| ***Hobbies / passions*** |
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| * Stories are a great privilege to think about in a real-world context, yet they are also a great escape from reality. Some would imagine that writers of all kinds, be it poets, authors, singers, musicians alike, constantly have this little gnome inside the clockworks of their heads, always turning the gears of our minds to churn out more stories and such. * A cold, yet calming sensation runs down your back, and once more, you hurriedly scramble for something. To record that feeling, to express it in words for another to feel, to experience, just like you did. That urge to create, is the very essence of what drives us, humans, to write. * As your mind writes, it flows like a raging river; as you read, the river continues to move into the larger ocean known as memory. * As we write, we are unconsciously dragged into an infinite number of possibilities, tugging on us to see where we will turn to. To be honest, even the best writers in the world that sell the most books, tend to see where the story takes them. A quote from Stephen King beautifully illustrates this point, “Description begins in the writer’s imagination, but should finish in the reader’s.” * The multitudinous paths that spread out across the fields of our minds, call out to us at any time, anywhere. Is that not, a wonderful feeling to act upon? |

| ***Technology*** |
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| Social media   * A heavy-handed allegory for the rise of technology, the corporate power structures behind it, and the impact such things have on the populace: its impact was seismic. * The Matrix’s overly-complex depictions of a dystopian technological future pale in comparison to some of the real-life developments we have endured. * Today, the internet is inextricable from our everyday lives. * Back then, there was a notable disconnect between the ‘real world’ and the online. * utopian online ideal * The Matrix predicted the rise of social media, and the social posturing that accompanies Instagram et al. * Today, there is a rising suspicion in the internet – be it a fear of where your data is being harvested, or a simple desire to ‘disconnect’ and live a more naturalistic life. * sowed the seeds of digital distrust in the public consciousness * The ‘fake news’ epidemic – something that has gone from an easy soundbite for the US President to a very real problem across the board – has led to widespread disillusionment and distrust in the media, and the ‘reality’ it presents. * tangible impact * widespread proliferation   Data privacy   * Messaging app WhatsApp’s new privacy policy sparked a global exodus from its services. * surged in popularity * a similar controversy unfolded * The dust has yet to settle on both controversies. * stirred up intense interest * spirited discussions on the topic * Most people still have no qualms clicking through message prompts that say “I consent to the use of my data” * Digital footprint is used by others for fair or foul purposes. * Facebook faced a strong backlash from users when the Cambridge Analytica scandal was uncovered. * a fallacy that comes from wilful ignorance * preventing unsavoury characters from showing up at your door * out of an inordinate fear that their personal data will be abused * The onus is on the individual to keep asking questions about their personal data. * do not have to make a binary decision between having to stop using the service completely, versus using it blindly.” |

| ***Social issues*** |
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| * riots instigated by the President * met with somewhat of a lukewarm response from police, whose inability to keep the rioters from breaching the grounds or even breaking into the congressional office has been met with backlash. * The protests were met with overwhelming police violence, with the excessive force of tear-gas, rubber bullets, and physical abuse. * The question on the minds of thousands of Americans weighs heavily and demands to be answered. * This violent intimidation over baseless claims of fraudulent voting and the lack of national protection against it is a harbinger of dark times. |

| ***Ethics*** |
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| Sophie’s Choice   * The phrase, ‘Sophie’s Choice’ is used in reference to a difficult situation in which a person must choose between two equally deserving alternatives. * 'guilt' often arises from the consequences of making difficult decisions when either choice results in some form of destruction and suggests leaving difficult decisions to 'chance'. * heart-rending decision that has left her in mourning and filled with a guilt that she cannot overcome. * an implicit espousal of the sadistic doctor’s mindset * get out of the conundrum   Bioethics   * The case caused international outrage in scientific circles, and a couple of months later, many scientists called for a global moratorium on gene editing embryos. * We have to deal with the dark side – in order to take steps to counter them as soon as possible. * spark discourse and urge bioethicists to speak a lot more and a lot louder about the most pressing issues and topics * exploited a vulnerability * The situation is not rosy * outside of the traditional ‘ivory tower of medical knowledge’ * augment our bodies with the help of machines * indelible * Some are even expecting the widening of the chasm. How can we mitigate the differences? How can we make innovations more accessible to all kinds of communities? At the same time, how do we prepare society for a time when financial differences lead to biological ones? * end up in the wrong hands |