

ROBOCOP

I just saw Robocop. It was a good movie. It was directed by Paul Verhoeven, who later made Total Recall. Peter Weller stars as Murphy, the one that is a robot and a cop. Perhaps he could even be referred to as a robocop. The action scenes were mostly good, except for one scene in which nothing makes sense because a cut is made at the rate of seemingly 5 hertz. But this review is not intended to focus on the action, themes, symbolism, or plot of the movie. Instead, this review focuses on the software in the film. The first obvious place to start is with the Android Enforcer himself. What operating system does Robocop run on? This question is pretty easy, as some sequences show the file system of the computer. Here is what the boot process looks like in the film:

```
COMMAND.COM
LOAD BIOS
BIOS SYSTEM CHECK
RAM CHECK
CONFIG.SYS
BIO.COM INTERFACE
TO ROM I/O
CONTROLLER
COMSPEC.EXE
MEMORY.DAT
ROBO UTILS
SYSTEM BUFFERS
PARAMETERS
PARITY SET
MEMORY SET
SYSTEM STATUS
OK
```

Some of these files may seem familiar. That is because this operating system is DOS. How can one tell? The *.COM extension gives it all away. This file extension is a DOS executable. Furthermore, COMMAND.COM and CONFIG.SYS are both files associated with the boot process of DOS. I like how the film strives to be realistic in this sense, at least a little bit. Unfortunately, the depiction of technology in this film is not perfect. For example, how many colors is Robocop able to see? If he's running DOS, I think rendering this many colors in this high resolution in this many frames

per second might have been a little strenuous on Robocop. The film is widely believed to take place in the 2040s, so DOS may not be the most cutting edge operating system for the setting.

But what does choosing DOS lend to the story? Well, although probably not intentional, it makes complete sense for OCP to use DOS. This is because DOS is a closed-source, industry standard (for 1987). OCP is also secretive and cold. Coincidence? Probably. But assuming this isn't a coincidence, someone on the production team was a huge nerd.