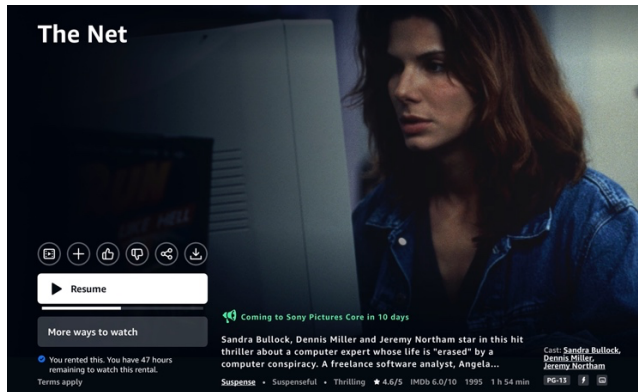


Movie

The Net (1995)



Overview

The movie is a cautionary tale about how the digital world has changed the world in a fundamental way namely our privacy and lack of control of the people that can access and change it.

Computer expert Angela Bennett (Sandra Bullock) is asked to analyze a complex computer issue, but she goes on vacation instead thinking that she can help out after she gets back. She slowly finds her life has been erased and someone is out to get her thus making it almost impossible to function in modern society. As the movie progresses, she tries to figure out what is happening and she realizes that the for-profit software company *Gatekeeper* is the offender. The company has installed a backdoor allowing them unfettered access to the many government, business, and personal websites they are paid to protect but use instead for control. (Yes, good triumphs over evil.)

Historical Accuracy of the Plot

The movie is for entertainment purposes; however, it does send a chilling message to the power of the caretakers (programs/apps) of information. In many ways it was foreshadowing the potential power of the digital world.

Historical Accuracy of the Internet development

The computer industry had not standardized computer setups like we use now and thus security was not as good as it is now. Experts were able to do more during that time period especially with Windows and UNIX (Linux) based computers (MACs were less than 10 percent of the market) giving power to those in the know. It took time for many to truly understand what was going on because the Internet was still new and dial up was common.

Presentation of Historical Information

The specific ways they undermine her life is a far stretch to reality though. For example, the DMV/State Department potentially could have looked up older pictures of her driver's license/passport to prove her identity. The sequence of events such as losing all her information is rare and not having virtually anybody to confirm her identity is even rarer. Also, the extremely fast and seamless way the bad guys are able to access and manipulate information across many domains (government, medical, military, banks, DMV, etc.) is far-fetched.

Reflection of the Time Period (1995)

Indications of the year: floppy disks, large computers, car phone.

Rating

8/10

Links

<https://www.computerhistory.org/timeline/1995/>

<https://www.w3.org/>

[Amazon](#)