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Comm Technology and Social Change

Black Mirror Essay: Arkangel

The show "Black Mirror " has taken many topics and ideas that we talk about today and twisted them to give perspective on what the future might look like for technological advancement and for social change for the United States and maybe even the world. In the episode "Arkangel" a single mother loses her child at a very young age and luckily finds her. After this traumatic experience she decides to try a new technology where she can track her daughter with a chip that is implanted in her head. Along with being able to track her, she is able to block out what she can see and see what her daughter is seeing at all times. This technology that is portrayed in the show perfectly represents the clash of privacy and parental overview that is a hot button issue for teens all over the world. What is too far and when can we know kids' lives to ensure that they are safe from bad actors.

In the United States we often have debates on civil liberties and how much we can limit civil liberties when national security is in play. This debate has come about much more after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and seems to have effected everyone in the United States. The issue of safety versus privacy is central to the debate that we have, and it has moved into other areas in people's lives, including child and parent relationships. We often hear stories from older generations that they would go off and play all day until the street lights came on, and that can not be further from the truth for younger generations. With new and retaly available technology

like Life360, Find My Iphone and Ring, younger generations are constantly having privacy taken away from them by helicopter parents.

What the show is trying to get viewers to understand is that privacy is very important in people's lives and that it could seem good to have a watchful eye sometimes, but it can also ruin the development of some. For example, when the girl is just a small child the mother is able to protect her from seeing bad things like fighting, terrorist acts and porn. This is seen as a good thing as a young person should not be exposed at that young of an age. The mother was also able to see that someone was hurt through the eyes of her daughter, and was able to help. This shows all of the good outcomes of the control of a parent.

However, as the daughter gets older she begins to resent her mother for what she has done. This drives the daughter to go out and do things that she should not like having sex at a young age and getting pregnant, using drugs and lying about where she is. This shows us that sometimes when a parent does not let their child live a little bit, it makes the child rebellious and go down the wrong path.

Personally, this show made me very sad as I have seen this in my own life. I had a friend from Middle school into High school who was often getting into trouble. His parents installed video cameras and other technology to try to ensure his behavior was corrected. In turn, he did not sneak friends into his house anymore he would sneak out and go god knows where. He would not just steal alcohol from his parents house, he would sneak out and go steal it from the store. I am not saying it is his parents fault that he was so troubled, but when he felt trapped in that situation he did what he thought would make his parents mad, so he did it. Moral of the story, this past summer I had to say goodbye to him for the last time as he was involved in very bad things and overdosed.

All in all, this subject is extremely hard to debate over, parents most often want what is best for their kids and to keep them out of trouble, while kids just want to be able to develop and find themselves in this world. What the show “Black Mirror” shows us is that when parents overstep the privacy boundaries it is hard for kids to trust and obey parents. This debate will never change, as each family has its own ideas of how to keep their kids safe.