THE ERASURE GAME

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In a future society, two teens find out what happens when seemingly innocuous “community games” serve a more sinister purpose. It turns out that these popular means of social interaction are quietly eroding civil liberties and privacy as neighbors collect data on one another and report it to shadowy rulers and a power-hungry elite.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some possible downsides to rewarding people for eating well, exercising, and helping out their communities?

2. Data is a powerful tool in helping us understand health and how to improve it. What safeguards do we need to put in place to ensure that data-gathering is not abused?

3. Miz Laura and the other sentinels keep a close eye on the Town. What do you watch out for in your neighborhood? Do you have health equity concerns about encouraging those kinds of efforts? How might that change in the future and why?

4. Every action Kimmy takes is monitored. Cameras, sensors, and other tracking devices line our pockets and our streets too. As surveillance increasingly becomes a part of daily life, is privacy still important?

5. Do you think the Town has built a Culture of Health? What seems to be working in the Town? If the Town’s protagonists’ intentions were well-meaning, where did they maybe go wrong?

6. Like Achy Obejas’s story, “The Sweet Spot,” “The Erasure Game” explores new family structures through the idea of households—groups of apartments where residents live with roommates, as well as relatives who all eat together. What makes a family? Whom do you count as family? How might the idea of “family” look in the future?