned which I believe, has made my paper more clear and understandable because if I do not connect the citation with my paper, it will be confusing for readers to build a connection.

Moreover, despite increasing my paper's credibility, citation can even further push my thesis forward to a higher and deeper level because when I am citing others' words, I am exchanging ideas with outside, a process which can trigger idea conflicts and generate new realizations. So I really believe that by this semester, I have improved my ability to read, think, cite and evaluate critically.

## Literary Analysis Letter

June 13

Dear Diary,

I am scared. I am so scared. I lost my previous job position and a huge amount of money for which I have been working for a long time. With those young kids and the SUK DIK guy, I am afraid that I am already falling behind the time. The world now belongs to younger generations and I may die in another short forty years which, compared to the lifespan of the Earth or the universe, is as transient as a blink of the eye. It is not death that I fear. I always imagine that time is like a river, flowing forward and forward, and our lives are walking in the streams; when deaths come, people simply walk out of the river and are abandoned by the time. But how can I endure this? I worked so hard for half of my life to climb to this position, to make this amount of salary and to attract penniless girls like Eunice. Oh, Eunice, Eunice. Can you feel me? Can you understand me? or can you? My dear, dear diary? Even if I can live forever, how can I live without Eunice's love and her company? I am so confused and lost. Haha, diary, you must wonder why human beings are always this contradicted, never seem to know what they want or is this just a problem of mine due to my increasing age? I must say that every human being is born to be bewildered and ambivalent and this is exactly why we are also born to be inquisitive, exploring and longing for immortality: to give us time to think things through.

You see, human nature is really elusive and intractable, right? Just when I was writing, I made a decision to tell you one of my dreams. I had tried very hard to forget it but I could not. I want to share this with anyone and I know that you are loyal and will never betray me. Some days ago, I dreamed that the person on the airplane who was captured and tormented by those soldiers was not that fat man but was Eunice! At first, I was even elated. I thought that maybe this is a chance

given by God for me to impress her. With the blurry and jumpy pictures, I knew that at that time I nearly dreamed of a thousand ways to save her, even by sacrificing myself. But I just could not move. I shouted, cried and begged. But the only thing I could do was to stand here, grabbing my apparat, watching her being towed away. From the day I met her, I was sure that she was my girl, my goddess, my only one. I had never questioned that. But when I woke up that day, horrified, shamed and guilty, I began to reflect on the reasons why I abandoned her even though I was so certain about my love. Was that because my love for her was still not strong enough to overcome my instinct to protect myself? Or was it due to mankind's deep-rooted vicious nature to standby while others suffer? Oh, don't judge me, my dear diary. I know that the second one seems to be my excuse. I have already blamed myself so much that I was even kind of relieved by my demotion and discrimination by youngsters because maybe this was the way that God wanted me to atone for my sins.

Today is June 13 and I met Eunice on June 1. I am feeling so vacant and so missing her only after 12 days! Who can say this is not love? Dare you, my diary? Recently I am really having a hard time with no one behind me. I really hope that she can fly to New York and console me! But I know this is not possible because I botched another thing. I said all the things about her freckles, about how we ate dinner together at da Tonino and about how I pictured us reading books to each other on Noah's show. Even now, I can not remember what I was thinking. I really should not tell this story, especially on live broadcast to nearly everyone! I only hope that Eunice would not accidentally hear it. But still I owe her an apology. However, to be honest, my diary, I am even a little bit excited that I now have another excuse to write to Eunice, though not a good one. Is there any possibility that she may be moved that even though I was so drunk and carried away, all I could think of were her and the time we spent together? Oh, now I am being foolish.

Foolish enough to dream insanely that someone may thank you because you spread the story of her crazy night with a old man!

But still I need to write her. I want her to know that with the limited years left in my life, I want every day to be full of her, or full of love to her.

## **Reflection for literary analysis letter**

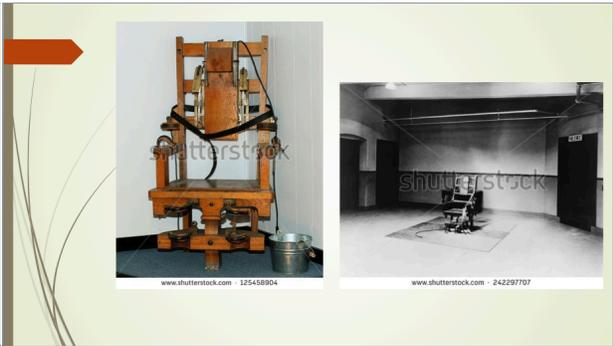
When I saw Lenny's email to Eunice, I was immediately attracted because this is the first time Lenny wrote to someone other than himself. In the email, Lenny seemed to be very polite and gentlemanlike. And out of question, he showed his love for Eunice. This email let me think that what was Lenny thinking about during the time he was demoted? What would Lenny think about his disclosing the story of Eunice and him to nearly everybody? How would he feel about Eunice then? Of course, Lenny would not tell Eunice those specific feelings. But he may write in his diary. And this difference leaves me a huge space to imagine what Lenny thought, how he felt, what he would do next and why he would do it. Those questions lead to my creation of Lenny's diary which notes nearly all the things happened after he met Eunice. Also, I believe that as a grown man or even an 'old' man, Lenny certainly can see things beyond love and then it is my work to reveal his thoughts other than love. I think that his thoughts may include love, marriage, responsibility, society, occupation, savins, life, death and so on. So I chose several of them to expand to become my imagination of Lenny's diary.

# Pecha Kucha presentation slides

**Death Penalty**

- Countries
- Quote
- Electric Chair

The infographic shows various execution methods: Quartering, Stoning, Crucifixion, Beheading, Buried Alive, and Burning. The list of countries includes: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Moldova, Monaco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, United States, United Kingdom, and Venezuela.



**By 2014**

<b>Total countries(no regions):</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>Countries which have abolished Death Penalty:</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>Countries which still keep using Death Penalty:</b>	<b>51</b>

A graphic of a red splatter with a heart shape in the center. To the right is a list of countries: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Moldova, Monaco, Mozambique, Nepal, North & South Korea, Pakistan, Rwanda, Singapore, and Taiwan.

"If statistics are any indication, the system may well be allowing some innocent defendants to be executed."

---Justice Sandra Day O' Connor



## Logos



## Ethos



## Pathos





## **Pecha Kucha presentation speech draft**

1. Today I want to talk about Death Penalty. Since Venezuela abolished its death penalty in 1863, the trend of humanitarianism has put the abolition of Death Penalty in the spotlight. In the next slide I will show you a picture from the Pandora box by a artist who objected death penalty.
2. This picture comprises of three parts: the most obvious one is the two lists of nation names in black and red. Very strong contrast. And then on the background, we can see some less visible sentences by Justice Sandra and a seemingly very archaic and horrible electric chair.
3. First, let's see the countries. By 2014, there are 142 countries out of total 193 countries have abolished death penalty, such as Australia and Canada. In the mean time, there remain 51 countries which keep using death penalty, such as China and the US.
4. If we see more carefully, The artist has painted the names of countries which keep death penalty in red, the color of blood, and also, the red countries' names are a little bit smaller than black countries' names. These are all suggesting artist's objection to the inhumanity of punish people to death.
5. And then we see this part of the sentence from Justice Sandra: "If statistics are any indication, the system may well be allowing some innocent defendants to be executed." This quotation from a justice of the United States Supreme Court is very clear.
- 6.7. Because a quote from a person of such a high but delicate position can not only attract people's attention and curiosity but also make his objection more convincing. Also, as the first woman in Supreme court and one of the most influential and respected people at her time,

Sandra's decision to oppose death penalty can perfectly illustrate the artist's opinion that death penalty can bring irretrievable hurt to innocent people. If the lists of nation names are just facts, this quote straightforwardly question the legitimacy of death penalty.

8. Then is the electric chair. by using various cycles of alternating current at different voltage to pass through human body, this execution can cause fatal organ damage. The voltage can up to 2000 volts, ten times of standard voltage.

9. Moreover, when facing a death penalty, the person who will be executed is not the only one suffered. His or her death would damage the family and his or her children would be left behind and have no choice but grow up in an incomplete family.

10. In this picture, the artist is clearly using all three of logos, ethos and pathos.

The nation names are using logos because the artist is just displaying the truth, trying to impress people that there are actually a lot of nations which have abolished death penalty.

11. And the quote of Sandra is using ethos. The artist emphasized the mistakes the enforcement of death penalty can make, letting people focus on whether use of death penalty is right or ethical and making people more easily believe in the necessities to abolish death penalty.

12. Finally, the electric chair is clearly using pathos. The oldness and the dread showed by the electric chair can easily arouse people's repulsion and distaste toward death in order to justify the abolition of death penalty. But before you agree with the artist, I want to tell you more.

13. Firstly, we need to know why those countries chose to abolish death penalty. There are two main reasons for the abolition. The first one is that death penalty may not be the most painful punishment. There are even many ways that don't hurt at all.

14. For example, the lethal injection can make people lose consciousness like falling asleep with no pain. Also, the execution by shooting is so fast that everything will end in millisecond. In this way, death is really a relieving way. For many people, death is even more easier than life imprisonment.

15. But I believe that there is more to why the artist choose to stand with abolition of death penalty. Hope. It is hope for the criminal, a misguided person to go back to the right track and to society and hope for a family to have a chance to be complete again.

16. Other than hope, there is also humanitarianism behind the abolition of death penalty. The artist believed that death penalty is cruel and inhumane. Instead he may want people to show kindness, benevolence and sympathy to each other and governments to show their lenience.

17. But why those countries in black still insist in using death penalty? Because firstly people believe that death penalty is the only way that really pay respect for human's life by showing the difference in punishment between killing and theft. There is an old saying that the kindness to criminals is the cruelty to victims.

18. Also, if the criminals dare to commit a crime, they should definitely shoulder the responsibility and endure the outcome. Moreover, it has already been proved that death penalty can effectively deter existing malefactors and prevent potential crimes.

19.20. By using quote, contrast and expressions of logos, ethos and pathos, the artist clearly illustrates his objection of death penalty. Sharing a similar view with him, I hope that because of social improvement and education popularization, people can create a harmonious and relaxing environment to live with others without crimes and the abolition of the death penalty can become the inevitable trend.

## Proposal

### **Mirroring our reality: how people desire closeness but hide behind electrical devices in ‘Her’**

‘Her’, a 2013 American science fiction film written, directed and produced by Spike Jonze, specifically and vividly lays out a future world where technology is highly developed and texting, skyping through electrical devices almost substitute for face-to-face communication. In the movie, though people can easily and quickly reach out to one another, with virtual faces shown on screens, people are feeling lonelier and more isolated. While people desire one another, they are not willing to express love in person but find some specialists like Theodore to write love letters. The main character Theodore is a reflection of people in that era who yearns for closeness and personal concern, but fears of true human contact, so instead chooses to hide and only talks to artificial intelligence Samantha. From face-to-face talk to skype on screens, from words on paper to digital messages, human’s way of communication has totally revolutionized by technology. But exactly in what way does technology change human’s connection to outside world? In this paper, I will use the movie ‘Her’ as a primary source and several other articles talking about changes brought by technology as secondary sources to illustrate how technology renovates and redefines three aspects of human’s connection to the world: the relationship between human and electrical devices; the relationship between human and human; and the relationship between human and inner selves. Only when we clearly understand the different aspects and sources of those changes can we correct our currently unhealthy reliance on technology and lead our interaction with electrical devices to a reciprocal and sustainable track.

## **Annotated bibliography**

*Turkle, Sherry. "Connected, but Alone?" Online video. Ted2012. Feb. 2012. Web. 26 Oct. 2015*

This video talks about how social media redefines the way people communicate to and connect with one another by seemingly shortening the distance but in fact increasing the distances between human's hearts. This speech illustrates a very good point about why even when people feel lonely and isolated, they still prefer online chatting than face-to-face communication. I believe that this point complements my idea that online chatting can not only provide closeness but also distance which makes people more comfortable. In this way, this video can further help me develop the meanings behind changes in relationship between human and technology.

*Paul Barnwell. "My students don't know how to have a conversation" The Atlantic. Apr. 22. 2014. Web. 26 Oct. 2015*

This article mainly talks about students' overreliance on screens for communication has distracted them from some meaningful real-time conversation. The author believes that many of the current teachers have overlooked the importance of verbal communication and failed to help students become conversational competent. Although this article admits that technology plays a big role in promoting people's contact, it also raises a very interesting problem that people can not hide behind screens forever because they will have applications, interviews and negotiations. I think that this article can also help me discuss more about the limitations of screen talking.

*Amanda Lenhart. "Teens and Mobile Phones over the Past Five Years: Pew Internet looks back". Pew Research Center. August 2009. Web. 26 Oct. 2015*

This research paper circumstantially shows how electrical devices, especially mobile phones, have pervaded teens' lives by laying out statistics of all kinds of surveys. For example, the percentage of teens who have access to mobile phones have increased from 45% in 2004 to 71% in 2008 and it is continually increasing now. Those direct statistics and comparisons between years can strongly support my idea that usage of devices are taking over human contact and also further expand my opinion about technology's influence on human relationship.

*Amanda Lenhart, Monica Anderson and Aaron Smith. "How Teens Incorporate Digital Platforms and Devices Into Their Romantic Relationships". Pew Research Center. October 1, 2015. Web. 26 Oct. 2015.*

In this research paper, researchers found out that text messaging and talking on the phone are the two most frequent ways of interactions that teens use to talk to their significant other. Additionally, research shows that managing communication on multiple platforms and meeting their partner's expectations for a quick response are quite challenging for teens. This is a very interesting point regarding to the problems technology has brought to human contact. By showing teens' reliance on devices even when they talk to their beloved ones, this article can fully show technology's impact on human relationships in future generations in my paper.

*Michael Bittman, Judith E. Brown and Judy Wajcman. "The Cell Phone, Constant connection and Time Scarcity in Australia". Social Indicators Research 93.1 (2009): 229-233.*

This article firstly admits that cell phone has been instrumental in accelerating the pace of life and it is also associated with a heightened sense of time pressure. However, it refutes that cell phone will extend work and intensify work effort because it proves that the amount of phone

calls people receive increase significantly during work but drops steeply after work so cell phone has not greatly interrupted human life. I want to argue against this idea since I believe that technology mostly changes human life in invisible ways. I will use this article in my paper as an opposite idea to lead to my detailed discussions about the effects that technology has on current society.

## **Final Draft**

### **Mirroring our reality: how people desire closeness but hide behind electrical devices in ‘Her’**

Theodore says: “I would touch your face with only the tips of my fingers. I would put my cheek next to yours very gently. I would kiss you in your mouth so smoothly.” Samantha answers: “Yeah, yes, I can feel you.” This is an erotic interaction between the main character Theodore and an artificial intelligence Samantha in movie “Her” which is a 2013 American science fiction film written, directed and produced by Spike Jonze. In this film, face-to face communication has been mostly replaced by texting, calling and skyping through highly developed electrical devices. However, even though people in the movie can be more easily reached to and see one another on screens than people in our real world, they even experience stronger loneliness and isolation from majority. While people desire to talk to and compliment one another, they are not willing to express their love in person, but instead find experts like Theodore to write digital love letters. Theodore, an epitome of people in that era, reflects people’s struggle between their yearning for closeness and their fear of true human contact; with this struggle, Theodore chooses to hide behind his phones and only talk to Samantha. Before the Internet era, the primary way for people to connect was to have real-time conversation with one sitting with another. Nevertheless, with transitions from face-to-face communication to Skype on screens and from words on paper to digital messages, human’s ways of connection have been totally revolutionized by advanced technology. This paper will

talk about how technology renovates and redefines human's connection to the world through three specific aspects: the relationship between humans and technology; the relationship between humans; the relationship between humans and their inner selves. Only when we clearly understand the sources of changes for these different aspects can we correct our currently unhealthy reliance on technology and lead a sustainable and mutually beneficial interaction with electrical devices.

First of all, regarding to the relationship between humans and electrical devices, the emergence of smart phones has triggered a significant change that communication through various kinds of electrical devices and mobile phone software has gradually taken over face-to-face talk. Just like how Samantha is introduced to Theodore in the movie: "This is the first artificially intelligent operating system, an intuitive entity that listens to you, understands you and knows you. It is not only an operating system. It is a consciousness." The programs in electrical devices now are so smart and powerful that people sometimes even imagine them to be true and real. Even though people are sitting together, they prefer using phones rather than making eye contact. There are several reasons for this phenomenon. To start, electrical devices are accessible whenever we feel lonely, anxious and unsure about ourselves. This accessibility gives us a false feeling of companionship. Moreover, as contradictory and complex as human nature is, we are afraid of not only loneliness, but also intimacy. Devices can just provide us with appropriate amount of concern and a comfortable distance with which we can feel private and in control. Additionally, living in a world

changing so fast, people can hardly feel safe to tell their innermost thoughts and feelings to anyone but their exclusive devices which, under no circumstances, would betray them. What's more, as writer Paul Barnwell introduces in his article "My students don't know how to have a conversation" that "students look perplexed, or even fidget in their seats when the teacher proposes a project of holding a conversation, that without a student facilitator asking a question first, those kids are unable to converse effectively, and that at the same time, they subconsciously reach for their phones." From these descriptions from the article, it is clear that reaching out for our phones has become an involuntary and automatic impulse when we are confused or stressed as if grabbing a phone in our hands can bring mental power and relief.

Furthermore, virtual communication is destroying the real connection between people in the real world. As illustrated in the movie by Theodore saying that "I think I hid myself from my wife. I left her alone in the relationship.", we are using social media as a crutch, a replacement for in-person interactions for a couple of reasons. To begin, Sigmund Freud's theory of Presentation of Self states that by intentionally altering or creating one's outlook, one attempts to control or guide the impressions that other people form of him. In other words, we prefer virtual communication because by using online media, we can edit, retouch, delete and beautify the information we give out, offering only positive self-concepts and desired impressions. However, no matter how complete one's online profile can be, it is still virtual and

unreal; only face-to-face talking can truly let people come to know and understand each other. Equally important is that by using electrical devices, we can connect our mind to various places, share and experience other people's life. While we can only get in touch with one person's limited knowledge reserve by talking to one person, surfing on phones can help us gather hundreds' of people's ideas at one time, so naturally we will be attracted by the more interesting and informative way of connection provided by virtual network. Nevertheless there's a latent problem that those interesting information online might easily stunt our creativity because when there are always more than enough new messages, we will no longer take efforts to come up with our own creative ideas to make interpersonal dialogues engaging. Gradually, we will become passive information receiver and lose our originality. In addition, by using electrical devices, we are included in a big family and closely connected with others. We will never have to be alone, not to mention feel lonely because whenever we send out a message, we can always be heard and whenever we receive a message, we can always feel the people around us. Yet the constant pings of texts and twitter notifications can also be huge distractions because whenever our phone flash, we can't help turning to our phones to check out the newest information. Even when we are in a conversation with others, we might also instinctively reach out to our phones even though we know that this behavior might implicitly tell our conversation partners that we are more inclined to use my phone now instead of talking with you and make our partner feel uncomfortable and devalued. As the famous

speaker Turkle Sherry once introduces an interviewee in her speech “The Flight from Conversation: How technology is shaping our relationships” that the interviewee thinks that: “It makes me feel terrible—I’d never say that, but it does. I feel I’m being put on pause. It’s bad when I do it to other people, but then I don’t really think of how they feel when I do it to them.” That is to say that people can easily detect the absentmindedness of the person they are talking to and they usually hurt by the person’s indifference and inconsideration.

Last but not the least, technology is forming a wall between one person’s outer and inner self. As Turkle Sherry says in her Ted talk “Connected, but Alone?” that “We use technology to define ourselves by sharing our thoughts even as we’re having them. So before it was: I have a feeling and I want to make a call. Now it’s: I want to have a feeling and I need to send a text..” In other words, Sherry means that people often mistake the feeling that they intentionally create for the feeling that they involuntary generate, getting confused of what they really think and feel. Continuously focusing on new messages about others’ life, People become less care about and leave less time for self-reflection during which only in solitude can people listen to their hearts about what they truly want and what they should do. Without this process, people would easily get lost and confused in life. Nonetheless, we don’t even leave ourselves one moment of being alone, separate and unaccompanied during which we can clear mind, gather thoughts and find ourselves. Technology has occupied people’s mind, not only shaping their outside

connection with others, but also forming a wall between outer and inner personalities by intervening natural self-reflection.

However, there are also some studies pointing out an opposite possibility that technology can actually increase social interaction. For example, as Alexandra Ossola argues in her article “A new kind of social anxiety in the classroom”, a 2012 study finds out that “people with low self-esteem who may be reluctant to talk about themselves with peers face-to-face feel more comfortable sharing personal information on Facebook.” and researchers in another survey also conclude that social media can “strengthen community engagement and attachment” in some people. Admittedly, online media such as twitter and Facebook can provide a convenient platform for exchanging ideas. But when we surf those media, we more often than not have a “just read, then forget” response. Important information, flushed away by new messages continuously coming in, stays in our head for too short a period of time to engage us in extended critical and truly meaningful thinking.

Now, with more and more new technology put into market, people’s reliance on technology has become a serious problem. From the data that researcher Amanda Lenhart shows in the article “Teens and Mobile Phones over the Past Five Years: Pew Internet looks back” that with a huge increase in teens’ possession of phone(from 45% in 2004 to 71% in 2008 ), 94% of teens use their mobile phones to call their friends and 76% to send text messages. Furthermore, another article “How Teens Incorporate Digital

Platforms and Devices Into Their Romantic Relationships” by Amanda Lenhart, Monica Anderson and Aaron Smith, shows that when teens are in romantic relationships, 92% of them choose to spend time text messaging, 87% of them choose to spend time talking on the phone with their significant other while 86% of them actually spend time together in person. While people who are in romantic relationships should have been crazy for and want to see one another all the time, meeting in person is only ranked the third with text messaging stands head and shoulders above all other communication venues when it comes to the frequency of those interactions. Similarly, it is noticeable that most of the teens let someone know they are interested in them romantically by friending them on Facebook or another social media site, or express their attraction by liking, commenting or otherwise interacting with that person on social media. Those data and phenomenon are enough to show that people’s inability to communicate face-to-face is a very urgent problem worth of attention.

After understanding the ways technology renovates and redefines three aspects of our communication, people should start to transfer most of their attention from communication on screens back to conversation in person in order to avoid the scenarios in movie “Her” to become our potential future.

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## **Reflection for final draft**

This reflection is about the strong part and weak part of my rough draft. First of all, I think that my strong part in this draft is that my paper's structure and logic are very clear. I first have a thesis which divides the rest of the paper into three parts. And then my body paragraphs mainly discuss those three parts in details. Then I use a "they say, I say" structure, pointing out several opinions which disagree with me and then I argue against those opinions to reconfirm my thesis. In the end, I conclude the whole paper and remind people of the urgency of this problem. Also, in each three big paragraphs, I come up with several specific ideas to support the big points. So I think I have a good structure.

Next, I think that my paper's weak part is that some of my big paragraphs are too long. Because I have three main ideas to support my thesis, so I thought that to use only three body paragraphs can let readers clearly understand the relationship between each of the three main points and each of three big paragraphs. However, I don't know whether some of my paragraphs are too long.

## Final Paper

### **Mirroring our reality: how people desire closeness but hide behind electrical devices in**

#### ***'Her'***

Theodore says: "I would touch your face with only the tips of my fingers. I would put my cheek against your cheek and rubs it very gently. I would take your head in my hand and kiss you in your mouth so smoothly." Samantha answers: "Yeah, yes, I can feel you. It's amazing. I really can." However, there is no one in front of Theodore. Only air. This is an erotic interaction between the main character Theodore and an artificial intelligence Samantha in movie *'Her'*. *'Her'*, a 2013 American science fiction film written, directed and produced by Spike Jonze, vividly lays out a future world where technology is highly developed. Texting and video chatting through electrical devices have almost substituted for face-to-face communication. The most outstanding similarity between the movie and reality is that though people can easily and quickly reach out to one another, with virtual faces shown on screens, people still feel lonely and isolated. While people desire one another, they are not willing to express their love in person but instead find some specialists like Theodore to write love letters. Theodore, an epitome of people in that era, reflects people's struggle between their yearning for closeness and their fear of true human contact; with this struggle, Theodore chooses to hide behind his phones and only talk to Samantha. Before the Internet era, the primary way for people to connect to each other was to have real-time conversation with one sitting with another. Nevertheless, along with the advancement in technology, transitions have been realized from words on paper to digital messages and from face-to-face communication to video chat on screens. Human's ways of

connection have been totally revolutionized by advanced technology. This paper will base on the movie '*Her*' and connect it to our real world to reflect upon how technology redefines human's connection to the world through three specific aspects: the relationship between humans and technology; the relationship between humans; the relationship between humans and their inner selves. Only when we clearly understand the sources of changes for these different aspects can we correct our currently unhealthy reliance on technology and lead a sustainable and mutually beneficial interaction with electrical devices.

### **The relationship between humans and technology**

In the movie, technology represented by computers, phones is so prevalent that it is a crucial and indispensable component in people's lives. When Theodore is at work, he uses his computers and software to write love letters for clients. When he gets off work, he immediately puts on his earplugs, listening to music, checking voice box or hearing news report. When he gets home, he starts to play online virtual games. There is hardly one moment that he stays away from technology products. However, Theodore is not the only one who builds his life on technology. No matter they are in the elevator, on the street or in the subway, instead of talking to each other, people are all wearing earplugs and talking to their phones. Moreover, when Theodore talks to Samantha about his writing, he says: "Sometimes when I write something good, I become my favorite writer." Samantha responds: "I like that you can say that about yourself." Then Theodore continues: "I don't think I can say it to anybody, but I feel I can say it to you. I feel like I can say anything to you." Next Samantha answers: "But I don't have a body you know. I can't..." Theodore quickly cut her sentences: "You feel real to me. I wish you were in this room with me right now. I wish I could put my arms around you. I wish I could touch you." From

those fragments in the movie, it is very clear that the development in technology has made electrical devices a pivotal and necessary element in humans' life; lifelike personification techniques in voice and thinking mode has facilitated technology to be more acceptable and even created a illusion of real people talking.

Technology has exerted similar effects on our real world. Our reliance on technology is growing day by day. For example, even when people are sitting closely to one another, they prefer using phones to start a communication rather than greeting each other by making eye contact. How does technology have such a huge impact on people's life? To start with, nowadays, electrical devices are so universal that they are accessible whenever we feel lonely, anxious or unsure about ourselves. This accessibility might give us a false feeling of companionship. Moreover, as contradictory and complex as our human nature is, we are afraid of not only loneliness, but also intimacy. Electrical devices can just provide us with an appropriate amount of concern and a comfortable distance with which we can feel private and in control. Additionally, living in a world changing so fast, people can hardly feel safe to tell their innermost thoughts and feelings to anyone but their exclusive devices which, under no circumstances, would betray them. Just like how writer Paul Barnwell says in his article "My students don't know how to have a conversation" that "students look perplexed, or even fidget in their seats when the teacher proposes a project of holding a conversation. Without a student facilitator asking a question first, those kids are unable to converse effectively. At that time, they subconsciously reach for their phones." From Barnwell's descriptions, it is clear that our reliance on technology has already grown to a point where reaching out for our phones has become an involuntary and automatic impulse when we are confused or stressed.

In sum, both in the movie and in our real world, technology has greatly elevated the importance of electrical devices to human life and thus redefines the relationship between human and technology.

### **The relationships between humans**

In the movie, Theodore works for a company with an online website called [beautifulhandwrittenletters.com](http://beautifulhandwrittenletters.com). There's a time when Samantha asks him how he knows Roger, the receiver of one letter has two canine teeth, Theodore answers: "I have been writing Roger's letters since they met eight years ago. The first letter I ever wrote for him was for her birthday." In other words, for eight years, instead of looking into one another's eyes and expressing their love for each other face to face, this Roger couple chooses instead to hire Theodore to write love letters. Moreover, when Theodore divorces his wife, he admits that "I think I hid myself from my wife. I left her alone in the relationship". Next when his ex-wife knows the relationship between Theodore and Samantha, she says that "It makes me very sad that you can't even handle real emotions. You always wanted to have a wife without the challenges of dealing with any real problems." From Theodore's ex-wife's perspective, she believes that the reason for Theodore to date Samantha is that they won't have any physical and concrete conflicts and thus Theodore could continue his dream of one smooth relationship with no need to solve problems. Lastly, in the end of the movie, under Theodore's strong questioning, Samantha confesses: Actually Theodore is not the only one who has fallen in love with an operating system. Supported by powerful programmings, Samantha is simultaneously talking with 8316 people and falls in love with 641 of them. These two big numbers of people for only one operating system directly shows that there are huge amounts of people giving up on talking with and developing a relationship

with another human being; instead, most of those choose to fall in love with their computer, which requires less tactics to deal with. Those pieces of movie plot all point out one serious problem that exists both in that fictional world and in our reality: we are using social media as a crutch, a replacement for in-person interactions.

Similar to the situation in the movie, virtual communication by texting or video chatting is replacing the real connection between people in reality. For instance, after people have created online media platform such as Twitter, Facebook or Wechat to talk to one another, they no longer bother to make appointments and go out with friends to enjoy a real-time conversation. While virtual communication provides many advantages like time-saving and convenient, there are many other reasons for people to be obsessed with it. To begin with, corresponding to Sigmund Freud's theory of "Presentation of Self" which states that people attempt to control or guide the impressions that other people form of him by intentionally altering or creating one's outlook, people enjoy editing, retouching, and beautifying the information they give out, offering only desired impressions. Equally important is that electrical devices allow us to connect our mind to various places. While we can only get in touch with one person's limited knowledge reserve by talking to one person, surfing on phones can let us gather hundreds' of people's ideas at one time. Thus, naturally we prefer this more interesting and informative way of connection provided by virtual network. In addition, by using electrical devices, we will no longer feel lonely because we are included in a big family and are closely connected with others. Whenever we send out a message, we can always be heard; whenever we receive a message, we can always feel be concerned.

Nevertheless, communication through electrical devices also has its disadvantage. For example, the constant pings of texts and twitter notifications are huge distractions because

whenever our phones flash, we can't help turning to our phones to check out the newest information. Even when we are in a conversation with others, we might also instinctively reach out to our phones. This behavior implicitly shows that we are more inclined to use phones instead of talking with our conversation partners and thus make them feel uncomfortable and devalued. As MIT professor Turkle Sherry recollects an experience in her speech "The Flight from Conversation: How technology is shaping our relationships" that when her communication partner consistently picks up the phone during a conversation, she feels "terrible—I'd never say that, but it does. I feel I'm being put on pause. It's bad when I do it to other people, but then I don't really think of how they feel when I do it to them." That is to say that the absentmindedness created by incoming messages on electrical devices might distract and hinder the following communication and the indifference and inconsideration expressed when one picks up his phone can hurt people easily.

To sum up, both in the fictional world and in our reality, technology profoundly transforms people's communication mode from face-to-face talking to virtual communication including texting and video chatting and consequently redefines the relationship between humans.

### **The relationship between humans and their inner selves**

In the movie, before the operating system is initiated, Theodore is asked several questions to help create an operating system that best fits his needs. The program asks: "Are you social or antisocial?" Theodore answers: "Well...social, I think. You know... I..." Before he finishes his sentences, the program chimes in: "From your voice, I sense hesitance. Would you agree with that?" Theodore suspects and asks: "Was I sounding hesitant?" The program responds: "Yes." In this circumstance, when Theodore is considering upon the question, organizing his thoughts and

expressing them logically, the program just cuts his train of thoughts and subjectively makes a judgment about Theodore's hesitance. Additionally, there are many scenes in which artificial intelligence Samantha interferes with Theodore's decisions. For example, Samantha helps Theodore decide which emails to delete or keep, where he could go for a walk or vacation, whether he should meet this person or attend this activity and whether he should make love with a stranger. In those situations, Theodore no longer talks to his inner self, weighs up gains and losses and makes his judgment but instead wholly relies on the advice from technology.

Like Samantha in the film, technology in our world is also forming a wall between one person's outer and inner self. As Turkle Sherry says in her Ted talk "Connected, but Alone?" that "We use technology to define ourselves by sharing our thoughts even as we're having them. So before it was: I have a feeling and I want to make a call. Now it's: I want to have a feeling and I need to send a text.." In other words, Sherry means that people originally had a feeling first and then made a call; on the opposite, nowadays, people create a feeling just to send to text. Technology has messed up people's originally clear train of thoughts. Due to continuous concentration on new messages about others' life, People become less care about and leave less time for self-reflection which allows people to listen to their hearts about what they truly want and what they should do. Without this process, people would easily get lost and be confused in life. Technology has occupied people's mind; they don't leave themselves one moment of being alone, separate and unaccompanied during which they can clear mind, gather thoughts and find true selves.

In conclusion, by intervening in people's natural and indispensable self-reflection, technology today is forming a wall between people's outer and inner selves and therefore redefines the relationship between humans and their inner selves.

Now, along with increasing amount of new technology coming out, people's unparalleled reliance on technology has become a serious problem. The data showed in the article "Teens and Mobile Phones over the Past Five Years: Pew Internet looks back" by researcher Amanda Lenhart indicates that with a huge increase in teens' possession of phone (from 45% in 2004 to 71% in 2008), 94% of teens use their mobile phones to call their friends and 76% to send text messages. Furthermore, another article "How Teens Incorporate Digital Platforms and Devices Into Their Romantic Relationships" by Amanda Lenhart, Monica Anderson and Aaron Smith, points out that when teens are in romantic relationships, 92% of them choose to spend time text messaging, 87% of them choose to spend time talking on the phone with their significant other while 86% of them actually spend time together in person. While people who are in romantic relationships should want to see one another all the time, meeting in person is only ranked the third with text messaging stands head and shoulders above all other communication venues. Similarly, it is noticeable that most of the teens let someone know they are interested in him or her romantically by friending him or her, or expressing their attraction by liking or commenting on social media sites. Those data and phenomenon are enough to show that people's inability or unwillingness to communicate face-to-face is a very urgent problem worth of attention.

As illustrated by aforementioned discussions, technology has redefined the relationship between humans and technology, the relationship between humans and the relationship between humans and their inner selves. Thus, people should try to transfer most of their attention from communication on screens back to conversation in person in order to avoid the scenarios in movie "Her" to become our potential future.

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## **Reflection for final paper**

There are two major changes in my final paper from my rough draft. The first one is that because in my paper, I talked about the three aspects in relationship that technology has changed, I add three subheadings in front of each aspect in order to make my paper more clear and organized. And then, about the content in each aspect, I first add many citations and scene descriptions and then I split long paragraphs into shorter ones to make my paper more understandable and easy to read. Furthermore, as one of the biggest problem with my rough draft is that it is not closely connected with the movie, I add many phrases about relating the fictional world in the movie to the real world we are living in.

The second change in my paper is that I delete my counterarguments. In my rough draft, I had one paragraph for counterargument and my rebuttal of this counterargument. I thought that this paragraph could make my paper more comprehensive and convincing. But in fact, it did not. It only distracts my paper from my theme and weakens my statements. So even though I like the idea of having a conceding paragraph, I decide not to have it in order to make my paper as a whole more complete and logical.