Mnemophrenia: a Science Fiction Film-Essay on the Future of

Cinema and Artificial Memories

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Abstract

Mnemophrenia *[ni-mä-frē-nē-ə]*
A condition or state characterized by the coexistence of real and artificial memories, which affects the subject's sense of identity

"What is more real than the thoughts in your mind?"
"Re/structure your memories, re/construct your reality, re/define yourself"

The foundation of my research is about practising theory instead of theorising practice. My project begins with theory, which then leads to the science fiction film *Mnemophrenia* that constitutes the practical aspect of it. I attempt to demonstrate how theory and practice can be joined to create a fruitful union, each one feeding the other. In my research, I am inspired by Marshall McLuhan's idea and use the medium as the message in order to depict and explore how cinema can affect human memory and more specifically create artificial memories and thus contribute to the dissolution of any boundaries between reality and fiction.

The key research question that *Mnemophrenia* explores is: what would happen if in a future postmodern society the Bazinian myth of 'total' cinema becomes a reality? If 'total cinema' is pure realism and cinema can lead to artificial memories, then artificial memories and pure realism become one and films become artificial memories. *Mnemophrenia* depicts a different kind of human being or species, a schizophrenic 'cyborg' changed from within due to the advancement of virtual reality films which signals the end of cinema as we know it today.

Mnemophrenia is about the future of cinema and maintains a horizon of hope that could lead to utopia; it does not discard technology as something evil as many previous science fiction films have done. I am interested in depicting through the film and examining in my thesis the possibility of a society where the dissolution of borders between fiction and reality does not lead to horrific consequences for humanity but instead promotes a potential for a new kind of identity that is an amalgam of real and artificial memories.

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Preface - The beginning

My research was originally theory-based, examining contemporary American science fiction films that deal with the interaction between individual memory and technology. My goal was to critically explore the cultural interest in this subject and analyze how these films depict the effects of technology on memory and the subsequent creation of artificial memories. How do their characters cope when they do not know which memories are based on 'real' events? How much of their 'real' identity remains intact? And what does 'real' mean in a world where the boundaries of reality and fiction disappear?

The plots of these films are around memory-film products that are used as entertainment or means of control, or memories becoming independent of their owners due to technological advancements: free floating memories that affect the original owner and maybe also other recipients/consumers. My original research focused on film characters that show similar identity patterns: they all have fragmented identities and have lost the capacity to organize their pasts and futures into coherent experiences. I decided to categorize these characters as schizophrenics or cyborgs, concepts that are linked to different theories of Fredric Jameson, Jean Baudrillard, Donna Haraway, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (which I examine further in the following chapters). During the research, I realized that one of the recurring depicted technologies was cinema itself or its future successors. That is when I understood that my work was an indirect critique of the cinema of the future, which was represented as an advanced, interactive and completely immersive medium.

After this realization, I decided to change my research to practice-based and explore the subject on different levels; and to not limit myself to the written word. Practice-based research has the potential to illuminate significant questions and issues. According to Tom Barone and Elliot Eisner, "art is [not] an ornament on a form of productive work; rather it is essential to what it

communicates and critically affects its reception. Arts based research is, at its deepest level, about artistic and aesthetic approaches to raising and addressing social issues." (Barone and Eisner, 2012: 57) I was researching a very dynamic and organic subject and the mere theorization of it felt insufficient. I thought that my research could be as dynamic as its subject since I had the privilege to study a discipline that has first and foremost flourished in practice. I was already in science fiction territory, which welcomes any hypothetical and speculative thinking about the future based on the past and present: thus I thought that making a film about the future of cinema and its ramifications on human memory would be the perfect case study. As Victor Burgin comments, "[i]t might be argued that if audiovisual forms are inherently discursive, then an intellectual argument can equally well be presented in the form of a film or video as in a more conventional written form." (Burgin, 2006: 6) I had an abundance of films from which to take inspiration and combine them in ways that would on one hand explore aspects that have not been examined before or at least not from the same perspective and at the same time support a film that gives voice to my theorization. "The innovative and critical potential of practice-based research lies in its capacity to generate… knowledge and new ways of modelling and externalising such knowledge while at the same time, revealing philosophical, social and cultural contexts for the critical intervention and application of knowledge outcomes." (Barrett, 2007: 2) Therefore, I decided that my film would be an amalgam of and a critical comment on all of the films that I intended to analyze in my original research, a film essay on how memory and film can develop together and into the future based on different sociocultural ideas and theories that I was interested in.

In a few words, *Mnemophrenia*'s three intertwining stories explore the effects of a condition (the titular "Mnemophrenia"), whose main symptom is the involuntary blending of real and artificial memories, creating an identity crisis. The three main characters, Jeanette, Nicholas and Robyin live in different time periods, all set in the future. They are connected in three ways: by blood; by the condition itself, since they are all mnemophrenics; and by their shared interest in ways

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that technology affects the human condition. The memories of the three protagonists are interwoven and their fusion creates, as a result, a new 'artificial' memory, which is essentially my film. All three stories combine to depict the different effects and aspects of mnemophrenia.

It is important to note that I have made only one third of the film as part of my PhD research, that being Jeanette's story. I am planning to finish the rest of the film after completing my studies. Apart from the film, I am submitting the shooting script[1] for Jeanette's story and detailed storylines[2] for the other two periods. Although I submit only the first part, I refer to the film throughout the thesis as a completed whole: this should be read as a suggestion of the effect I hope to achieve rather than a statement of what has already been achieved. I recognise that since the film has not yet been completed I cannot be certain of the result, but I decided that my analysis would be more coherent and read better if I approached my film as a finished product. Thus, the reader needs to bear in mind that my analysis does not imply certainty on my part about the outcome but a confidence and anticipation that the suggested effect can be achieved.

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1 The shooting script is different from the final film due to the fact that different scenes were cut during the editing process.

2 I submit storylines instead of a script because I use improvisation methods in order to build my characters and I develop the dialogue with the help of my actors. This is how the script of the first period was developed and I briefly analyze the process at Appendix I. I intend to use the same method for the script development of the other two periods.

Chapter 1: Introduction - the film-essay

1.1 Film essay: theory and practice

The foundation of my current research is about practising theory instead of theorising practice. This work could be seen in light of Burgin's student who "is interested in ideas, and turns concepts encountered in reading into practical projects. The research of this type of candidate typically has a mainly practical outcome, with academic work playing… [an] 'instrumental' role." (Burgin, 2006: 4) In Film Studies, it is not uncommon to encounter examples of practice-based research that are practice-led. Hazel Smith and Roger Dean in *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* write,

> The term practice-led research and its affiliates… are employed to make two arguments about practice which are often overlapping and interlinked: firstly… that creative work in itself is a form of research and generates detectable research outputs; secondly, to suggest that creative practice… can lead to specialised research insights which can then be generalised and written up as research. (Smith and Dean, 2009: 5)

Unusually, my project begins with theory, which then leads to a practical outcome, the film *Mnemophrenia*.[3] "Research-led practice… complement[s] practice-led research, and which suggests more clearly than practice-led research that scholarly research can lead to creative work." (Smith and Dean, 2009: 7)[4] Smith and Dean argue that research-led practice is more prominent in some areas such as new media and music and it is still developing in other areas where its full impact is yet to be fully felt. I believe that in film, as in creative writing, "research-led practice is mainly conceptual and tends to be driven by critical and cultural theory." (Smith and Dean, 2009: 8) "[C]ritical and cultural theories… can, with some effort, be adapted to the process of making an artwork." (Smith and Dean, 2009: 9) This research is mostly conceptual and is driven by theory; it

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3 The film title *Mnemophrenia* refers to the idea of postmodern schizophrenia that I associate with the development of artificial memories and is explored throughout my research.

4 The foundation of my project is based on research-led practice, which is also combined with practice-led research, especially at the part where I use improvisation to develop the script and characters.

is founded on sociocultural and philosophical work that explores ideas around memory, identity and technology and mostly focuses on themes of postmodern schizophrenia and cyborgization. I adapt these ideas and use them as the foundation for the making of my film *Mnemophrenia*. However, the relationship between the theory and the film is two-way, and the creative intervention has substantial ramifications since it informs the theory and complements it. My aim is to demonstrate how theory and practice can be joined and create a dynamic synthesis, each one feeding the other, not only creating a new form of research and creative work but also new knowledge about a creative process which can feed back into the work of future practitioners/researchers.

Aristotle posited three kinds of knowledge: practical, theoretical and productive (2000):

> Practical knowledge is knowledge that allows one to negotiate differences in values, courses of action, and commitments in order to resolve a particular situation that needs attention… Theoretical knowledge dealt with the pursuit of certainties… Productive knowledge is the ability to put things together so that they work… Productive knowledge is a making of something, not simply the ability to understand what a person has done. Productive knowledge lives in the universe of action. (Barone and Eisner, 2012: 58)

As Aristotle might also have put it, this project is productive by making a film and practical because it negotiates different views on the relationship between film and memory. This mix allows the co-existence of different interpretations that affect the final film product. Barone and Eisner argue "[a]rts based research is a construction; in that sense it is indeed productive. And arts based research is also practical insofar it deals with contingencies that are temporal and not subject to certain answers." (Barone and Eisner, 2012: 59) Smith usefully expands on this notion, "where the productive begins with a plan or design, the practical cannot have such a concrete starting point. Instead, we begin with a question or situation." (Smith, 1999, 2011: 2) This research engages with particular questions to which this practice offers a combination of answers, thereby contributing to knowledge within the domain through a different lens than would be offered by a traditional thesis. My original theoretical hypothesis is founded on the much-discussed subject of the close relationship between film and memory and more specifically the possible creation of 'artificial'

memories[5]. *Mnemophrenia* showcases how film can be a memory system itself, consequently affecting memory, creating artificial memories for the viewers and depicting different courses of action.

According to Aristotle, *phronesis* is linked to the practical wisdom and appropriate action to a particular situation, which is associated with the domain of *praxis*. This is in contrast to *techne*, the exercising of skill that is exploited to achieve pre-conceived ends (2000).

> In praxis there can be no prior knowledge of the right means by which we realize the end in a particular situation. For the end itself is only specified in deliberating about the means appropriate to a particular situation… There is a continual interplay between ends and means… This process involves interpretation, understanding and application. (Smith, 1999, 2011: 2)

My role as practitioner-researcher entails the deliberation of different views on the subject and my awareness of, and explicit reflection on, practice as an appropriate creative response to the initial questions. Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt in *Practice as Research: approaches to creative arts enquiry,* comment that "materialising practices constitute relationships between process and text - of which the first iteration is necessarily the researcher's own self-reflexive mapping of the emergent work as enquiry." (Barrett, 2007: 5) The articulation of my intentions, documentation of the process, presentation of my practice and reflection back on the film's relation to the initial questions aim to communicate the knowledge outcomes. The film itself, then, becomes one element in the bigger picture, a vehicle in the generation of knowledge rather than only the embodiment of knowledge. It is the combination of the thesis and the film that constitutes the new knowledge.

Bell reminds us, "research-led practice demands the creative transformation of the research methodology, not just the reproduction of it." (Bell, 2009: 256). Borgforff follows on from this notion, "[h]ence, the answer to the question of art research methodology is briefly that the research design incorporates both experimentation and participation in practice and the interpretation of that

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5 For the aims of this thesis, the term 'artificial memory' does not only mean a supplement of a person's own memory but a 'memory' that can originate outside a person's lived experience and then be appropriated and manipulated, thus becoming a part of the memory reserve of any person that has consumed it or indirectly experienced it through mass media. Or it can even be a memory that has no connection to reality but is created, promoted or consumed as such via advanced visual media.

practice." (Borgforff, 2006: 17-8) Without relinquishing the established application of theory through critique and hermeneutics, heuretics offer a new perspective on the enquiry of my project into the relation of film and memory. "What has been missing, perhaps, is the concept of a heuretic practice to set alongside interpretive and analytical work – in other words, a use of media technologies and forms of production in a critically *inventive* mode." (Fleming, 2000: 390) "[H]euretics adds to [the] critical and interpretive practices a generative productivity of the sort practiced in the avant-garde… the artists demonstrate the consequences of the theories… by practicing the arts themselves, generating models of prototypes that function critically as well as aesthetically." (Ulmer, 1994: xii) As a consequence I, as artist, adopt the dual roles of researcher and researched through the deployment of a reflexive process. "Heuretics [are] not an alternative to critical study but its complement, or perhaps better a component in a new articulation where interpretive and inventive intentions more deliberately inform each other." (Fleming, 2000: 390-1) In this project, both film and thesis become exegetical through their capacity to be used in analysis and interpretation of each other. "By interchanging and integrating the practice with the exegesis, it may be possible to generate a combined and reflexive research praxis." (Goddard, 2007: 113) This hybrid activity of practice demonstrates that the relationship between practice and reflective writing is not one of equivalence but one that promotes a dialectical, productive relationship.

This project takes inspiration from Marshall McLuhan's idea of the medium as the message. Film is used as a tool through which to depict and explore how cinema can affect human memory, create artificial memories and lead to the dissolution of any boundaries between reality and fiction. According to Gregory Ulmer, "one element of the practice is the manifesto, accounting to a discourse on method… for a new genre or mode of production: a program of experimentation." (Ulmer, 1994: xiii) My own kind of 'manifesto' is to make a science fiction film taking a cue from Steven Shaviro (2003) who argues that science fiction is a privileged genre that provides the most useful social and cultural theory. Shaviro, thus, decided to write his book *Connected* as science fiction in order to discern the changes that are transforming our world and as an attempt to produce

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a cultural theory as radical as reality itself. (2003: x-xi) I similarly use the science fiction genre to depict the blending of reality and fiction and investigate in theory as well as in practice images of human artifice that exhibit, as J. P. Telotte suggests, "our nature *as* artificers, constructors of the real, and of the self—*homo faber*. These images foreground our desire to wield a shaping power, to render all things subject to our creative hand, including the self." (Telotte, 1995: 5) I believe that a science fiction film-essay can reveal more effectively than a written essay the ways in which the film medium can promote artificial memories. Thus, as Chris Marker has previously shown the importance of images in relation to memory in his science fiction film *La Jetée* (1962) and his film-essay *Sans Soleil* (1983), I use the film medium itself in order to explore my thesis around film and artificial memories. The key research question that both the film and the theoretical writing explore is: what would happen if in a future postmodern society the Bazinian myth of 'total cinema' becomes a reality? If 'total cinema' is pure realism and cinema can lead to artificial memories, then artificial memories and pure realism become one. In *Mnemophrenia* reality and fiction are integrated, mutually negating each other, since the established reality depicted in the film is proven to be 'artificial', based fully on different Virtual Reality films. Ultimately the film and this thesis aim to explore the future of cinema that leads to the blurring of real and artificial memories. Together they attempt to demonstrate the dissolution of these boundaries, to display the two-way relationship of reality and fiction and to showcase how theory fuels practice and practice enlivens theory.

Donna Haraway, in an interview with Nicholas Gane, claims that fact and fiction "have [an] interesting etymological connection and fact is [the] past participle – already done, and fiction is still in the making." (Gane, 2006: 153) The theories I use comment on reality or fact but also discuss different aspects that are "still in the making". The premise of my film starts from the expectation, as Annette Kuhn writes, "that films which appeal to our imaginings of future or alternative worlds will, intentionally or otherwise, also address contemporary concerns." (Kuhn, 1990: 15) However, the main focus of my film is to envision possible new worlds, expanding some of the theoretical

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ideas that are "still in the making", as Haraway says. The genre of science fiction offers the right ground for the testing and fruition of these kinds of ideas. Sue Short comments in *Cyborg Cinema and Contemporary Subjectivity* that the "impact of new technologies on human identity is a key issue for cultural theorists, one that has frequently been speculated on in SF cinema and which has consequently led to increased academic interest in the genre." (Short, 2005: 45) In addition, Bukatman notes in his article "Who Programs You?" that science fiction film with its semantics of technology, artifice, and spectacle "has obtained such a lately privileged position" in the area of cultural commentary precisely because it speaks the language of a technological, artificial, and spectacular world, because its technical concerns so closely parallel and thus help trace out the "methodological terrain" of this new world[6]. (Bukatman, 1990: 204)

Short observes that there is a two-way dialogue between critics and cultural forms like science fiction, referring to the genre's reflection of societal and cultural concerns as well as critics such as Jean Baudrillard that have taken examples from science fiction in order to justify their claims. Baudrillard is one of several cultural theorists who embrace science fictional rhetoric in order to explore high-tech alienation caused by technology. "Baudrillard's text aspires to the condition of science fiction, and ultimately becomes performative of the process he once merely described… Baudrillard's essays… bear rhetorical resemblances to the fictions of Dick and William Gibson, resemblances which are hardly coincidental." (Bukatman, 1990: 199-200) According to Short, science fiction has in many ways prefigured the dominant issues of contemporary culture.

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6 Science fiction, however, not only comments on and questions our technologised world, influencing and stimulating sociocultural discussions but as Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska argue it might even lead to the development of 'real' science. "Popular interest in virtual reality technologies has been fuelled by films such as *The Lawnmower Man* (1992), *Strange Days* (1995), *eXistenZ* (1999) and *The Matrix* (1999)." (King and Krzywinska, 2000: 7) This important part that science fiction plays in shaping the ways technology impacts on our lives is echoed in Telotte's writing where he prophesies that

the capacity for a computer-generated photorealism, probably combined in the not-too-distant future with virtual-reality technology, could well eventuate in the ultimate science fiction machine: a "cinema" – and here we must begin to use the word quite loosely – in which we can easily move into another time and place, a realm substantially like the very stories we typically tell in the genre. In fact, our films are already anticipating this move with the wave of films about virtual-reality experiences that have appeared in the 1990s, works like *The Lawnmower Man* (1992), *Virtuosity* (1995), *Strange Days* (1995), *Dark City*, and *The Matrix* (1999) (Telotte, 2001: 28)

"Yet while it is easy to understand how the two have become interrelated, it should also be noted that SF had been asking what impact an increasingly technologized world will have upon identity, social relations, and our concept of the real long before academics named such issues." (Short, 2005: 185)

In contrast, for the aims of my research, I reverse Short's assertion, and in my project the theory predates the practice. Previous science fiction films that depicted the relationship between memory and different technologies have subsequently led to the development of ideas and theories on the subject. On the contrary, my research begins with different sociocultural theories, from Fredric Jameson and Jean Baudrillard to Donna Haraway, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari that eventually lead to the development of *Mnemophrenia*, which actualizes these theories and demonstrates their full potential. All these ideas and theories become the basis of the plot and represent different themes around film and memory. Barone and Eisner argue that organizing theories in themes helps to bring them together and makes the artwork, and in this case the film, work as a whole. "In doing art, or arts based research… theoretical knowledge may be better thought of as *thematic*, insofar as themes (and subthemes) within a work of art provide a kind of qualitative control that allows for all parts of the work to cohere into a 'whole.'" (Barone and Eisner, 2012: 59) I combine various contemporary ideas and theories about memory and time that might have been written many years ago, even at the end of the 19th century, and I aspire for their meaningful fusion based on the themes they represent. In addition, the use of themes allows the theories to take a different life and purpose within the construct of the film as well as informing the practice. Barone and Eisner demonstrate the value of this approach,

> Themes [as mentioned above] also have the advantage of inviting discussion regarding their "fit" and significance and may avoid the suggestion of final interpretations. For indeed, if theoretical – or thematic- knowledge is part of arts based research, it will not necessarily be explicit in the work itself; rather, it may be found in the reflections, interrogations, conversations, deliberations, and debates that effective arts based research generates. (Barone and Eisner, 2012: 59)

Therefore the depiction of Virtual Reality technology and its development and the coexistence of different themes around its representation and its various meanings enables these theories to subtly

obtain form, and in return shape and reflect the experience of the three main characters and their relationship to mnemophrenia, thus contributing to the dialogue between theory and practice.

Mnemophrenia explores an idea that has been thematized in several science fiction films that depict either the blurring of the dividing line between reality and fiction[7], or the difference between human/inhuman[8]. I argue that these films constitute a kind of a sub-genre, emerging from a thematic shift in the science fiction genre, creating in its turn an evolving dialogue on the influence of technology on individual memory. As José van Dijck argues, "[t]he function of these movies is to 'imagineer' what memory may look like in the future. A projected collapse of the brain with sophisticated chip technology, far from an incidental concept, is a recurring trope in science fiction films." (van Dijck, 2008: 81-2) According to Bukatman much science fiction is "concerned with the status and commodification of memory, which seems to produce an ersatz humanity." (Bukatman, 1993: 248) *Total Recall* (Paul Verhoeven, 1990), *Johnny Mnemonic* (Robert Longo, 1995) and *Dark City* (Alex Proyas, 1998) are some such films that have been made during a period that is labelled by many different theorists as postmodernist. "'[P]ostmodernism' pervades the contemporary SF film – its deep structural logic symbolized by the genre's new figures and aesthetic values, and dramatized by its new attitudes and thematics." (Sobchack, 2001: 246) They explore issues, anxieties and fears that arise from the development of new technologies such as the advancements in artificial intelligence, the fast growth of computers and cyberspace as well as innovations in Virtual Reality and the consequent effect on human memory and identity.

Mnemophrenia is a blend of the aforementioned films and offers an organic and dynamic analysis of them in a creative way by taking advantage of the qualities of film itself and its self-referential attributes - therefore, as Fleming wrote, "[r]econstructing the material of media practice as a way of investigating that material." (Fleming, 2000: 390) The science fiction films from which

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7 Some examples are: *Total Recall* (Paul Verhoeven, 1990) and *The Truman Show* (Peter Weir, 1998)

8 Such as *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982) or *The Thirteenth Floor* (Josef Rusnak, 1999)

I take inspiration ask similar questions to *Mnemophrenia*, such as "[w]hat if the human imagination, including the tracks and stray traces of its memory effects, were itself fictive, an invention? Or, even if real, nonetheless drastically renarratable at will, just like a fiction – its chronologies suddenly reversible?" (Stewart, 2007: 209) In contrast to my approach, Garrett Stewart comments that this 'postrealist' cinema "likes to indulge in the hypothesis as *fantasy*, safe in the 'unreality' of its premises." (Stewart, 2007: 209) As well as this theoretical analysis, the film does not approach the subject as mere fantasy, but instead attempts to look into it from a more critical angle. I want to offer a critique about the position of memory in postmodernism and its link to visual technologies, taking as my starting point the development of film to a point that achieves complete simulation of reality. Telotte writes characteristically that movies about the future tend to be about the future of movies, and this is the main objective of *Mnemophrenia*. Telotte's ideas describe precisely the fundamental premise of my research. According to him, "[w]hen we watch a science fiction film, we see as well a narrative about the movies themselves – about how our technology can impact on our humanity, how our technology (and, indeed, our very rationality) impinges on our world, how our technology might point beyond our normal sense of reality." (Telotte, 2001, 24-5)

Stewart writes that several science fiction films are "not parables of enablement but escapist games... It is in this light that one is tempted to see such films as vehicles for little more – yet nothing less – than killing time." (Stewart, 2007: 214) In the same vein, Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska write in *Science Fiction Cinema*, "[r]eal issues are raised and difficulties are sometimes tackled quite seriously, but in mainstream films they are more likely to be evaded in the pursuit of more reassuring narrative closure." (King and Krzywinska, 2000: 12) I endeavor to show that my film, although creatively citing many films, offers a more in-depth commentary around the issue of artificial memories and the social ramifications of a future Virtual Reality cinema.

1.2 *Myth of Total Cinema* realized: *Mnemophrenia*, a critical dystopia

Half a century ago André Bazin engaged in a thought exercise that he called "the myth of total cinema." He described total cinema as a "total and complete representation of reality… the reconstruction of a perfect illusion of the outside world in sound, color, and relief." (Bazin, 1967: 21) He also claimed that "the guiding myth… inspiring the invention of cinema…[is] namely an integral realism, a recreation of the world in its own image, an image unburdened by the freedom of interpretation of the artist or the irreversibility of time." (Bazin, 1967: 20) Bazin did not believe that cinema will eventually achieve a perfect simulation of reality, but claimed that the ideal of total cinema drove the technology of film, which aimed to offer as perfect an illusion of reality as possible. "Bazin argued that the particular aesthetic of the cinema lay in the contradiction between its goal of perfect illusion and the inevitable failure of its achievement… technical developments simultaneously added to and disturbed cinema's realism." (Maltby, 2003: 231) For example Bazin, referring to stereoscopic filming in 3-D, wrote, "[t]he internal contradiction of this depth which one cannot touch gives an impression of irreality that is even more perceptible than that of flat cinema in black and white." (Bazin, 1985: 13) In my film, I pursue the further thought experiment, attempting to show a progression towards the actual achievement of total cinema. Richard Maltby argues, "[t]he goal of realism is an illusion. Art cannot 'show things as they really are,' because the 'real' in realism is understood to be exactly that which is unmediated by representation. Since it is outside representation, the 'real' cannot be represented: representations can be only more or less inadequate imitations or substitutions for it." (Maltby, 2003: 233) But the important element of the technology that I am introducing is that it does not only 'represent' reality but actually 're/creates' it. As Maltby comments about recent technological developments,

> [t]he computerized revision of the image – literally a re-vision – makes the distinction between reality and the image ever more difficult to maintain… the digital image is ambiguous [and is not]… authorized by reference to anything external to itself… Since the early 1980s, computer graphics artists have been attempting to create 'imaginary people.'… the ambition underlying this project involves conquering reality. (Maltby, 236-7)

In *Mnemophrenia*, I envision a world where this ambition has been reached, especially since all of the different versions of the depicted VR technology interact directly with the way in which the human brain perceives reality leading to the subsequent condition of mnemophrenia. From the first VR films in Jeanette's time to Nicholas's creation of all-sensory Total Cinema experience and finally to Robyin's brain implant that records and plays back real and artificial memories and experiences in the mind's eye, it becomes evident that the myth of total cinema is not an illusion but part of the characters' reality. As Scott Bukatman argues, "virtual reality becomes the fulfilment of that drive toward Bazin's 'myth of total cinema,' a cinema without boundaries. All the senses are engaged by a perfect simulacrum of reality which denies its own technological origins." (Bukatman, 1993: 239) Rephrasing Maltby's ideas, I argue that the representational conventions used by the depicted VR technology are transparent. In contrast to the special effects of *Total Recall* that according to Maltby enhance the image, the VR technology used by my characters reveals reality, or a new kind of reality and human experience, and thus leads to the confusion between actually lived and VR experienced memories.

Mnemophrenia explores the ways that VR technology affects humanity but does not offer clear guidelines on how to distinguish between what is real and what is not and does not celebrate the superiority of reality, as we perceive it today. Claudia Springer comments that although science fiction films of the 90s experiment with the idea of electronic embodiment, they all eventually establish the supremacy of the 'real'. "Not unlike the hard-bodied cyborg films of the 1980s, the 1990s cyberthrillers work to ward off the instability made possible by electronic existence. An analysis of the cyberthrillers reveals that cyberspace is constructed as an instigator of wild instability, and simultaneously as a therapeutic device used to restore conventional order." (Springer, 1999: 206) In addition, Sue Short comments on many science fiction films' tendency to depict a recoverable reality:

> The interrogation of memory and reality has become a discernible motif in recent SF, questioning the individual's ability to withstand manipulation... They consequently infer that no matter how manipulative and confusing reality becomes, an intrinsic identity is recoverable, yet while such a

conclusion is undoubtedly optimistic, the fact that metaphysical speculation almost completely obscures any political ideas is worrying indeed. (Short, 2005: 191)

Moreover, Sobchack, with characteristic directness, locates the genre's conservative and conventional tendencies in the bottom line:

Although the SF film ostensibly strives to transcend the conventional and, perhaps, reach toward the avant-garde "and beyond" to the radical, the demands of the genre's commodification also compel it to inscribe itself as familiar, unthreatening, unrevolutionary, and easily understood. True in the 1950s, and truer yet today, an axiom emerges: the more a film costs, the fewer risks it is likely to take. (Sobchack, 2001: 303)

In contrast, *Mnemophrenia* attempts to challenge the conventional Hollywood ending that usually venerates the human and deplores the loss of authenticity and the proliferation of artificiality. I am interested in discussing and visually depicting the possibility of a society where the dissolution of borders between fiction and reality and the blend of real and artificial memories do not lead to horrific consequences for humanity but instead promote a potential for a new kind of identity and a new state of being where difference can be embraced.

Therefore, *Mnemophrenia* could be considered a critical dystopia, which as Tom Moylan and Raffaella Baccolini write in *Dark horizons: science fiction and the dystopian imagination* "is distinct from its nemesis, the anti-utopia, and its generic sibling, the literary eutopia." (Baccolini and Moylan, 2003: 4) *Mnemophrenia* does not discard technology as something evil as other science fiction films have done in the past, but embraces and accepts it as part of everyday life, thus maintaining a horizon of hope that could lead to utopia. By the end of the film it becomes evident that "the process of taking control over the means of … representation, memory, and interpellation is a crucial weapon and strategy in moving dystopian resistance from an initial consciousness to an action that leads to a climactic event that attempts to change the society." (Baccolini and Moylan, 2003: 6) With *Mnemophrenia* I want to create a different kind of representation, which, using Fredric Jameson's ideas, will show how the characters might begin to "grasp [their] positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is… neutralized by [their] spatial as well as [their] social confusion." (Jameson, 1991: 62) Thus, I attempt to offer a futuristic representation that neither longs for the past nor merely re-presents a capitalist society

deeply affected by technological changes.

1.3 Low budget aesthetics and absence of special effects

Most of the films that I refer to in the thesis are spectacle-oriented and absorbed in their artificiality. Special effects are used to differentiate the now from the future, making a clear difference between reality and fiction and celebrating or reaffirming the humanness of their characters – such as in *Johnny Mnemonic* or *Robocop* (Paul Verhoeven, 1987). Alternatively, according to film theorists Julia Hallam and Margaret Marshment, several blockbuster 'spectacle' films have relied heavily on special effects in order to make 'unreal' images actually appear 'real.' (Hallam and Marshment, 2000) For example, Brian De Palma, director of *Mission to Mars* (2000), claims:

> What we've tried to do is to make *Mission To Mars* as authentic as possible, and it's what we've realized. The film is all the more exciting because you feel like it's extremely real. The various things that happen to the Mars One and Two crews in this film all come out of the physics of what could happen in the situations presented in the story. So, it is realistic and extremely authentic. (Quoted in Production Notes, 2000)

In addition, in several of the films that *Mnemophrenia* refers to, reality is grounded in more indexical examples such as photographs, contrasting with the digitalized, constructed environment that their characters live in, such as in *Robocop* and *Minority Report* (Steven Spielberg, 2002).

> Narrative conflict with the digital reasserts the aesthetic value of analog images as somehow more real than digital simulations... the photographic basis of cinema is coded as "real", the locus of truthful representation and the authentic aesthetic experience of cinema. Photography becomes the sign of the vanishing referent, which is a way of camouflaging its own imaginary status. (Rodowick, 2007: 5)

Even though there are several narratives that undermine the evidential indexicality of photographs or even home movies by showing them as constructs themselves (as in *Dark City*), these films still extensively use special effects in order to create a fantastical world exploring future anxieties about one's relation to technology. As Stewart says, they show "such an extreme and hypertrophic form of this vexing ontological nervousness that the outside world would have to seem real again by contrast." (Stewart, 2007: 213)

However, I do not want to create such an extreme version of the future world, but offer a quite familiar view of the future where any kind of distinction between reality and fiction is really

imperceptible. This aesthetic decision echoes Sobchack's views about several contemporary science fiction films that focus "on mapping not the fearsome and wondrous 'newness' of the new technology, but rather its awesome and wondrous *familiarity*." (Sobchack , 2001: 252) My project focuses on a society where reality and fiction merge; and it deals with soft technology that is so thoroughly integrated, and where the 'real' does not have any supremacy over fiction, that there is no need for special effects. I embrace the lack of resources and use experimental filmmaking as a virtue in order to explore this subject. I believe that the low budget demands inventive solutions and pushes for a naturalistic look that has the potential to successfully depict the reality/fiction fusion that I am interested in.

My project follows the example of other low budget science fiction films such as: *La Jetée*, *Alphaville* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965), *Brother from Another Planet* (John Sayles, 1984), *Repo Man* (Alex Cox, 1984) and *Teknolust* (Lynn Hershman-Leeson, 2002), since "it is the low-budget SF movie... which tends to embrace its inadequacies as a defensive maneuver, and is often aesthetically and narratively energized toward invention precisely by the low budgets constraining it." (Sobchack, 2001: 303) Thus, I do not use special effects to differentiate between reality and fiction, an aesthetic choice imposed by budget constraints but at the same time suitable for the project. Compared to big budget science fiction films I am more interested in the relationship between humanity and technology and not mainly in the technology as such. Stewart analyzes in *Framed Time* the connection between European films that explore the psychological implications of virtuality and their Hollywood counterparts that depict the technological side of it. He offers *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (Michel Gondry, 2004) as an example of the mixture of both, "a film where electronic brain technology is mostly an allegorical prosthesis of the psychic drive to forget." (Stewart, 2007: 172) I intend as part of my low budget sensibilities, to combine European *psyche* and American *techne*, as Stewart refers to them, focusing not only on the technological aspect or the psychological ramifications for the characters, but exploring how the technological affects the human psyche, memory and identity.

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1.4 Thesis structure

Throughout the thesis, I examine how various theories contributed to the development of *Mnemophrenia* and discuss the science fiction films that influenced it. In the following chapter, I introduce the film texts and theories that constitute the basis of *Mnemophrenia*. My film brings practice and theory together; form and content together: the practice is influenced by every film that has inspired it and the theory revolves around the idea of memory. In this chapter, I discuss the link between film and memory from the perspectives of form and content, which are both explored in my film and examined throughout the thesis. First I explore how the film medium can replicate memory's features – visuality and malleability – in order to successfully depict memory, and I offer various examples of science fiction films to demonstrate this. I also examine the concept of artificial memories and the views of different current theorists around the subject and show how their ideas are reflected in *Total Recall*, which I use as a representative film example.

In the next three chapters, I analyse the form and narrative of each period within my film, in order to explain how I represent the fusion of reality and fiction and ultimately how the film itself constitutes an artificial memory. These chapters demonstrate how form and content, practice and theory become one. On one hand, I examine the way memory is represented in each period, since a different film form is used each time (mockumentary film style in the first period, CCTV/ surveillance aesthetic in the second and POV/ subjective camera in the last: film forms that are commonly perceived as documenting reality and actual experience). I use these forms in order to emphasize the self-referentiality of the medium and remind the viewer of the status of the depicted memories as videorecorded that are then appropriated and become someone else's artificial memories.

On the other hand, I analyse the narrative of each period, which has been influenced by different theories and deals with the impact of mnemophrenia on the main characters. Mnemophrenia is the name that the experts give to what they consider a medical condition during Jeanette's period, which is when it appears for the first time. This name bears similar negative

connotations to Jameson's schizophrenia. However, with the passing of time the meaning of mnemophrenia changes. If we look at mnemophrenia from a Baudrillardian perspective and apply the last three successive phases of the image that, as he suggests are characteristic of the era of simulation, we could say that the image and artificial memories of Jeanette's time mask and denature "a profound reality"; those of Nicholas's time mask "the absence of a profound reality"; and those of Robyin's time bear "no relation to any reality whatsoever: [they are their] own pure simulacrum." (Baudrillard, 1994: 6) In each successive time period, mnemophrenia is seen respectively as a mental condition; then a variation of social behaviour; and finally the norm. Jeanette's segment, with which the film begins, depicts the ramifications of mnemophrenia in the personal realm; Nicholas's segment discusses the societal repercussions; and Robyin's explores the possibility of transcendence. I identify the three characters as schizophrenics or cyborgs (as I had originally planned for the characters of the science fiction films that influenced *Mnemophrenia*) and the main theoretical arch is comprised of different postmodern theories on schizophrenia or cyborgization, from Jameson and Baudrillard to Haraway and finally Deleuze and Guattari.

Chapter 2: Artificial memories in science-fiction films: from theory to practice

In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates tells a story in which the god Thamus talks to another god, Theuth, about his invention of letters and tells him, "this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves… [It] is an aid not to memory, but to reminiscence, and you give your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth." (Plato, 2011) Anxiety and fears about the weakening and even subversion of human memory by the media that support its representation were first expressed in antiquity, and they continue unabated today in the contemporary Western world with the advances within film and digital media.

The connection between memory and forgetting is clearly manifested since the end of the 20th century not only as a result of traumatic socio-historical events but also because of the advent and intense infiltration of media in everyday life. As Andreas Huyssen writes in his article "Present pasts: Media, politics, amnesia", "[e]ver more frequently, critics accuse this very contemporary memory culture of amnesia-anesthesia or numbing... Could it be that the surfeit of memory in this media-saturated culture creates such overload that the memory system itself is in constant danger of imploding, thus triggering the fear of forgetting?" (Huyssen, 2000: 27-8) With the advent of photography, cinema and advanced technologies the idea of artificial memory has been further discussed and led to the development of many different related theories. Under these circumstances, there is a shift in the meaning of memory catalyzed by technological innovations and the proliferation of an image-dominated culture.

From the 1980s onwards, a number of science fiction films[9] were made that explored this subject, depicting the relationship of technology and memory and the subsequent creation of

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9 Some of the films that deal with this subject are: *Blade Runner, Total Recall, The Truman Show*, *The Thirteenth Floor, Brainstorm* (Douglas Trumbull, 1983), *Strange Days* (Kathryn Bigelow, 1995), *Dark City* (Alex Proyas, 1998) and *The Final Cut* (Omar Naim, 2004).

artificial memories, their connection with real memories as well as the ramifications for personal identity. Films such as *Total Recall*, *Strange Days* (Kathryn Bigelow, 1995) or *The Final Cut* (Omar Naim, 2004) are self-referential and examine the direct link between film and artificial memories. For example, in *Johnny Mnemonic* artificial memories completely override real memories: Johnny, a mnemonic data courier, has erased all his childhood memories in order to have enough capacity in his brain to carry large data packages, which is possible due to wet-wired brain implants. Therefore, Johnny is identified by his profession as a mnemonic courier and not by his true last name that would indicate his roots. His human memory has been replaced by implanted electronic memory that does not have any link with his personal experiences.

These films take advantage of their medium, which is formally linked to the way memory is believed to function, and attempt to depict a future when artificial memory substituting for real memory becomes an everyday reality, either through manipulation, technological erasure or implantation. As Susannah Radstone has argued in *Memory and Methodology*, "[i]n science fiction cinema… the subject of memory has become a recurrent narrative theme... science's potential challenge to memory's place in the constitution of identity's essence has been raised." (Radstone, 2000a: 82) The main concept that is explored in all these films is the blurring of reality and fiction due to artificial memories. They depict different technologies that lead to artificial memories, emphasizing the constructedness of memory. They explore the ways their characters cope when they do not know which memories are based on 'real' events, and question the meaning of 'real' memories in a world where the boundaries between reality and fiction disappear.

This chapter offers the textual and theoretical background to *Mnemophrenia*, introducing the science fiction films that constitute the starting point of this research as well as its central theme of artificial memories. I briefly establish the link between memory and visual media and then turn my focus on the complex relationship between memory and film, in both form and content. *Mnemophrenia* is based on the visuality and manipulability of memory: thus, the definition of memory I offer focuses on both of them. I examine how the film medium replicates these aspects in an effort to represent

memory, and I then show how they are depicted in selected science fiction films, revealing their self-referential stance. The manipulation of these aspects becomes the foundation for the creative development of *Mnemophrenia*. In addition, *Mnemophrenia* builds upon the idea of artificial memories, which carry both negative and positive connotations. Both nuances are presented in the film, although as I mentioned before the film attempts to conclude with a positive and optimistic note suggesting an alternative to the dystopian fear that pervades most films on this theme. In order to demonstrate how I use the idea of artificial memories in my film I refer to its significance, various meanings and possible ramifications during the current time period. I use *Total Recall* as a representative example to introduce different theories – negative as well as positive – around the subject of artificial memories, which constitute the starting point for my film.

2.1 Artificial memories and media technologies

Memory is a way of defining who we are in relation to the world. "When we remember, we represent ourselves to ourselves and to those around us. To the extent that our 'nature' – that which we truly are – can be revealed in articulation, we are what we remember... A study of the way we remember ... is a study of the way we are." (Fentress, 1992: 7) Just as people rely on their memories to validate their experiences, they refer to them to structure their subjectivity. Memory is closely linked to identity, the idea of the self and its continuity as body and mind over time and space. Memory is an important element in shaping continuity in people's lives.

> We can accept that a powerful sense of, and interest in, his own identity, continuous through time, is a normal feature of the species man. This interest is necessarily and inextricably bound up with man's capacity for memory, and the pleasure in remembering that the species as a whole displays. (Warnock, 1989: 74)

Memories play an important role in the sense of self; the concepts of personhood and past are intertwined and a person's past experiences and memories define him or her.

Furthermore, memory is structured by the interaction of individual subjectivity with cultural and social conditions. It is a personal matter but also a social construction: society influences the way it

is perceived and experienced in different time periods. As Maurice Halbwachs has argued, "[t]he succession of our remembrances, of even our most personal ones, is always explained by changes occurring in our relationships to various collective milieus – in short, by the transformations these milieus undergo separately and as a whole." (Halbwachs, 1980: 49) "Human memory may well be an anthropological given, but closely tied as it is to the ways a culture constructs and lives its temporality, the forms memory will take are invariably contingent and subject to change." (Huyssen, 1995: 3) Our most personal feelings and thoughts originate in a definite social context and since most social influences we obey remain unperceived we believe that we act and think independently. Halbwachs adds, "Since the remembrance reappears, owing to the interweaving of several series of collective thoughts, and since we cannot attribute it to any single one, we imagine it independent and contrast its unity to their multiplicity." (Halbwachs, 1980: 49) Thus, it is evident that memory needs to be apprehended as a socially embedded action and its ownership becomes an increasingly fluid concept due to its mediation and manipulation by different media and technologies. In antiquity memories were conceived as something private and personal; however throughout the years, with the advent of different techniques and technologies and memory's increasing mediation, personal memory has become shared and comprehended by other people and not only by the person to whom the memory belongs.

> Today, privately experienced "interiority" appears less and less a necessary condition of the human being. Intrasubjective "personal" vision once invisible to others has become publicly visible and commodified through media imagery. Our private "memory" has been increasingly constituted from previously mediated "spectacle" rather than from "direct" experience. (Sobchack, 2001: 235)

The media imagery that Sobchack refers to offered a supplement to human memory: a kind of artificial memory that can be preserved and manipulated. "Increasingly, since a great deal of memory resides in cultural artefacts, film has become a memory bank." (Blackmore, 2004: 17) My exploration of artificial memories focuses on their link to visual media and film and their representation in various science fiction films. Thus although it is still believed that personal memory belongs to one person and is closely linked to his past, an important aspect for this thesis is that memory is affected by the

technologies that represent it. The forms memory will take are contingent and subject to change due to this relationship.

Memory as depicted in *Mnemophrenia* and the related science fiction films appears as the representation of the subject's imaginary relationship to his or her real conditions of existence due to the advanced technologies that enhance this relationship. Applying Marshall McLuhan's phrase, "The medium is the message", I argue that the means, technologies, media by which memories are preserved, extended, communicated and mastered in different times, play an important role in the way memories are experienced and has a subsequent effect on human consciousness and identity. McLuhan commented, "[a]ll media are active metaphors in their power to translate experience into new forms. The spoken word was the first technology by which man was able to let go of his environment in order to grasp it in a new way." (McLuhan, 1994: 57) Thus, the different techniques that make memories reproducible and transportable in space and time become an analogy for prosthetic memories: they are memory aids that translate the experience of memory into a new form.

Memories are a sum of human experiences, events and knowledge gathered during one's lifetime that are destined to fade away and disappear when the person dies. People have fought against this diminution for centuries; the emphasis on continuity is apparent in all cultures and societies which have attempted to preserve memories with the aid of various means. "We have armed ourselves against the transience implicitly in the mortality of memory by developing artificial memories." (Draaisma, 2000: 2) In his book *Metaphors of Memory: a History of Ideas About the Mind*, Douwe Draaisma examines the different memory aids that have been used throughout the years and discusses the concept of artificial memories.

> These artificial memories have not only supported, relieved and occasionally replaced natural memory, but they have also shaped our views of remembering and forgetting. Over the centuries memory aids provided the terms and concepts with which we have reflected on our own memory. (Draaisma, 2000: 3)

Many people in different time periods have tried to apprehend and master different cultural mental devices by exploring the way that memory functions, creating a technique or an art of memory that abided by a specific set of rules and practices and developed a kind of 'artificial' memory as a

supplement to natural memory. "From the very beginning, that is, from the wax tablet onwards, human remembering and forgetting has been described in terms derived from prosthetic memories." (Draaisma, 2000: 24) There is a very long history to the role of memory techniques or devices from the ancient world to the twenty first century, serving as explanations for our internal memory records and attempts to control them.

A way that people have attempted to preserve memories is with the aid of media of communication, from orality to writing[10] and printing to electronic technology. With the invention and development of media, the way our life is structured, how we communicate and perceive ourselves and the world around us all change dramatically. Different media, including cinema, influence the concept of memory and the way it is comprehended and approached. They have managed to preserve, transfer and extend memory. For the aims of this thesis, I focus only on film and examine the reasons why I consider it a very successful supplement to memory – and as a result use it in *Mnemophrenia* as the source of artificial memories.

2.2 Film as a memory aid

With the advent of optical apparatuses like stereoscope, magic lanterns, zoetropes and others that were developed in the 19th century, the visual experience was transformed and manipulated and theories on visual memory started to spring up. Lev Manovich argues in his article "From the Externalization of the Psyche to the Implantation of Technology,":

> [i]n order to externalize the internal, the invisible, it was first equated with the visual... One can even say that to a large extent it is this very desire to objectify the psyche which gave birth to modern imaging technologies such as photography, cinema and VR. Indeed, is not the whole idea of photography to objectify private memories and private mental images? (Manovich)

From 1839 onwards photography developed into an important artificial memory device, storing and reproducing optical information. "Photography captured what was transient, gave permanence to what was fleeting; photography was the invention of a 'mirror with a memory.'" (Draaisma, 2000: 119)

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10 Walter Ong has argued that a memory stilled in words, whether spoken or written, is just as 'technologized' as memory packaged in electronic images. (Ong, 1982)

Photography offered a permanent record of our visual experience. The belief in photography as a memory aid is also evident from the use of the concept 'photographic memory' to describe a perfect visual memory that simulates a photographic copy of past impressions. Photography filled in blanks in our mental pictures of the present and the past and gave us the sense that all our experiences can be held as an archive of images.

Jean-Louis Comolli suggests that with the advent of photography, the human eye loses its "immemorial privilege" and is devalued in relation to the "mechanical eye of the photographic machine," which "now sees *in its place*." (Comolli, 1980: 123) Roland Barthes commented on the externalization of the human internal world by photography and argued that the photograph is the advent of 'myself as other' and thus the memory of a personal moment is externalised and objectified. "Each photograph is read as the private appearance of its referent: the age of photography corresponds precisely to the explosion of the private into the public, or rather into the creation of a new social value, which is the publicity of the private: the private is consumed as such, publicly." (Barthes, 1993: 98) This meeting of the private and public has influenced the way we remember, since photographs became mementos of experiences, lived moments and events that can be observed by different people, separate from the "owners" of the memories and therefore open to different interpretations.

However, photography offers still images, with no motion and duration: they present, or rather *represent*, a specific lived instant. Barthes commented that the photographic image of the self is frozen and static, along with the memories that it entails, "'myself' never coincides with my image; for it is the image which is heavy, motionless, stubborn (which is why society sustains it), and 'myself' which is light, divided, dispersed; like a bottle-imp, 'myself' doesn't hold still, giggling in my jar." (Barthes, 1993: 12) Film, in contrast with photography, offers temporal duration and its form and style along with the aid of montage ensure a more flexible and fragmented representation of the self that depicts more successfully the fluidity of memories. The reciprocal relationship between film and memory has been much discussed, film as an externalized form of memory and memory an internal process whose function is similar in many ways to film. One of the first people to theorize this relationship was the

philosopher and psychologist Hugo Münsterberg, who in 1916 in *The Film:* A *Psychological Study* argued that a film can act as an externalization or objectification of the internal workings of the mind. He imagined memory as the camera of the "mind's eye" and strongly believed that cinema incarnated human memory. "The photoplay obeys the laws of the mind rather than those of the outer world." (Münsterberg, 1970: 41)

The filmic style and cinema's representational techniques share many similarities with the way memory works, externalizing interior mental states and functions. Walter Benjamin claimed that the camera, with the help of various technologies such as enlargement, time lapse and change of focus, makes possible the detection of bodily motions and behavioural details that are invisible to the human eye. "With the close up, space expands; with slow motion, movement is extended... Evidently a different nature opens itself to the camera than opens to the naked eye... The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses." (Benjamin, 1999: 229-30) He thus treats the camera like a psychoanalytic instrument and argued that it can reveal what is stored in the unconscious like personal memories, exposing the invisible that is present inside the visible. "The technology of the camera and film, its movements and its editing, substitutes increasingly for human gesture and interpretation. The contents of the psyche become externalized in technological effects." (Leslie, 2000: 156) Film has the ability to depict flashes of memory, since linear time progression can be suspended and the action can jump back and forth approximating the mental function of memory and projecting it onto the screen. Cinema was always "fundamentally a kind of time machine, a device that effectively freed both its audience and its early users from a conventional sense of time and place." (Telotte, 2001: 78) Its techniques include non-linear editing, the combination of fragmented and disjunctive images and the most common cinematic edit that links past and present, the flashback. Maureen Turim has analyzed the filmic use of flashbacks in her book *Flashbacks in Film* (1989) arguing that "[f]lashbacks often present images which are to be understood as memories. These films portray their own versions of how memories are stored, how they are repressed, how they return from the repressed." (Turim, 1989: 19)

Even some scientists have used cinema as a metaphor to explain the way that memories are stored in the human brain. "[I]n order to describe memory imaging, science often has recourse to the most modern means of imaging and information storing available to the culture." (Turim, 1989: 205) For example, in the 1950s, neurosurgeon Wilder Penfield after several experimental surgeries concluded that experiences were stored in the brain in a manner similar to the way a film was made, "when, by chance, the neurosurgeon's electrode activates some portion of that thread, there is a response as though that thread were a wire recorder, or a strip of cinematographic film." (Penfield, 1954: 68-9) In Alison Winter's view, the most enduring association of memory and film was the practice of forensic hypnosis, as a way to refresh crime victims' memories and the practitioners believed that memories were like film recordings that could be replayed under the right circumstances. (Winter, 2006) As Turim comments, "[i]n the films themselves, as well as in the larger culture (even in scientific/medical paradigms), cinema becomes an operative metaphor for the brain's imaging capacity." (Turim, 1989: 206) In addition, neurobiologists, use film as a metaphor to describe the intricate mechanism of human consciousness and memory. For example, Neurobiologist Antonio Damasio speaks of a 'movie-in-the-brain', using the term metaphorically: as if the brain was a camera, a screen, a filmed production and a moviegoer. (Damasio, 1999: 11) Thus, it is evident that film has a close link to memory and its workings.

2.3 Memory's aspects: visuality and malleability

My film focuses on two elements of memory: its dependence on images and its malleability. Both elements have been represented in previous science fiction films. Memory has often been described as having visual attributes that could be manipulated and organized in space, leaving traces behind. One of the most popular science fiction examples that emphasizes the connection between images and memories, introducing the importance of photographs as proof of past and memory trace, is *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982). Another example is *Dark City,* wherein a recurrent visual motif triggers the protagonist's presumably original memories and past, which appear as a flash. These kinds

of memory flashes are also used in films such as *Robocop*, *The Manchurian Candidate* (Jonathan Demme, 2004) and *Cypher* (Vincenzo Natali, 2002), where the main characters have dreams or flashes of incoherent and scattered shards of past memories that have been erased via various means. I now turn to different memory theorists in order to display the diversity of thinkers that recognize memory's visuality and malleability, and examine the way that their ideas are reflected in various science fiction films. For the theorization of the image quality of memories, I combine ideas of the Representative and Realist theories of the philosophy of memory,; and I use psychoanalytic ideas to explore their malleability. The films to which I formally refer comment on these two aspects, which according to their plots are manipulated by various visual media or advanced technologies, consequently leading to artificial memories.

The Representative theory of memory claims that to remember is to experience an image, and that image helps the person to recall a past experience. The main motif in *Dark City* is the image of Shell Beach, appearing either as a postcard, a billboard, a souvenir snowglobe or in family photos. They all represent a sunny beach – the only image that is full of light in contrast to the endless darkness of the city – referring to a condition of wakefulness, revelation and truth. The recurring image in *Dark City* successfully depicts how recollections are not the actual past events, people or things, but *images* or *ideas* of them: a trace that somehow represents that past experience. Bertrand Russell discussed the visual nature of memory in *Analysis of Mind*. He commented, "[m]emory demands an image... It is clear that insofar as the child is genuinely remembering, he has a picture of the past occurrence, and his words are chosen so as to describe the picture." (Russell, 1921: 175) Russell's thoughts are reflected in *Johnny Mnemonic,* in which Johnny's childhood memories come to him unexpectedly, usually when he is asleep or during his fits. These are disjunctive images of Johnny and his mother from when he was a child. He calls them residual traces, but he can never hold on to them. He comments at one point, "I almost saw... as if it wasn't... a memory." These blurry, almost dreamlike memory traces are completely different from the 'memories' of data that are represented by bright, colourful computer graphics accompanied by electronic sounds.

In contrast, in *Strange Days* the 'SQUID' recorder (Superconducting Quantum Interference Device) which records events directly from the wearer's cerebral cortex offers the ability to the user to experience the recorded memory as if it were his or her own experience. The ability to re-experience a past event exemplifies the Realist theory of memory that also accepts the role of mental imagery in remembering; but argues that the things we remember, the memory-images, are not present images of earlier times but actually the past events as they appear to us in our remembering. As philosopher and psychologist G. F. Stout wrote, "in remembering a past experience, I do not, normally, discriminate the memory-image from the experience remembered." (Stout, 1930: 160) Thus, remembering is not linked to looking at pictures but looking at things themselves. Lenny Nero, the protagonist of *Strange Days*, is able to experience the past events, which as Henri Bergson comments take the shape of memory images and in this case film images.

> No doubt a recollection, as it becomes actual, tends to live in an image; however, the converse is not true, and the image, pure and simple, will not be referred to the past unless, indeed, it was in the past that I sought it, thus following the continuous progress which brought it from darkness into light. (Bergson, 1911: 135-6)

In a similar way, *The Final Cut* takes place in a future society where brain implants record every moment of someone's life. These moments can then be cut and edited, like a film, in order to be watched by loved ones after the person dies. At some point in the film, the main character Alan Hakman, a successful 'cutter,' manages to penetrate his own memories and re-experience a traumatic past event.

The above theories and films offer different approaches to memory, though all recognize memory's visual character: either as a present image that represents a past event or as the past event itself. However, if we link the image to memory an important concern arises, since it is difficult to know whether or not we are actually remembering; or whether an image we have is related to the past or just a construct of our imagination. According to Bertrand Russell the distinction between memory and imagination is our feeling of familiarity related to a past event or experience. "I think the characteristic by which we distinguish the images we trust is the feeling of *familiarity* that

accompanies them." (Russell, 1921: 161) He suggested that memory images have an affective element: they carry a feeling of *pastness*. Our memories are considered part of reality whereas our imagination creates pure mental and unreal images. However, when we describe the memory-image, we describe it as we remember it and this might actually differ from how it was. As philosopher H. H. Price writes "[m]emory-images are often inadequate and known to be so. If we can detect their inadequacy and correct it, surely we must have some 'direct acquaintance' with past events themselves." (Price, 1953: 309) Memory and imagination are closely interrelated and I now turn to the second characteristic of memory: its malleability or flexibility.

Memories are considered by many to be obscure, patchy and incomplete; and that imagination comes to fill in the gaps in order for us to create a coherent meaning. According to Annette Kuhn:

> The past is unavoidably rewritten, revised, through memory; and memory is partial: things get forgotten, misremembered, repressed. Memory, in any case, is always already secondary revision: even the memories we run and rerun inside our heads are residues of psychical processes, often unconscious ones; and their (re)telling—putting subjective memory-images into some communicable form—always involves ordering and organizing them in one way or another. (Kuhn, 2000: 184)

In *Final Cut,* Hakman always thought that he knew what happened during a traumatic childhood event, but by re-experiencing the event itself he realizes that he had invested a specific meaning into an image which proved not to be real. He had filled in the gaps with his imagination, and mistakenly remembered a spill of red paint as a pool of blood that made him believe all these years that his childhood friend had died.

The internal and subjective workings of memory are discussed in depth in psychoanalysis and in particular Sigmund Freud believed that memory and fantasy were associated. In "A Note upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad'", he writes, "our mental apparatus… has an unlimited receptive capacity for new perceptions and nevertheless lays down permanent, though not unalterable, memory-traces of them." (Freud, 1959: 176) Freud acknowledged the difficulty in locating something like an "authentic" or genuine memory. He seemed to admit that this difficulty arises from the fact that memories are mediated through representations. The malleability of childhood memories is intimately connected to

their visual character: "In my own case the earliest childhood memories are the only ones of a visual character: they are regular scenes worked out in plastic form comparable only to representations on the stage." (Freud, 1965: 47) *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and *Inception* (Christopher Nolan, 2010) explore the surreal aspects of memory, merging dream and memory imagery. The dream/memory images are highly stylized to accentuate the extreme subjectivity and unreality of the dream/memory state. Joel Barish, the protagonist of *Eternal Sunshine*, decides to erase the memories of his ex-girlfriend and during the erasure process (which happens while he is asleep), he experiences an upsurge of pure memories that take the shape of dreams. As the inventor for the memory erasure procedure comments in the film, "By the time you wake up in the morning, all memories we've targeted will have withered and disappeared. As in a dream upon waking." This is an example of the plasticity of memory, showing how experiences and events retained in our brain go through various kinds of reorganization and realignment.

Moreover, the concept of *nachträglichkeit*, often translated as 'afterwardness', refers to a process of deferred revision, where "experiences, impressions and memory-traces may be revised at a later date to fit in with fresh experiences or with the attainment of a new stage of development." (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988: 111) A perception usually conserves its firm, exterior nature; while a memory is revised by later experiences, thoughts or fantasies. The idea of 'afterwardness' is successfully depicted in *Solaris*, both the original and the American remake, although here I refer to the American version of 2002 directed by Steven Soderbergh. Dr. Chris Kelvin, during his stay at the space station orbiting the planet Solaris, has regular visits from replicas of his dead wife, who materializes due to the memories he has of her. His encounters with the different replicas make him rethink his memories and reevaluate his relationship with his wife, deciding to give it one more chance. The suggestion that memories can be shaped by the present experiences puts the cause and effect structure in crisis and emphasizes the link with imagination.

In this section, I aimed to show the importance of memory's visuality and manipulability, and the way these aspects are represented in science fiction films that revolve around the subject of

memory. The relationship of film and memory is further enhanced by the contemporary interest in the latter due to its prominent mediation by various means during the last few decades. The science fiction films that I discuss have been made during this period: they deal with the subject of artificial memory and reflect different contemporary theories on this subject.

2.4 Artificial memories in contemporary context

Memory is a subject that has attracted considerable attention since the end of the 20th century. "Though accounts of the precise periodisation of memory's vicissitudes may vary, what seems indisputable is that contemporary societies appear fascinated by… memory." (Radstone, 2000b: 2) Developments in cybernetics and artificial intelligence, and the pervasive presence of technology in everyday life, inevitably affect the way memory is perceived and experienced. This ubiquitous computation based on Goodman and Parisi has meant more distributed digital storage devices being connected across the planet, and machines increasingly becoming receptacles for human memory. Computers, mobile phones, palm pilots and a host of gadgets are being promoted and used as memory databases supplemental to natural memory mechanisms. "This has been referred to as the sphere of prosthetic memory, which leads some to controversially suggest that in evolutionary terms, machines are currently acquiring human memory in nonhuman, technical networks." (Goodman and Parisi, 2010: 345) In addition, the accelerated change of trends, combined with the surplus of technological and disconnected experiences, has created the need for memory building and restoration and has led to an increasing search for stability in a time period that is often referred to as postmodern.

> Around us is the texture of memories, real and prosthetic, produced for us, by us. We have turned our memory devices (in the industrialized world – television, film, video, the Web) into answering machines that, on demand, spool out rote solutions to the ontological, epistemological, and existential issues that produce life's dread. (Blackmore, 2004:14)

Furthermore, time and space compression – caused by the media, the Internet and electronic communications – make every place and every time instantly available. Vivian Sobchack comments that with the development of new electronic technologies, the event and its representation become one: their distance is dissolved. (Sobchack, 1996: 5) She also suggests that the cinematic and electronic

technologies which mediate our relationship with the world and relationships with others have transformed us and the way that we make sense of ourselves, arguing that we are quite different from the way we were before those technologies. (Sobchack, 1994: 87) "Not only are our recording, witnessing, archiving, distributing and re-representational practices shaped by highly affordable digital media devices and technologies, but a 'long tail' of the past is suddenly available for private and public consumption, re-working and remembering." (Hoskins, 2009: 148) All these conditions create an unstable living environment and identity has become a sum of fragmented and dispersed experiences and events.

Many historical and traumatic events have been commodified through films, photography books, comics or docudramas; and as George Lipsitz comments, "through electronic media people get memories from a past that is not connected to their own past." (Lipsitz, 1990: 5) Several critics believe that the growth of this contemporary memorial practice does not have real links with history but is superficial and treated as an entertainment trend. The media can manufacture and market events that never existed and the past can be made over, replicated with or without an original. Thomas Elsaesser believes that the endless replaying of traumatic events by different media, mostly TV and film, illustrates negatively the concept of mediated memory that becomes synonymous with cultural memory of historical events, taking the place of "authentic" experience. Elsaesser argues that films have reconfigured individual and collective memories and that this continuous representation does not guarantee a clear understanding or a fruitful confrontation with traumatic events or experiences. It instead manifests the faith that "cinema can redeem the past, rescue the real, and even rescue that which was never real." (Elsaesser, 1995: 166) On the other hand, he suggests that there are representations that are closer to reality and respect the individual experience, but because they do not threaten the coherence of the viewer's identity they therefore cannot make radical otherness representable. (Elsaesser, 1995: 174)

Robert Burgoyne also argues that some films can methodically create (specifically American) national myths, excluding the histories and experiences of minorities and counterculture in an effort to

disengage cultural memory from public history. Burgoyne analyzes *Forrest Gump* (1994) and argues that this film offers prosthetic memories that repurpose cultural memory in order to promote an improved and virtual image of the nation: it is a cinematic rewriting of history that attempts to rearticulate the cultural narratives that define the American nation. "In foregrounding memory as the connective tissue of nation, *Forrest Gump* appears to emphasize memory chiefly in order to construct an image of nation that can exist apart from, or float free of, the historical traumas of the 1960s and 1970s." (Burgoyne, 1997: 106) Burgoyne believes that the example of this film shows the power of cinema and its central role in creating false memories and producing an image of social consensus and collective identification built around these memories.

Ian Hacking writes, "[t]here is no canonical way to think of our own past. In the endless quest for order and structure, we grasp at whatever picture is floating by and put our past into its frame." (Hacking, 1995: 88) This situation is manifested by the growing need of people to have their experience of reality confirmed and enhanced by photographs and films – a demand that has driven a growing image consumerism. "[W]e live according to a generalized image-repertoire. Consider the United States, where everything is transformed into images: only images exist and are produced and are consumed." (Barthes, 1993: 118) Vivian Sobchack also comments that,

> ... we are all part of a moving-image culture and we live cinematic and electronic lives. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to claim that none of us can escape daily encounters - both direct and indirect - with the *objective* phenomena of motion picture, televisual, and computer technologies and the networks of communication and texts they produce. Nor is it an extravagance to suggest that, in the most profound, socially pervasive, and yet personal way, these objective encounters transform us as *subjects*. (Sobchack, 1994: 83)

Unprecedented mediation and recycling of the past by visual media has led people to consume illusions of the past without, most of the time, being able to confirm the realness and authenticity of these memories. "Our memory is never fully 'ours,' nor are the pictures ever unmediated representations of our past." (Hirsch, 1997: 14) Thus, memories often do not validate the actual life experiences of people since they can be remodeled and influenced, blurring the boundaries between real and imaginary. Victor Burgin discusses the mixture of memories and fantasies with material from films and other media sources in *The Remembered Film,* and refers to a 1977 research project

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by sociologists at the University of Provence. That was a ten-year oral history research project,

> in which they conducted more than 400 recorded interviews with residents of the Marseille/Aix-en-Provence area. They asked each interviewee to describe her or his personal memories of the years 1930 to 1945. They found an almost universal tendency for personal history to be mixed with recollections of scenes from films and other media productions. 'I saw at the cinema' would become simply 'I saw.' (Burgin, 2004: 68)

These technologies of reproduction reproduce and represent experienced reality and memories; but in mediating present and past experience they remodel and influence it, becoming part of it rather than simply its passive medium. As Huyssen argues, "[w]e do know that the media do not transport public memory innocently. They shape it in their very structure and form." (Huyssen, 2000: 30)

Human memory's subjectivity and fluidity is further emphasized in contemporary Western societies by its mediation and representation, and subsequent creation of artificial memories by technical means that are not themselves objective. Photography and cinema are both connected to memory preservation and manipulation and belong somewhere between the myth of ideal life and lived reality. Although photography is associated with reality because of its indexical properties, as Susan Sontag argues, a photograph is still just an interpretation, and cannot be objective, since it is essentially a construction like any other representational form. "Instead of just recording reality, photographs have become the norm for the way things appear to us, thereby changing the very idea of reality, and of realism." (Sontag, 2001: 87) Every part of the image can be manipulated and even fabricated. Especially with the advent of more sophisticated digital technologies, the issue of fabricated reality and fictional memories is very much discussed. Digital representations are manipulable, fluid and imitable: as a copy with or without a referent they can evade truth and reality, leading possibly to the Baudrillardian simulacrum. As Steven Shaviro comments, "[e]ach time we extend ourselves technologically, some part of the real gives way to the 'virtual'." (Shaviro, 2003: 104) Digital media can represent something that does not belong to actual reality and does not bear any traces in the real world, not even memory traces. The rupture between signifier and signified can lead to the creation of fictional realities and subsequently fabricated memories. "Digital technologies inevitably become extensions of our selves - entities through which we re-think our relationship to the world and to our

selves." (Leslie, 2003: 182) They enhance and take advantage of the mediated nature of memories, their visuality and fluidity; and along with other recording devices transform the way we perceive memory.

Nevertheless it is worth noting the ironic fact that due to advanced technologies our connection to the past and to our memories is severed but, in contrast, without these technologies we would not have preserved these extensive personal and collective memories; and many past events would have been completely forgotten. Our memories are dependent on electronic records and data and their preservation is crucial for the conservation of these memories that are threatened by oblivion in case this technology breaks down. Esther Leslie questions these two opposite movements, when she asks: "[a]re computer memories a guarantee against forgetting, given their preservation of piles of data...[or] in actuality, the endpoint of an ultimate forgetting, because memory - our memory – is here externalised, and substituted?" (Leslie, 2003: 183) Jameson also comments, "the informational function of the media would thus be to help us forget, to serve as the very agents and mechanisms for our historical amnesia." (Jameson, 2002: 125) These ideas harken back to Plato's musings in *Phaedrus*, which opened this chapter. Under the conditions I described above, the growing power of photography, cinema and digital technologies, along with their subjective, unstable and fragmented character constitute the right background for the growth of contemporary theories and ideas around artificial memory, its manipulation and ramifications.

2.5 Artificial memories: theory and *Total Recall*

In *Mnemophrenia* and its predecessors, different visual technologies contribute to the extension of the range of the senses, consciousness and memory, extending inner mental states. As Baudrillard argues, "[t]he prostheses of the industrial age are still external, *exotechnical*, those that we know have been subdivided and internalized: *esotechnical.* We are in the age of soft technologies – genetic and mental software." (Baudrillard, 1994: 100) In these films, the overshadowing of reality by images echoes Baudrillard's notion of the hyperreal, where the real has disappeared and is replaced by

representation without referent as the new 'reality'. *Total Recall* successfully depicts various opposing ideas around artificial memories and for this reason I have chosen it as a representative of the group of films that has informed my film and thesis. I use *Total Recall* to present different theories on artificial memories and establish the different meanings and approaches constitutive of this concept as well as their ramifications. My analysis of the theories discussed should not be considered exhaustive but are nonetheless indicative of the discourse on artificial memories.

Total Recall revolves around the character of Douglas Quaid, a construction worker who dreams of Mars and longs to move there without understanding why, although he knows he has not been there before. In this future world one can buy memories of a trip one has never taken; and also memories of a fictional identity, such as those of a secret agent. Quaid decides to buy these memories but in doing so finds out that he himself used to be a secret agent on Mars called Hauser. He learns that he used to work for Cohaagen, the Governor of Mars, fighting the resistance; and that with his own consent his memories were erased and replaced by Quaid's artificial memories as a way to infiltrate the opposition group. From this point on, Quaid lives in a state of confusion, not knowing his real identity and not being able to distinguish between reality and fiction which have, for him, become interchangeable. Christine Cornea argues,

> [u]nlike those films that create a distinct separation between diegetically real and fantasy worlds... *Total Recall r*efuses to clearly signal which of these worlds is intended as real and which as fantasy. Confusion is encouraged in following the attempts of the hero, Douglas Quaid/ Hauser... to disentangle fact from fantasy in his own mind. (Cornea, 2007: 236)

The company that sells these pre-packaged memories, Rekall, not only offers artificially implanted memories of different trips, but also the possibility of acquiring a new identity, using their latest product, called 'Ego Trip'. This product offers the consumer the option of alternate identities during the trip, and as one salesman says, "It is like taking a vacation from yourself." These pre-packaged memories are depicted as fictional experiential films that are internalized due to implantation, and thus are watched by the mind's eye, becoming part of the consumer's memory reserve.

In the film's futuristic society, the human activity of memory preservation – through oral or

written stories, photographs or family videos – is superseded by memory implantation. Memories are not just mediated via different means but can be totally fabricated and consumed, as any other product, having a consequential effect on human identity and the ways that people perceive memories and the self, whose integrity is in question. The medium here becomes the memory itself: any mediation is imperceptible, technology being so sophisticated and the implantation procedure so advanced that the medium becomes the message and vice versa. Here we have Baudrillard's hyperreal, leading to

> ...the implosion *of the medium and of the real* in a sort of hyperreal nebula, in which even the definition and distinct action of the medium can no longer be determined... Finally, *the medium is the message* not only signifies the end of the message, but also the end of the medium... the medium and the real are now in a single nebula whose truth is undecipherable. (Baudrillard,1994: 82f)

Rekall promotes memory implantation as cheaper, safer and better than the real thing. As the salesman assures Quaid, the memories they sell are as real as any memory in his head, and his brain will not know the difference. Rekall and its commodified memories echo Huyssen's ideas about the growing commodification and spectacularization of memory, which result in the replication and remake of memories and even to the construction of memories that are completely fictional; yet, they are advertised as original and authentic. Huyssen also argues that we consume 'imagined memories' and although he acknowledges that all memories are imagined he believes that these consumerist memories are different from lived ones. "After all, many of the mass-marketed memories we consume are 'imagined memories' to begin with, and thus more easily forgotten than the lived memories." (Huyssen, 2000: 27) However, this is not possible in the society in which Quaid lives. As the film progresses, different twists negate the facts that Quaid and the audience have considered to be true and real, emphasizing the rootlessness of Quaid's life. The pre-packaged 'Ego Trip' that Quaid buys has all the elements and details that he will encounter during the rest of the film, such as: alien artifacts, the girl that he falls in love with and even the blue sky on Mars at the end. As he is told, "By the time the trip is over, you get the girl, kill the bad guys and save the entire planet", something that is actually fulfilled in his 'reality'.

In relation to the idea of commodification, Norman Klein has coined the term 'consumer

memories' in "Audience Culture and the Video Screen" (1990), referring to movies, TV, shopping, driving and touring, which offer narrative vignettes in which consumers are the central characters. He argues that due to capitalism, increased consumerism and the intense presence of media in everyday life, people's memories have become a combination of incoherent, displaced fragments of political speeches, commercials, dislocated phrases, shows, films and products they have bought. Consumer memories are the artificial memories of consumers of images, experiences and material objects, all treated as products offered to be bought and consumed.

> Merchandising promotion leaves room for the audience, but little else. It simply presents us with an imaginary space, which we, as audience then inhabit. We are reminded of a street, a highway, or a room next to ours, because, like TV programming, sound bites register in strands of fractured memories, impulses that feel familiar, harmonies snatched from famous operas. (Klein, 1990: 402)

Klein argues that personal memories are influenced and subsequently reconfigured, restructured by the images and products that people consume, redefining the memories as just as fabricated as the products themselves. In *Total Recall* the implanted memories are the ultimate 'consumer memories', commodifying personal memories, promoting them as films that are watched by the mind's eye and where the central character is always the consumer.

The saturation of everyday life with mediated images and information is used as the backdrop in *Total Recall*. TV screens and computer monitors are everywhere[11], almost transparent and very much integrated into the futuristic setting. Note the large flat TV screen in Quaid's apartment, which one minute shows the news and the next minute can be switched to resemble a window overlooking nature that is nevertheless televised. Landsberg, commenting on the technological permeation in *Total*

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      Garrett Stewart remarks about science fiction film and its overabundance of "banks of monitors, outsized video intercoms, x-ray display panels, hologram tubes, backlit photoscopes, aerial scanners, telescopic mirrors, illuminated computer consoles, overhead projectors, slide screens, radar scopes, whole curved walls of transmitted imagery, the retinal registers of unseen electronic eyes." (Stewart, 1985: 161) According to him, "cinema becomes a synecdoche for the entire technics of an imagined society." (Stewart, 1985: 161)

Recall, writes, "[t]he notion of authenticity-and our desire to privilege it-is constantly undermined by *Total Recall*'s obsessive rendering of mediated images... In *Total Recall* the proliferation of mediated images – and of video screens – forces us to question the very notion of an authentic or an originary presence." (Landsberg, 2004b: 243) For example, Lori, Quaid's fictitious 'wife', trains with the help of a human-sized tennis teacher hologram; and Quaid uses a device that produces a hologram of himself, a duplication reflecting visually his real and artificial mixed identity. Hence, technological consumer products are shown as trespassing every aspect of life, from the exterior surroundings to the internal and personal sphere.

Alison Landsberg also discusses the commodification of memory but approaches the subject from a different perspective compared to Klein, as examined further below. Landsberg coins the term 'prosthetic memories' and argues that they have emerged in this period because capitalism has enabled memories to be commodified and disseminated across different strands of society, and because of the development of different mass media of memory. "Through watching films and television, by visiting experiential museums, and perhaps by entering virtual worlds on the Internet, people can and do take on prosthetic memories." (Landsberg, 2004a: 48) Quaid's prosthetic memories of his previous life as Hauser are always mediated, and the only proofs of their authenticity are the video recordings of the 'real' self, Hauser, referring to the 'artificial' self, Quaid. In the first recording Hauser characteristically says, "You are not you, you are me..." Quaid ventures on an Ego Trip of self-re-discovery, where he meets his double. Hauser and Quaid are polar opposites: Hauser is selfish and corrupt whilst Quaid is a good-natured hero who decides to fight against the forces that have constructed him. Landsberg argues that the meeting with Hauser via the video monitor,

> seems to disrupt the Lacanian notion of the 'mirror stage'... the encounter with the face in the monitor, which looks like his face but is not the one he owns, disrupts any sense of a unified, stable and bounded subjectivity. Instead of consolidating his identity, the video screen further fragments it. This encounter undermined as well the assumption that a particular memory has a rightful owner, a proper body to adhere to. (Landsberg, 2004b: 243)

Celia Lury in *Prosthetic Culture* develops her ideas on a culture in which the notion of extension plays a significant role. In this culture the individual is a combination of adjacent and coeval

parts, the distance between cause and effect, subject and object disappears: "memories [are] substituted for one another, organs transplanted from one body to work alongside those of another's, hues of cloth juxtaposed with colors of skin, hair and eyes. This is no longer a culture of *synthesis,* but one of *prosthesis."* (Lury, 1998: 16) Lury argues that the intrusion of media in everyday life, and specifically photography and seeing photographically, contributed to the emergence and nourishment of multiple personality and false memory syndromes which entail a combination of memories and fantasies with material from films and other media sources. Lury is influenced by Baudrillard and his belief that every possibility has the potential of being realized in a technological loop, and argues that in prosthetic culture people may feel responsible for memories they have not had, and they are comforted that there is a machine that can actualize this possibility on behalf of them. In *Total Recall* this is possible with the implanted memories that give Quaid the chance to live the life he always thought he wanted. In his case, the Cartesian idea of stable and coherent self belongs to the past: human identity is a sum of real and fictional memories and experiences, a combination of different – even contrasting – identities. At one point Quaid asks, "Ok, then. If I am not me, who the hell am I?" The video recordings of Hauser constitute the only clues in Quaid's search for truth; but at the same time their mediated nature suggests their unreliability, contributing to a kind of multiple personality disorder as suggested by Lury. Quaid even needs to kill Lori, the woman that he had thought of as his wife for the last eight years. In this sense, nothing can guarantee that a new circle of mutually exclusive memories and experiences will not promote a new and contrasting identity for Quaid. Any connection to the past is unstable and compromised if not destroyed, since there is no clear assurance of what belongs to reality. The artificial identity in *Total Recall*, a product of consumerist society, is so unstable that as Rekall's doctor tells Quaid, "One minute you'll be the savior of the rebel cause, then, next thing you know, you'll be Cohaagen's bosom buddy." This instability and fluidity emphasizes the mutable aspect of Quaid's identity.

At the end, Quaid opts to forsake his assumed previous selfish, corrupted self, represented by Hauser; and chooses the fake memories and identity instead. As Landsberg argues in her article

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"Prosthetic Memory: *Total Recall* and *Blade Runner*", these 'prosthetic' memories can prove valid and enable the individual to be proactive.

> Surprisingly enough, memories are less about authenticating the past, than about generating possible courses of action in the present. The Mutant resistance leader, Quato, tells Quaid that 'A man is defined by his actions, not his memories.' We might revise his statement to say that a man is defined by his actions, but whether those actions are made possible by prosthetic memories or memories based on lived experience makes little difference. (Landsberg, 2004b: 244)

Although Cohaagen tells him that he is nothing but a stupid dream, Quaid takes a stance and decides to change his future through his actions. Biderman suggests that Quaid "takes an attitude toward his facticity by rejecting his past actions as completely defining him and chooses to create a new identity through his future actions." (Biderman, 2008: 52) On a similar note, Quaid experiences everything in a personal way and manages to empathize with the mutants on Mars, and thus chooses to take responsibility and help the resistance group. Kaja Silverman, like Landsberg, focuses on the transferable nature of memories and explores the idea of artificial memories from the perspective of their contribution to the development of social empathy. Silverman coins the term 'heteropathic memory', a kind of memory that permits the subject to participate in the desires and struggles of the 'other', particularly the culturally minor and persecuted. Silverman discusses how the social order is based on visual representation, photography, cinema and video,; and she challenges our way of looking, suggesting a way of representation that supports an identification process that does not interiorize the other but instead accepts the other as oneself. Through heteropathic memory the person does not absorb the other, does not cling to images of the other that he/she can incorporate, but gets out of his/her own cultural norms. He/she lets the pasts of other people destabilize his/her own, following an empathetic and affective approach to 'difference'. Quaid experiences through the implanted memories a reality that is very different from his life on Earth, and lets the struggles of the mutants and resistance group on Mars affect him. His previous experiences were completely different, echoing Silverman's ideas about "the designation of the scene of representation as radically discontinuous with the world of the spectator" in order to encourage and maintain an heteropathic identification. (Silverman, 1996: 86) Quaid decides to go against Hauser's ideology and his past or "authentic" self,

and embraces his new "artificial" self and heteropathic or prosthetic memories by liberating the people of Mars. As Christine Cornea writes, "it is significant that the hero chooses to adopt what finally turns out to be a fictional persona, leaving both Quaid (and viewer?) immersed in the fantasy world that Hauser created, internalised, and now lives." (Cornea, 2007: 236) His alliance with the resistance is built upon memories that might be artificial but which he nevertheless accepts as authentic since they are indistinguishable from the real and become part of his present reality.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the science-fiction films that have influenced *Mnemophrenia* in the ways they establish the idea of artificial memory, emphasizing the link between memory and film. Firstly, I offered a brief historical examination of the relationship between memory and film and examined how film resembles memory due to its form and techniques, and introduced it as an effective memory aid. In addition, I argued that film can represent memory by replicating memory's visuality and malleability and presented examples of science-fiction films that deal with the subject of memory and successfully depict these aspects. I also offered a critical analysis of artificial memories as a film subject, placing the concept in a contemporary context; and used *Total Recall* as a representative example that effectively illustrates the current discussion around the subject.

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the idea of film as a memory aid that is able to successfully represent and preserve memory and potentially become a memory system itself, which consequently produces artificial memories. The visuality and malleability of memory examined in this chapter constitute the foundation of how memory is depicted in *Mnemophrenia*, which builds on the ideas around artificial memories discussed earlier and explores this subject even further. In the following chapters, I analyze each period of *Mnemophrenia* separately and examine for each one the form and style used to depict memory; and explore the artificial memories produced by the advanced films of the time and their subsequent ramifications. I analyze *Mnemophrenia* in chronological order, despite the different periods interacting with each other throughout the film. The reason for this is that

it helps me to offer a clear and coherent analysis, since each period affects the next.

The first period depicts the story of Jeanette, a documentary filmmaker who is making a film about mnemophrenia, a new mental condition arising from the merging of real and artificial memories. Her interest stems from discovering that she is a mnemophrenic: memories of her first love, Douglas, were artificial, created by Virtual Reality (VR) films she consumed when younger. In the following period, Nicholas – Jeanette's grandson – is a neuroscientist and computer scientist who works for Memofilm developing Total Cinema (TC), the first generation of all-sensory interactive VR films. Nicholas is a mnemophrenic, and his vision is that TC will encourage empathy and eliminate the divide between mnemophrenics and non-mnemophrenics. In the last period Robyin – a descendant of Nicholas and Jeanette – is a researcher and one of the first people to get a brain-implanted microchip. She is interested in empathy and shared consciousness, and has been researching Jeanette's and Nicholas's videorecordings.

How much do we know our pasts? If we discover that our memories are corrupt, how will we effect their restoration? How will we know what constitutes a complete memory, let alone memories that produce truths? Being low on memory produces a crisis in both the personal and the public sphere. (Blackmore, 2004: 38)

Chapter 3: Outbreak of mnemophrenia

The family tree of the main characters in *Mnemophrenia* starts with Jeanette Harper, a documentary filmmaker who is making a film about the condition. Jeanette aims to research the outbreak of this new mental condition, trying to find its possible link with visual technologies and specifically Virtual Reality (VR) films. Jeanette's story signals the beginning of mnemophrenia and the fusion of reality and fiction. Her research and personal story are recorded in her documentary, a visual autobiography that subsequently becomes (artificial) memory material for future generations, notably her descendants Nicholas and Robyin.

This part of *Mnemophrenia* combines science fiction and documentary, being in effect a futuristic 'fake' documentary that builds on documentary conventions. In this chapter, I will briefly refer to other documentaries that are placed in the future and have influenced my creative choices for Jeanette's documentary; and will go on to discuss two science fiction films that have documentary elements. In my analysis, I use documentary as a metaphor for memory and select the term 'fake documentary' over 'mockumentary' in order to support the metaphorical equation of fake documentary with fake memories[12]. As Jeanette strongly values real memories and strives for truth, it becomes increasingly apparent that her fake memories are as important if not more important than her real ones, uncovering a different 'truth'. Thus, the use of fake documentary style reveals the significance of fake memories as well as the fragility and uncertainty of Jeanette's reality; and questions documentary's and memory's authority. I then explore the effect of mnemophrenia on Jeanette and use the idea of postmodern schizophrenia[13] as examined by Fredric Jameson and Jean Baudrillard in order to analyze

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12 In this chapter I use the terms fake and artificial memories interchangeably.

13 Deleuze and Guattari have also written about 'postmodern schizophrenia' and their ideas will be explored in the last chapter.

the ramifications of fake memories. I consider Jeanette a postmodern schizophrenic and compare her to other science fiction film characters that have artificial memories and that share similar traits and experiences.

3.1 Beginning of mnemophrenia

Although Jeanette's documentary constitutes one third of the feature film, it sets the foundation for the development of the other two stories since Jeanette is the first in the bloodline to experience mnemophrenia. Jeanette's story does not depart much from the classic science fiction film narrative that offers a negative perspective with regards to technology. I do not shy away from showing the significant consequences of VR film consumption and depict Jeanette becoming increasingly confused and emotionally unstable. I also show how the re-experience of the VR films intensifies her longing to meet Douglas[14] again. Thus, in the end, I present Jeanette quite willfully getting more and more lost in fiction, losing touch with the reality for which she has so strongly advocated.

Jeanette's documentary introduces the beginning of mnemophrenia as a condition. Bill Nichols argues that the documentary addresses the world in which we live rather than the world imagined by the filmmaker (Nichols, 2001: xi), and *Mnemophrenia* attempts to capitalize on this address. This is the beginning of the film, at least chronologically, and it constitutes a more conventional grounding in a 'reality' that the audience can understand and relate to, compared with the rest of the film. As Vivian Sobchack comments, "[a] great deal of our rising curve of excitation is… to see what we know is unreal and impossible made real – authenticated – by its presence in a real and familiar context which has been photographed in a manner reserved for actual and real happenings." (Sobchack, 2001: 137) Jeanette's experience is closer to ours than that of the two other main characters, since the further we go into the future the less familiar is the 'reality' that we encounter – or it would be more correct to say that we encounter a different kind of reality. Jeanette is the beginning of our journey into

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14 The name 'Douglas' is a reference to Douglas Quaid from *Total Recall.*

mnemophrenia and the world of artificial memories. I use her as our guide, who offers a brief overview of a condition that affects the perception of reality and identity for her and future generations.

As discussed in the introduction, several science fiction films from which my film takes inspiration offer a dichotomy between reality and fiction and almost always offer clear visual, textual and formal depictions of this battle in order to help the audience follow the story and, by the end, reassure them about the victory of reality over artificial and fictional worlds.

> Science fiction films can be seen as an arena in which we can explore exactly what it is to be 'human', partly through the juxtaposition between the human and a variety of opposites... Many science fiction films can be read as offering this kind of imaginary resolution of the opposition between the human and science, technology and rationality. They often set up an initial opposition that is eventually reconciled. (King & Krzywinska, 2000: 12)

In *Mnemophrenia*, I use the same device but with a different goal in mind. The audience needs a grounding, some kind of foundation in reality, a person to whom they can relate, cling to and possibly identify with, in order to follow a story that pushes them to question preconceived notions about reality and fiction, real and fake memories. Jeanette's story offers various cues that help the audience to distinguish between her real and fake memories. The main core of her documentary represents her real memories; and the various excerpts from the VR films of Douglas depict her fake memories. Even though Jeanette and her story offer this grounding in reality, their status as authentic, *first hand* memories is destabilised by the end of the film when it is revealed that they all along constituted Robyin's *artificial* memories: this stays in keeping with the film's objective to challenge the reality/ fiction binary.

3.2 Visual autobiography

Jeanette's main motive for making the documentary and wanting to find out the truth about mnemophrenia and its possible effects is that she has recently discovered she herself is a mnemophrenic. Her first love, Douglas, whom she always remembered with fondness and who had made such a strong impression on her, has been proven to be an artificial memory. Mnemophrenia makes Jeanette doubt herself and her life choices and as a way to cope she resorts to the only thing she

believes can help her find the truth: documentary filmmaking. As a strong advocate of documentary and its connection to facts, evidence and objectivity, Jeanette uses what she thinks of as a reliable film form.

Jeanette's documentary works like a visual autobiography that aspires to heal her wounds caused by mnemophrenia. It is like a "memory work" as defined by Annette Kuhn in her essay "A Journey Through Memory." Kuhn's description applies:

> [It is] an active practice of remembering which takes an inquiring attitude towards the past and the activity of its reconstruction through memory. Memory work... [i]nvolves an active staging of memory... [It] [q]uestions the transparency of what is remembered… [and] [t]akes what is remembered as material for interpretation. (Kuhn, 2000: 186)

Jeanette starts her documentary questioning all her memories of Douglas as well as their reconstruction, which are a result of VR films. The active staging, as Kuhn calls it, of these memories is achieved because of the unlocking of the VR films so that Jeanette can re-experience them and include parts of them in her documentary. In addition, her interviews with film scholars, neuroscientists, VR scientists and the recording of the group therapy sessions that she attends are part of her enquiring into the transparency or authenticity of her memories. They also depict her efforts to interpret them and look for their meanings and possibilities. It is evident that the revelation of Douglas's artificiality has completely shaken her, and made her not only question the memories themselves but also the choices she made since she was 18, which have contributed significantly to her present identity. According to Kuhn, for the practitioner of memory work, "it is not merely a question of *what* we choose to keep in our 'memory boxes'... but of what we do with them... how we then make use of the stories they generate to give deeper meaning to, and if necessary to change, our lives now." (Kuhn, 2000: 187) The memory work that Jeanette undertakes has a direct impact on every aspect of her life in the present, from the professional to the personal, which eventually leads to her breakdown. Throughout this memory work that is the making of her documentary, Jeanette negotiates her relationships with her family and with Douglas himself.

3.3 Futuristic mockumentary: science fiction and documentary

Jeanette's story is depicted as a documentary that is placed in the future and explores the blurring between reality and fiction. In this part of *Mnemophrenia,* documentary and science fiction complement each other, the former representing the science and the latter offering the "informed" fiction. Documentary has relied on its close link with science for its continued authority, and like science it has attempted to offer general truths about the human condition. "Beyond art, beyond drama, the documentary is evidential, scientific." (Winston, 1995: 127) Roger Silverstone argues in his book *Framing Science: the making of a BBC documentary* that in a scientific experiment, the scientist tests out a hypothesis by collecting data and submitting them to a variety of tests. Results produced by these tests are seen as confirming or denying the original hypothesis. Similarly, the documentarist making an expository documentary builds a narrative around a social problem or issue (hypothesis). (Silverstone, 1985) So, like the project of science, many documentaries have attempted to present general truths about the human condition. And documentary is usually, if erroneously, perceived as offering a representation of an objective, unmediated view of the world along with factual evidence.

However, as Jane Roscoe and Craig Hight argue in their book *Faking it*, "in postmodern society, we have become suspicious of science and of general truths about the world. The documentary can present a truth, not the Truth." (Roscoe & Hight, 2001: 28) The union of documentary and science fiction in *Mnemophrenia* leads to a self-referential structure that is represented by mockumentary, which can be seen as documentary's alter ego. Jeanette's story is depicted as a futuristic mockumentary, which showcases the fruitful combination of documentary and science fiction genre. The mockumentary style emphasizes the merging of reality and fiction; and offers a critique on the film medium itself and the ways documentary and science fiction complement and transform each other in this project. Thus, in this way the two genres are integrated and it is the deliberate play between factual and fictional modes of engagement that generates reflexive potential. I will now briefly refer to the documentary and science fiction films that have become my guide for the development of Jeanette's 'documentary'.

Mnemophrenia places the first time period in a future that has already happened and, since it builds upon the current relationship of humans and memory to media, bears the question, "Could this actually happen?" This part of the film shares formal and stylistic similarities with documentaries that are placed in the future. These are films that orient the viewer to a possible world via a representation of events that either have not yet happened or did not happen as the films depict. Paul Ward in his article "The Future of Documentary? 'Conditional Tense' Documentary and the Historical Record" talks about this specific kind of documentary, which he calls the future of documentary. "The plausible detail of the production – not to mention that of the events depicted – adds another level of complexity: these are events that have not happened at all, told as if they have already happened, with the resultant implication to the audience that this *could yet* happen." (Ward, 2006: 273) There are different examples of documentaries that talk about a possible future or depict a "what would have happened if" scenario, from Peter Watkins's *War Game* (1965) to *Smallpox 2002: Silent Weapon* (Daniel Percival, 2002), *The Day Britain Stopped* (Gabriel Range, 2003) and *Death of a President* (Gabriel Range, 2006). The conditional or future tense of these documentaries differentiates them from most documentaries by attempting to envision a possible future, and as Ward comments, their "mode of address is not 'Is this real' or 'Did this really happen?' but '*Could* this actually happen?'" (Ward, 2006: 275)

Jeanette is like the future archivist in *The Age of Stupid* (Franny Armstrong, 2009), but instead of looking for answers from actual events in the past, which is the viewers' present, she is looking at her own present or recent past, which is fictional and still placed in the future for us, in a similar vein to *Smallpox 2002* (when it was made and broadcasted)[15]. The use of documentary conventions contributes to the realistic appearance of mnemophrenia as a condition, which is mostly enhanced through interviews with different scientists who support the scenario of advanced VR

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15 This exemplifies what science fiction offers according to Jameson, "the estrangement and renewal of our own reading present." The "multiple mock futures" of science fiction work by "transforming our own present into the determinate past of something yet to come." (Jameson, 1982: 152)

films leading to such a condition. However, most of the aforementioned future documentaries such as *War Game, Smallpox 2002,* or *The Day Britain Stopped* depict a potential disaster. These films could be seen as a call to action, as Ward suggests, and their aim is to warn and inform the audience of impending dangers[16]. In contrast, *Mnemophrenia* is more of a personal story: Jeanette's documentary is a much smaller production compared to these documentaries and attempts to inform about a recent, not widely known condition, without having enough evidence. Her documentary does not showcase something that has already happened, like the terrorist attack in *Smallpox 2002* or the consequences of the failure of UK's transport system in *The Day Britain Stopped*. Thus, it lacks any (fictional) television newscasts but presents different views on a new condition, and most importantly documents Jeanette's personal experience.

The focus of my film is on science fiction, which also asks the question "Could this actually happen?" but is much more open to a diversity of possible answers and scenarios, and does not need any link to reality or evidence.

> As a form whose boundaries are, perhaps more than any other popular genre, always open or blurred, as a narrative type that always focuses on the tools of human fabrication, that is, on the science and technology that lend science fiction its very distinctive character... the science fiction film inevitably foregrounds as no other genre does our attitudes toward the real. Through that interrogation of the real, it asks a number of fundamental questions... How do we define ourselves, how do we construct our world, and even more broadly, how do we know? (Telotte, 2001: 59)

Mnemophrenia should be seen as a film that on one hand begins from a plausible scientific premise, using documentary conventions that are linked to truth and objectivity; but on the other hand, its science fictional elements tamper with its suggested 'realism' and question its documentary credibility, therefore contributing to the subversive goal of my fake documentary. In this respect, there are two science fiction film examples that *Mnemophrenia* resembles: *Journey to the Moon*

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16 Ward argues that these films are most certainly documentary in intention and that the filmmakers frame the events in such a way in order to emphasize how plausible they think these events are and considers them as a call to action. (Ward, 2006: 275) Moreover, Alisa Lebow in her presentation at the Visible Evidence Documentary Studies conference in 2008 asks the question "[i]f documentary is already a kind of fiction, then why should it relegate its explorations of the world to the past and present?" suggesting that a documentary in the future tense could offer different possibilities that are useful to explore. (Lebow, 2008: 1) Ward's and Lebow's discussion of these future tense documentaries reveals their belief that they could constitute a powerful critique or a type of history.

(Kutluğ Ataman, 2009) and *District 9* (Neill Blomkamp, 2009). *Journey to the Moon* has a loose connection to the science fiction genre since it explores the fictional quest of four Turkish villagers in 1957 to travel to the moon. It sets up as a fake documentary by using "found" black and white photos, the voice-over of a local narrator as well as interviews with established Turkish intellectuals who offer their views about what took place in that village. *Mnemophrenia* uses many similar conventions, such as interviews with experts, excerpts of Jeanette's VR films with Douglas, and the testimony of different mnemophrenics about their experience. In addition, *Journey to the Moon* questions, like *Mnemophrenia,* the status of documentary as an objective source of truth.

District 9 is a film about aliens stranded in Johannesburg due to the malfunction of their mothership, and their subsequent confinement in ghettos. Like *Journey to the Moon*, it uses documentary codes and conventions, such as interviews with experts and video footage of the protagonist before his infection and hiding in the alien ghetto, in order to make the story as realistic as possible, blurring the lines between reality and fiction. The story is situated in 2010 Johannesburg, combining current real images of the city with CGI images of aliens and their mothership: with its naturalistic style, camerawork and acting it succeeds in the blending of the two genres. Like *District 9*, *Mnemophrenia* uses fake documentary as a device to enhance its realistic effect while at the same time focusing on its science fiction premise. *Mnemophrenia* works like *District 9* and other science fiction films that envision a potential future. "[O]ur science fiction films, time and again… draw us back from a sheer fascination with what 'might be'—which is, after all, one of the key attractions of the genre—so that we can consider what is truly at stake in all these narratives about creation and destruction: our humanness." (Telotte, 1995: 3)

3.4 Documentary conventions

As a means of representing Jeanette's documentary, I use the expository and observational modes as defined by Bill Nichols, in order to reflexively engage with the subject and subvert the realism of documentary representations. I use the expository mode in Jeanette's interviews, in which

the interviewees express their ideas and beliefs about mnemophrenia. Jeanette's confrontations with the condition through the group therapy sessions are contrasted with the cold, scientific stance of the interviews. The interviews describe or try to understand the 'reality' of mnemophrenia from an objective angle, voicing both negative and positive views. It is important that none of the expert interviewees claim to be personally affected by the condition, which emphasizes Jeanette's feeling of isolation, making it an even more personal project for her.

The expert draws credibility from their official position or standing and from their access to "discourses of sobriety" as Nichols refers to law, science, medicine and politics in his book *Introduction to Documentary*. (Nichols, 2001) "[The experts] are expected to present us with material and knowledge we might otherwise not have access to, provide evidence to back up arguments, and help us discover and gain access to the truth." (Roscoe & Hight, 2001: 16) Since we usually do not question the status of the scientist or expert nor the truthfulness of his/her account due to his/her official position, I use the device used in *Zelig* (Woody Allen, 1983) or *Journey to the Moon* and interview actual scholars, researchers and scientists about mnemophrenia. All the interviewees explore the idea of mnemophrenia and its possible ramifications by commenting on a hypothetical future and playing along, behaving as if they live in that hypothetical future themselves. The documentary aspect of the film that expresses the idea of objectivity and reality contrasts with the hyperreality that it explores. The expository mode of the interviews offers a reflexive commentary. Many of my ideas are supported by these interviews, and some of the interviewees are cited in my written thesis as well, increasing the blur between reality and fiction. Thus, the dialogue between the film and the thesis comes alive, revealing an organic relationship by using the ideas of some theorists to analyse the film and its sociocultural background and at the same time interview them for the same film, creating an indeterminate situation where theory and practice vie for primacy, yet neither takes precedence. This implication also raises the question about the status of the interviewees, who assume the role of the expert and 'actor' at the same time. This blend offers a critique on their presumed official and informed position as documentary interviewees, since the duality of their role destabilizes their authority.

I use the observational mode by giving the audience an unmediated access to the real world of the mnemophrenics through the observed mnemophrenic group therapy sessions that Jeanette attends[17]. These scenes are all shown observationally and are linked to Direct Cinema style and support the idea of unmediated reality, like *Primary* (Robert Drew, 1960), *Don't Look Back* (D.A. Pennebaker, 1967) and *Titticut Follies* (Frederick Wiseman, 1967). The camera in the group therapy sessions tries to capture all interactions between the participants and their analyst, Tessa Fox, imitating the fly-on-the-wall documentary film style, which tries to keep a distance and be as unobtrusive as possible. Bill Nichols comments on this kind of film, which he calls observational, "[w]e look in on life as it is lived. Social actors engage with one another, ignoring the filmmakers. Often the characters are caught up in pressing demands or a crisis of their own. This requires their attention and draws it away from the presence of filmmakers." (Nichols, 2001: 174) The camerawork is indicative of this particular documentary film style by following the dialogue, including abrupt panning in order to capture different reactions. There are also handheld shots as well as zoom-ins that aesthetically comment on and emphasize the narrative significance of Jeanette's emotional reactions. In addition, the naturalistic acting contributes to the realism of the documentary. All of the dialogue and characters were developed through improvisation workshops with the actors and adds to the story's realism by giving the impression of spontaneity. (I briefly analyze the improvisation process at the Appendix).

3.5 Fake documentary: fake memories

My decision to use documentary clichés and conventional forms for the representation of Jeanette's story was deliberate in order to emphasize the common but flawed link between documentary, objectivity and truth. The use of conventional documentary style helps me to align it with the idea of memory and its presumed link to real events. As Susannah Radstone comments,

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17 I also intended to include other observational scenes, the documentary 'behind the scenes', all placed in Jeanette's office depicting her discussions with George, her cameraman. However, during the editing process I realized that these scenes did not work well and I had to cut them out.

> Although it is now recognised that memory's condensations and displacements are similar to those found in dreams, memory work does not reduce memory to fiction, to dream, or to poetry, for instance. Memories, that is, continue to be memories, and it is their relation to lived historical experience that constitutes their specificity. (Radstone, 2000: 11)

I consider documentary to be the best metaphor for memory, and that is how this term is applied in this chapter and formally used in the first part of *Mnemophrenia*. More than any other film genre it resembles memory in that it tries to structure and represent something that has happened though its representation does not necessarily reflect actual reality. Documentary, with its different choices in framing, editing, use of narrative and voice-overs, dictates what and how it re-presents, offering only a version of 'reality'. Documentary's reliance on the distinction between truth and falsity no longer holds: "[o]ne of the consequences of the critique of 'truth' and 'reality' has been the blurring of traditional boundaries between documentary and drama, and between fact and fiction." (Roscoe & Hight, 2001: 29) Documentary is like memory, which is a re-presentation itself, omitting details or filling in the gaps of a past reality. Thus, the use of fake documentary style offers an ironic emphasis on the authentic and real aspect of documentary and memory, while at the same time displaying their fictional features.

There are debates around what to call the types of film that deliberately fuse documentary conventions with fictional elements for parodic or self-reflexive purposes, or in some cases as pure hoax. It is worth noting that in documentary studies, it seems like the term mockumentary or mock documentary is widely used, further explored in Roscoe and Hight's book *Faking It.* "Mock-documentaries foreground their fictionality; their intention is to play with, undermine or challenge documentary, rather than to seek validity through an association with the genre." (Roscoe & Hight, 2001: 47) Gerd Bayer proposes in his essay "Artifice and Artificiality in Mockumentaries" that mockumentaries could also be called meta-documentaries since their aim is the questioning of documentary. (Bayer, 2006) But other theorists have referred to them as fake documentaries, as Alexandra Juhasz explains in *F is for Phony*, "I use the word 'fake' because it registers both the copying and its discovery... The fakery of fake docs mirrors and reveals the sustaining lies of all

documentary, both real and fake, producing the possibility for the contesting of history, identity, and truth." (Juhasz & Lerner, 2006: 7) I choose to use the name fake documentary[18] purely for metaphorical and not conceptual reasons as I explain below.

The reason for using a 'fake' documentary is in order to depict through form and not only content the exploration of the idea of fake memories. In *Mnemophrenia*, the idea of documentary stands for real memory and fake documentary for fake memory. A fake documentary reveals the fragile balance between reality, truth and documentary, and fake memories reveal the fluid relationship between reality and memories. As I have established, memories are always an act of construction. Like documentary, any attempts to recapture the past are exercises in fiction, revealing that there is always a difficulty in distinguishing between reality and fiction when reality is mediated and, indeed, more than ever in Jeanette's time. In *Mnemophrenia*, the fake documentary metaphor implies that fake memories might be truer than real ones and could reveal something closer to conscious or even unconscious reality. As Eric Barnouw comments, "[s]ome artists turn from documentary to fiction because they feel it lets them come closer to the truth, their truth. Some, it would appear, turn to documentary because it can make deception more plausible." (Barnouw, 1993: 349) The fake documentary reveals the deceptive truth of documentary and Jeanette's deluded ideas about the superiority of real memories over fake ones.

Jeanette resorts to documentary in order to understand mnemophrenia and the way she feels because she considers it objective and truthful. For her, the documentary is the only way to reestablish her relationship to reality and favour real over fake memories. Her journey is a mixture of reality and fiction, which interpenetrate and influence each other; but in the end she finds it very hard to reconcile them. The status of real memories is undermined when fake or artificial memories

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18 In contrast, Lebow has objections to the term fake documentary arguing that it reestablishes the status of documentary as authentic, . according According to her, "the term 'fake doc' too eagerly accepts and reconfirms the binary (fake vs. real) from the outset. Fake doc needlessly concedes that documentary itself is 'real' or at least authentic." (Lebow, 2006: 224) Although I understand and agree with Lebow's argument, however, I prefer to use the name fake documentary for a metaphorical purpose.

of Douglas are becoming, for Jeanette, more real than reality and affecting her relationship to that reality and the people involved. Eve Oishi in her essay "Screen Memories: Fakeness in Asian American Media Practice" writes, "[i]f documentaries function as the visual record of a story or event, then fake documentaries serve as the memory, the flood of things not seen... Fake documentaries not only call into question the reliability of all images, but they borrow... this method of truth telling to tell another story." (Oishi, 2006: 197) Paraphrasing Oishi's ideas, I argue that documentaries function as the memory of an event and fake documentaries serve as the fake memory, the flood of things not "really" seen that tell another story, which might not be linked to actual events but which is still powerful. Juhasz argues that fake documentaries do manage a link to actual reality (Juhasz & Lerner, 2006: 2,); and in addition, Lebow proposes that fantasy is necessary to have a glimpse of the Real and that mockumentary could be even truer than documentary. (Lebow, 2006: 235-6) Thus, the use of fake documentary in this film reveals the importance of Jeanette's fake memories;: it presents an insight into Jeanette's actuality and at the same time the realization of her memories' fictionality breaks down the meaning of everyday life offered by the symbolic and possibly leads to a glimpse of the Real as Lebow suggests.

3.6 VR films as film-souvenirs

After discussing how Jeanette's present experience and memories are represented in the first part of my film, I now turn to Jeanette's mnemophrenia and her fake memories, caused by the Memory Palaces[19] VR films. "The body in virtual reality transcends the need for a surrogate character to experience the diegesis *for* him or her... Instead, an illusion of direct, immediate (and seemingly

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[19] The name 'Memory Palaces' is a reference to an art of memory invented by the ancient Greeks, which became known to Rome and hence part of the European tradition, and depended on visual impressions of incredible density. "This art seeks to memorise through a technique of impressing 'places' and 'images' on memory. It has usually been classed as 'mnemotechnincs'." (Yates, 1966: xi) The art of memory was like an inner writing; those who have learned this art could set their thoughts in places and search for them whenever they were needed. In the course of time, in fifteenth and sixteenth century Europe people began to imagine memory as a space containing imaginary objects that represented thoughts and ideas organized into an imaginary architecture. These architectural loci were sometimes called "Memory Palaces."

nonmediated) engagement is produced." (Bukatman, 1993: 240) VR films are presented as a new kind of medium that attempts to represent the hyperreal world of the future as accurately and truthfully as possible, bringing the cinematic experience to the next level. Mary Ann Doane comments on the different visual media depicted in science fiction films, writing that:

> Since the guarantee of the real in the classical narrative cinema is generally the visible, the advanced visual devices... would seem, at least in part, to ensure the credibility of the 'hyperreal' of science fiction. And certainly insofar as it is necessary to imagine that the inhabitants of the future will need some means of representing to themselves their world (and other worlds), these visual devices serve the purpose... of a kind of documentary authentication. (Doane, 2004: 188)

I have chosen VR technology as the main technological cause of mnemophrenia because it stretches the possibilities for artificial memory, deeply affecting how memory can be perceived and experienced and subsequently impacting on human identity. VR attempts to offer an immediate experience where internal functions cannot be distinguished from external events, as Bolter and Grusin propose in their book *Remediation*: it "has become a cultural metaphor for the ideal of perfect mediation." (Bolter & Grusin, 2000: 161) Lev Manovich refers to Jaron Lanier, a VR developer, who comments on the link between memory and VR saying: "[y]ou can play back your memory through time and classify your memories in various ways. You'd be able to run back through the experiential places you've been in order to be able to find people, tools." (Manovich) Thus, VR bears the potential of becoming the ultimate way to experience one's memories: it offers the latent power to live through the memories of somebody else, confound the sense of self and identity and promote a different notion of artificial memory. VR is the technology that plays an integral role in *Mnemophrenia*, as well as many of the films that influenced it, and is widely examined in the thesis. As Christine Cornea writes,

> It is no surprise… that by the mid-1990s there was a flurry of American science fiction films concerned with the social implications of virtual reality/ internet technologies… the depiction of a futuristic form of virtual reality provided the perfect plot device with which to explore issues surrounding identity and postmodern culture. (Cornea, 2007: 188-9)

In *Mnemophrenia,* Memofilm is presented as the biggest VR film production company, and it develops and promotes the cinema of the future. Memofilm's Memory Palaces VR films are locked – only able to be viewed once – not only to increase company profit by encouraging consumers to buy new VR films, but also in order to replicate a true experience as authentically as possible.

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These VR films perfectly illustrate J. P. Telotte's views on films, which according to him serve the urge "to replicate by crafting images in our own likeness, images not bound by time or space or subject to normal human limitations, and images that provide us with a new measure of what we might be." (Telotte, 1995: 190) Through VR films, Jeanette had the opportunity to experience an ideal love relationship when she was 18. "[S]ince desires cannot be satisfied by reality, they are satisfied through images that function like hallucinations. The result is post-real satisfaction." (Weibel, 2002: 210) Jeanette's fake memories are validated as 'real' experiences by the mementos and souvenirs offered by Memofilm with every personalized VR film. As George says in his interview, "After the experience you have the option to receive memorabilia and souvenirs linked to the experience. You can get holiday shots, or if you go to a concert you can get a T-shirt or live recording of the concert." These souvenirs intensified Jeanette's belief in Douglas' existence. In particular, the photographic souvenirs offer an indexical credibility similar to the photographs in *Blade Runner;* or to the home video in *Dark City.* In both cases the items are proven to be fake, adding to the illusion of the originality of a fictional past.

In addition, apart from the souvenirs accompanying the Memory Palaces' films, the VR films with Douglas are promoted almost as home movies by Memofilm; and Jeanette approaches them as such, as documents of her past. Vivian Sobchack has written in the article "Nonfictional film experience", influenced by Belgian psychologist Jean-Pierre Meunier,

> in the experience of the *film-souvenir,* consciousness is engaged in a highly constitutive activity, the intentional objective of which is less the apprehension of the specific film image than the general recovery of the memory of a whole person or event. (Sobchack, 1999: 244)

Sobchack proposes that the images of the *film-souvenir* or home movie are apprehended as the catalyst to a constitutive activity in an attempt to call up and reactivate the "real" and "whole" person or event that belongs elsewhere at some other time. "Watching our own home movies, our intentional objective is to rejoin... the real event or person or our real selves 'elsewhere' and in other times." (Sobchack, 1999: 248) Jeanette's experience of the VR films is mixed: on one hand she treats the fictional VR films as film-souvenirs, ignoring their fictionality; yet at the same time she performs the activity of

retention in relation to images and scenes as we do in fiction films. Since the VR films themselves are fiction films they progress gradually, in contrast with the film-souvenir which is not constructed as a narrative but is a chronicle of temporal fragments. The effect of spending time with Douglas again is very intense: her intentional object is not the image itself but the whole ensemble that the person or event it represents evokes. Sobchack argues this rejoining is impossible with our current films: however with VR films Jeanette manages to relive these same events with that same person and at that same place, so she does not see specific images but experiences the whole event again. Thus, the VR films are for Jeanette as personal as film souvenirs, and at the same time have as clear a narrative as those of fiction films.

The natural look of the on-location and outdoor scenes with Douglas evoke a credibility and realism that Jeanette's surroundings lack, adding to the film-souvenir element. In the scenes with Douglas we never see Jeanette, since it is all shot from her perspective: we see only parts of her body, such as her hands and legs. One of the main reasons I chose this style was in order to depict Jeanette's experience of the VR films, where the consumer watches everything from the camera's perspective. There is only a moment when we see an image of Jeanette inside the VR film, when Douglas takes a picture of her with an "old" digital camera and shows her (and effectively the camera) the picture he took. This is an important moment that reaffirms Jeanette's existence inside the VR film as the protagonist and plays with the idea of the instant captured by the photographic camera, commenting as well on the power of the digital to present something artificial as a real-life truth.

3.7 VR films as screen memories

Susannah Radstone, a film theorist – and one of the interviewees in Jeanette's documentary – remarks about the VR films that "there is the question… about whether we are embracing this new memory technology so enthusiastically because there's something missing in our everyday lives. And that's a question that we do need to ponder and think about." As it becomes apparent through the group therapy sessions, there are deeper reasons why the group therapy members have

consumed the VR films. These films act almost like screen memories, disguising the real memories or actual events that have led all the group members to consume them in the first place. Screen memory is a term that was introduced by Sigmund Freud in his 1899 article of the same name. Freud described a screen memory as one that stands in for either a prior or a subsequent unconscious memory that is unacceptable to the ego. Any memory that presents itself to consciousness with great intensity could be a screen memory disguising the original memory, being essentially defensive in nature. Freud writes that "[t]here is in general no guarantee of the data produced by our memory." (Freud, 1962: 315) He noted that in the synthesis of an earlier memory and a later event, the earlier memory might very well change. He thus acknowledged the difficulty in locating something like 'authentic' or genuine memory. (Freud, 1962: 318) In this paper Freud evoked one of his own memories of childhood, which was screening off a later sexual wish: "there was *no* childhood memory, but only a phantasy put back into childhood…" "[A]s though a memory-trace from childhood had here been translated back… at a later date." (Freud, 1962: 315, 321)

In the same way, the VR experiences of the group members screened off prior real events. Tessa's artificial memory of professional success disguises her lack of confidence. Richard uses the VR films as a means of sexual experimentation with other women, trying to ignore his dysfunctional relationship with his wife. Nina uses her long-term love relationship with James, a VR character, to screen off the memory of her husband abandoning her and their child. Jim finds a way to express repressed desires through the VR bank robberies in which he participates. Finally, Jeanette's memories of Douglas screen off the traumatic experience of her dad's adultery.

Douglas not only represented the ideal lover – loving, caring, adventurous and passionate – but he also offered significant emotional support, helping Jeanette through a very difficult period of her life and with problems at home. Douglas was a person in whom Jeanette could confide all her thoughts and feelings about things that happened in her real life: something that led to a further confusion between reality and fiction. Telotte argues that dreams like the cinematic ones might be

necessary, "[t]hey may have a power to sustain us, to assert a reality of their own, and thus to liberate us from a repressive atmosphere." (Telotte, 1995: 163) It is revealed in her documentary that Jeanette consumed the VR films at a very specific time of her life, when the relationship between her parents was falling apart. The 'dream' or screen memory of Douglas helped her to go through the difficult times of her youth, and although it was too intense to continue, it was too deep to forget. However, the advance of her mnemophrenia led to confusion and forgetting that the memory of Douglas was not real.

3.8 Mnemophrenia and postmodern schizophrenia

Jeanette and the members of the mnemophrenia therapy group represent the first generation of mnemophrenics. The disruption of continuity through time deeply affects Jeanette as an individual. The idea of removing Douglas from her past is devastating and makes her angry about not knowing how life would have been. I apply different theories on postmodern schizophrenia in order to examine the ways mnemophrenia affects Jeanette. Fredric Jameson discusses in *Postmodernism* (1991) the symptom of schizophrenia and the subsequent crisis of history in postmodern society. Jameson's idea of schizophrenia is based on the work of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, who considered schizophrenia to be a language disorder that prohibits the formation of a mature psyche. However, Jameson approaches schizophrenia from a sociocultural perspective and not a psychoanalytic one. Jameson equates the postmodern with a new depthlessness, a consequent weakening of historicity, both in our relationship to public History and in our private temporality. According to him the schizophrenic lacks a personal identity, is unable to differentiate between self and the world, and is incapable of experiencing continuity through time. He lives in a world of heightened intensity where clear sense of reality is lost. Jameson proposes that,

> [i]f we are unable to unify the past, present, and future of the sentence, then we are similarly unable to unify the past, present, and future of our own biographical experience or psychic life. With the breakdown of the signifying chain, therefore, the schizophrenic is reduced to an experience of pure material signifiers, or, in other words, a series of pure and unrelated presents in time. (Jameson, 1991: 27)

Jeanette similarly feels unable to think of her life as a chain of events, since some of the experiences that she believes fundamentally changed her way of being and thinking *never actually happened*. She cannot unify her past and present, since the fictitious nature of her past recollections makes her question all the life choices that led to her present – leaving her in a constant limbo and making it very difficult for her to imagine her future. This experience confuses her by reducing her experience to a series of pure and unrelated presents that are not necessarily linked to her actual reality.

On the same note, film theorist Giuliana Bruno comments about the replicants in *Blade Runner* who have neither past nor memory: "[t]here is for them no conceivable future. They are denied a personal identity, since they cannot name their 'I' as an existence over time... This kind of relationship to the present is typical of schizophrenia... Their assurance of a future relies on the possibility of acquiring a past." (Bruno, 1990: 189-190) Likewise in *Dark City,* aliens control people's memories and their perception of reality; and humans live in a regulated fictional environment, incapable of distinguishing the artificiality of not only their lives but of the whole of society. All the characters of this city live in a ceaseless darkness that represents their own unawareness of their state of being. The residents of Dark City are all schizophrenics oblivious to their condition, unable to remember their childhoods or how to return to their favourite places or hometowns, not even realizing that the sun never rises in their city. As Sobchack comments, "[t]he city's inhabitants (if, indeed, they still can be called such) are increasingly dislocated in space – and, dislocated, their very identities shift and become displaced and ungrounded... never seem to know where they are, where they are going, or how to get anywhere." (Sobchack, 2004: 86) Their memories are erased, re-imprinted and swapped between different groups of humans. The city itself is a Baudrillardian simulacrum, representing something that does not belong to actuality and does not bear any memory traces. The rupture between signifier and signified leads to the creation of fictional realities, and subsequently to artificial memories. According to Jameson the schizophrenic experiences only moments of present that are disjunct from each other.

[H]e or she does not have our experience of temporal continuity... but is condemned to live a perpetual

present with which the various moments of his or her past have little connection and for which there is no conceivable future on the horizon. In other words, schizophrenic experience is an experience of isolated, disconnected, discontinuous material signifiers which fail to link up into a coherent sequence. (Jameson, 2002: 119)

Murdoch, the protagonist of *Dark City,* cannot remember his name, his wife, or the fact that possibly, according to his latest "implanted" memories, he was a killer. "John Murdoch finds himself among forgetful deniers who believe they remember. Even when faced by their forgetfulness, they shrug off anxiety." (Blackmore, 2004: 36) He experiences everything as if for the first time, trying to make sense of the dispersed clues he finds along the way. Jeanette, as well as Murdoch, cannot have a coherent experience: their pasts are mutable and they lack any clear coordinates from which to carve their future, which is consequently fluid.

For Jeanette and the other mnemophrenics the VR film experience "becomes powerfully, overwhelmingly vivid and 'material': the world comes before the [mnemophrenic][20] with heightened intensity, bearing a mysterious and oppressive charge of affect, glowing with hallucinatory energy." (Jameson, 2002: 120) As Jameson further comments, "what might for us seem a desirable experience – an increase in our perceptions, a libidinal or hallucinogenic intensification of our normally humdrum and familiar surroundings – is here felt as loss, as 'unreality'" (Jameson, 2002: 120), which is exactly how it is experienced by Jeanette. As her documentary research develops, Jeanette gets even more lost. The schizophrenic tendencies become more apparent and clear after she decides to re-watch and re-experience the VR films.

Telotte argues that cinema is not only a place of human doubles but also a place where "we *fashion* images of what we would like to be and how we would like our world to look, as well as a point at which we start internalizing that cultural manufacture, attempting to live up to those images or to work our own best variations on or compromises with them." (Telotte, 1995: 23) The VR films offer this kind of mirror vision, through which people can see how they have constructed human images

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20 I replace here the term 'mnemophrenic' for 'schizophrenic'.

within their minds,; but at the same time their real-life likeness pushes Telotte's ideas to the limit when people are very much affected by those images and literally live up to them. "The postmodern image theory of simulation, as Baudrillard explains, is 'the desert of the real,' the agony and the repression of the real, precisely because of the fact that the images to which we make reference become reality." (Weibel, 2002: 210) It is interesting that Esther Leslie (one of the film's interviewees) predicts that people could fall in love with the composites, just as Jeanette and Nina have. At one point, Douglas tells Jeanette, "Don't take life so seriously... It's all a big illusion", ironically commenting on the fictionality of his existence: yet she still cannot admit that this was all just that – an illusion.

3.9 Schizophrenia and intrusion of technology

Jeanette finds out through her research that the VR films' technology triggers specific parts of the brain, which makes the experience even more realistic. As Jim, one of the members of the mnemophrenic group, says, "Whatever Memofilm has done to me, maybe something fired in my cortex, rewired it in a way, so that the experience doesn't leave me, like a dream." Jeanette also discovers that Memofilm plans to develop the technology even further and to trigger not only the visual cortex but other parts of the brain as well, in order to stimulate different senses while watching a film – and thus achieve a multisensory experience. This technological intrusion reminds us, as Telotte argues, "of the difficulties and dangers we face as we set about forging not only a truly technological culture but also a thoroughly technologized humanity." (Telotte, 1995: 109) As Mark Seltzer has discussed in his book *Bodies and Machines*, technology produces exhilaration, because it enhances human power; but also panic, because technology appears to have a life of its own, something that he has identified as the "double logic of prosthesis." (Seltzer, 1992: 160)

Baudrillard has commented about a form of schizophrenia that signals the end of interiority and intimacy due to the intrusion of technology. According to him the terror for the schizophrenic is "too great a proximity of everything, the unclean promiscuity of everything which touches, invests

and penetrates without resistance, with no halo of private protection, not even his own body, to protect him anymore." (Baudrillard, 2002a: 132) The VR technology directly penetrates the brain of Jeanette and other mnemophrenics, intruding to their inner self and forging a new schizophrenic identity as described by Baudrillard. " Bereft of psychic depth and flattened into two dimensions, any distinction between interior and exterior is abolished... Baudrillard's schizophrenic is characterized by a terrifying overexposure to the hyperreal." (Woods, 2004a) Technology's invasion and the exteriorisation of the internal are visually depicted by the inclusion of scenes with Douglas in Jeanette's documentary. By doing so, Jeanette effectively shares some of her fondest private memories with the public, hoping that this can help her document the truth, show their importance and thus expose the dangers of Memofilm products.

In Jeanette's time period mnemophrenia has a negative connotation, weakening any link to reality, just as it does in both *Total Recall* and *Johnny Mnemonic* where the schizophrenic identity is not presented as liberating but entails exclusively negative ramifications. Johnny' cybernetic life results in the loss of his humanity and in Quaid's case, even though the artificial memories and identity turn him into a hero, we are nevertheless reminded what dangers this malleability might bring if it is used for the wrong ends. Paul Verhoeven, the director of *Total Recall,* explains,

> *Total Recall* is more to do with whether we are living in a dream. Is the dream life? Is my life real or is the dream real?... So I think the power of the movie is not so much the personal emotion, but the confusion of the audience, not being able to separate, or to make a choice between two realities. So for me it was like, OK, this is, in retrospect, what I would call a postmodern film... Because it states that we cannot know things or it states that nothing is absolutely true. (Cornea, 2007: 138)

Moreover, Claudia Springer argues that Johnny, without his personal memories,

> has lost access to a coherent identity, to a sense of self attained through the accumulation of remembered experiences. Johnny's lost identity pushes to an extreme the ideas of historical amnesia, fractured subjectivity, and loss of control associated with postmodernism. Its premise is that human interactions with electronic technology have abolished conventional notions about individual identity. (Springer, 1999: 206)

Jeanette's identity, and those of the other group therapy members, lacks any coherence, as a result of mixing reality and fiction by using the virtual reality technology, leading to their fractured subjectivity. All the group therapy members, including Jeanette, owe many of their favourite

experiences and memories to Memofilm and the VR technology: experiences that have boosted their self-esteem, expressed repressed feelings, or supported them psychologically and emotionally. "[V]irtuality is often sold as offering an extended form of freedom to the subject that ignores, or transcends the limits of human biology and the constraints of normal social subjectivity." (Springer, 1999: 232) However, they are wary of the consequences and have negative feelings towards the impact it has on their lives. "We are here at the controls of a micro-satellite, in orbit, living no longer as an actor or dramaturge but as a terminal of multiple networks." (Baudrillard, 2002a: 128) Mnemophrenics live in Baudrillard's imploded universe where "human power has itself become a simulation. Power now resides in a technology which holds humanity in its thrall. The media are invading; there will be no survivors... the media are no longer the extensions of man, man instead extends the media." (Bukatman, 1990: 199-200)

In *Mnemophrenia* technology becomes part of the self, as in *Total Recall* and *Johnny Mnemonic* where the procedure of memory erasure and implantation is painful and very physical. *Mnemophrenia* deals with the collapse and "extroversion of all interiority" that leaves people unsure of their "limits," uncertain just what constitutes the self any more, adrift in a culture of schizophrenics. According to cyberpunk author Bruce Sterling, "technology is visceral... Not outside us, but next to us. Under our skin; often, inside our minds." (Sterling, 1986: xi) In *Johnny Mnemonic* the encroachment of power by the new technologies is manifested by the fact that the majority of people in the film are victims of a neurological disease called Nerve Attenuation Syndrome (NAS). As Tim Blackmore writes "the more we weave machines into our nervous systems, introduce them under our skins, and work inside them; the more nervous we become... reenact not so much battles we have experienced as ones we fear we will face." (Blackmore, 2004: 41-2) Spider, a doctor who tries to cure people with NAS, believes that the cause of this disease is information overload, electronics that poison the airwaves, indeed the technological civilization without which ironically they cannot survive. This disease is part of the schizophrenic lifestyle that according to Baudrillard is the result of the convergence of public and private space "when everything is exposed to the harsh

and inexorable light of information and communication." (Baudrillard, 2002a: 130) The invasive technology existing in all different life strata, from dependence on technological devices to body implants, not only affects people's external life conditions but has an impact on their health and well-being. NAS deprives the afflicted from having a normal healthy life and eventually leads to their death.

Mnemophrenia is not as severe as NAS but it affects people's everyday lives in different ways as is shown in the group therapy sessions. Jeanette and other mnemophrenics whose lives are affected irreversibly by the VR films have a feeling of defenselessness. In order to finally save himself, Johnny needs to hack his own brain and artificial memory; Johnny's inner self becomes part of the technological realm, putting in question his human nature. This is a successful example of the visual externalization of the internal as well as an illustration of the existence of Johnny in both the real and cybernetic spheres. Jeanette and the other members of her group are similar to Johnny in that they exist in both the real and VR spheres that interact and affect each other. Paul Virilio successfully describes the coexistence of these two worlds:

> As far as gender is concerned, there are now two men and two women, real and virtual… One day the virtual world might win over the real world… Imagine that all of a sudden I am convinced that I am Napoleon: I am no longer Virilio, but Napoleon. My reality is wounded. Virtual reality leads to a similar de-realization. However, it no longer works only at the scale of individuals, as in madness, but at the scale of the world. (Virilio, 1994)

Thus, there are no boundaries to protect the self. In the media-suffused environment any distinction between "public space" and "private space" seems to be disappearing: everything becomes transparence and immediate visibility. (Baudrillard, 2002a: 132-3) Baudrillard, commenting on Philip K. Dick's stories, writes that in them "one is from the start in total simulation, without origin, immanent, without a past, without a future, a diffusion of all coordinates... *hyperreal*-it is a universe of simulation." (Baudrillard, 1994: 125) This applies also to *Total Recall,* which is based on Dick's short story "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale". In a similar way, the public space of VR films becomes part of the private life of the mnemophrenics, who live and interact in a world of simulation that makes them uncertain of who they are.

3.10 Fake memories and Jeanette's future

Quaid wants to remember in order to be, as he states, himself again; Johnny wants to reclaim his erased childhood memories; and Murdoch has to fight against the artificial memories imposed on him by the aliens and rediscover his "real" past. Jeanette wants to get hold of her past and tries to understand what was really true in order to be herself again, but unlike the characters from past science-fiction films she is ready to indulge in the fictional past that she believed to be true until recently. There is no retrieval of lost memories as in *Johnny Mnemonic,* or a decision of which memories and identity she prefers as in *Total Recall*. She is who she is: she cannot turn back time and have alternative memories. Her personal turmoil ensues from the fact that she cannot let go and accept that Douglas never existed, because that would mean for her that she was living the last 14 years in a lie. However, she realizes towards the end that she has the capacity to build her future as she wants, in a way like Murdoch who re-constructs an identity as he wishes and projects it into the future; even though in Jeanette's case her desired future accentuates her schizophrenic condition, and therefore her possible demise.

In order to describe how Jeanette decides to build her future, I apply Laplanche's concepts of "de-translation" and "re-translation" that link temporality and identification. The process of de-translation is characterized by "the splitting up of signifying sequences" that causes an individual to question his or her current identity, which is then followed by a re-translation, a re-construction of one's identity. (Laplanche, 1992: 171) In *Dark City*, this discontinuity lasts very briefly while the humans are not aware, so their imposed re-translation is imperceptible, instilling a schizophrenia that is never acknowledged. Murdoch, by waking up during the tuning, stays in a limbo – in a de-translation mode, a prolonged discontinuity. He is offered the rare opportunity to recompose a unity that is not imposed by the aliens. Jeanette, during the making of her film, also exists in a de-translation mode, a constant questioning of her identity. According to Laplanche, "[t]he individual has only too great a tendency to recompose a unity, to re-translate, to recast a synthetic vision of himself and his future." (Laplanche, 1992: 171) It is this propensity to "recompose a unity" in conjunction with her resistance

to let go of her fictional past that pushes Jeanette to re-construct an identity as she wishes and project it into the future. She thus decides to continue her story with Douglas and fall deeper into a fictional world. According to Chris Hables Gray and Steven Mentor, "[c]yborg advances in entertainment offer the possibility of more ambiguous changes that neither enhance, nor restore, humans but just alter them, or perhaps even degrade them into addicts of direct neurostimulation or more virtual thrills." (Hables Gray and Mentor, 2000) Jeanette shows signs of addiction and chooses Douglas by continuing the story with him and making him part of her future life.

The unlocking of the VR films plays a significant part in her future loss of touch with reality: it is the unlocking of fond memories that leads to their continuous replay, offering a fictional sense of completeness. This kind of memory replay is also successfully depicted in *Strange Days*, where the protagonist Lenny Nero is addicted to recorded memories of his ex-girlfriend – with the difference that in *Strange Days* the replaying of the clips plays back also the feelings that were experienced at that moment. In her book *Science Fiction Cinema: Between Fantasy and Reality*, Christine Cornea suggests that Lenny

> is living in a perpetual present fed by his own recent past, which, in turn, becomes his present and conceivably his future; past, present and future conflating when he sees/feels the tapes. Like Fredric Jameson's schizophrenic, postmodern subject he is "unable to focus on [his own] present, as though [he had] become... incapable of dealing with time and history." (Cornea, 2007: 192)

Lenny's use of the Squid technology and the use of VR films by Jeanette allows them to escape their lived reality, although Jeanette more than Lenny is resistant to the transformative potential of virtual reality and instead lets it destroy her actual life by giving precedence to the virtual one. As a consequence, all her relationships with 'real' people deteriorate and in contrast her relationship with Douglas becomes stronger and more present than ever, which is visually depicted by his increased appearance in the film. The memories of Douglas have stopped belonging to the past, and they become a sum of isolated and disconnected presents through their repeated replaying, which it is implied in the film could impede Jeanette's relationship with her daughter, Grace. During a group therapy session,

Tessa asks Jeanette whom she would choose between Douglas and her daughter, if she really had to: this is when Jeanette has an emotional meltdown that betrays her dilemma.

The film-souvenir, as Sobchack suggests, creates an affective charge effected by the sense of irrevocable loss of an "original experience." (Sobchack, 1999: 248) In addition, Annette Kuhn argues that acts of remembering bring forth feelings and thoughts that are hard to rationalize, giving a sense that something has been irretrievably lost. Jeanette feels a double loss because, in her mind, Douglas was part of her past that is gone: she always missed him. On top of that, the realization that he never actually existed compounds this feeling of loss.

> Perhaps you yearn for the completeness, the security of days and places gone by, while you know you cannot retrieve them; know indeed that they might never ever have been, while yet disavowing that knowledge. And so memory is tinged with the bittersweet, death-defying sadness of nostalgia. Mourning is another kind of remembering, one that involves a repeated recalling to memory of the lost object in a reality process that, unlike nostalgia, will end with letting go. (Kuhn, 2000: 188)

However, Jeanette cannot let go: although she goes briefly through the process of mourning, she retrieves and repeatedly recalls these loving memories by re-watching the VR films. Amidst this deep feeling of loss, Jeanette's confusion increases when she re-experiences her encounters with Douglas and the more she watches them the more they become part of her present not only her past, damaging further the linear temporal chain and continuity. This re-experience makes her miss Douglas even more and increases her desire to see him again. The ending of the film, with Douglas saying, "Let's never say goodbye," leaves the story open-ended, implying Jeanette's possible future preference of Douglas over her daughter and any other significant relationship.

3.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to demonstrate how the use of fake documentary, as the result of science fiction and documentary fusion, visually comments on the relationship between reality and fiction, real and fake memories. The fake documentary format reveals the significance of the fake memories and their connection to unconscious desires and screened memories. I also analyzed how these fake memories and the resultant mnemophrenia contribute to the schizophrenic identity of

Jeanette. She is seen from the negative prism of Jameson and Baudrillard as a schizophrenic that cannot organize her life's timeline in a meaningful way, and whose inner self is intruded upon irreversibly by technology. Although Jeanette cannot change her past or any memories connected to it, she takes control of her future by re-translating and recomposing an artificial unity: she decides to meet her VR lover again, without having reconciled her mnemophrenic existence. Jeanette's story looks into the outbreak of mnemophrenia and the negative connotations that it originally had. This leads us to the next chapter, which examines the second part of the film, set in an era when mnemophrenia starts becoming more socially, culturally and personally acceptable; and is seen through the story of Jeanette's grandson, Nicholas, who acquires a Haraway'esque cyborg identity.

[Technology] is always also "incorporated" and "lived" by the human beings who engage it within a structure of meanings and metaphors in which subject-object relations are cooperative, co-constitutive, dynamic, and reversible... In this sense, a qualitatively new techno-logic can begin to alter our perceptual orientation in and toward the world, ourselves and others. And as it becomes culturally pervasive, it can come to profoundly inform and affect the socio-logic, psycho-logic, and even the bio-logic by which we daily live our lives. (Sobchack, 1994: 85)

Chapter 4: Mnemophrenia – a variation of social behaviour

Nicholas, Jeanette's grandson, represents the next stage of mnemophrenia; after its outbreak in Jeanette's time it now becomes more acceptable and a common variation of social behaviour. In this chapter, I explore how Nicholas's present and 'actual' experiences are represented in the second part of *Mnemophrenia*. This segment of the film employs the CCTV aesthetic in order to depict the constant recording of Nicholas and his interaction with 'agentless' cameras that leads to his telemorphosis and consequent double existence in actual and Total Cinema (TC) reality (I analyse Total Cinema technology further below). The surveillant images replace the documentary images of the first part of the film as an attempt to represent 'reality' during a period when photographic and cinematic images lack any claim to truth. These images constitute Nicholas's Total Cinema chronicle as well as the source for Robyin's artificial memories in the future, hence opening up to different interpretations and raising questions regarding their status as 'real'. I then, examine how the constant surveillance atmosphere contributes to a 'postdocumentary' culture, where being recorded confirms one's existence. I argue that the indisputable acceptance of this atmosphere bears the danger of the continuous intrusion into the personal sphere of people, letting companies such as Memofilm gain control over their employees. As part of this controlling environment, Memofilm welcomes Nicholas's Total Cinema because it offers the potential to increase profits as well as the control over its customers.

Although in this second part I suggest a continuation of the negative and dystopian technological elements that were presented at Jeanette's time, I offer Nicholas's hybrid identity, caused by his mnemophrenia, as a prospect of freedom and emancipation for future generations.

This transitional period eventually leads to the 'creation' of Robyin. Jeanette's postmodern schizophrenia as analysed in the previous chapter based on Jameson and Baudrillard's ideas, is followed by the cyborg character of Nicholas founded on Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto." Haraway suggests ways of resistance to the status quo and as Chela Sandoval comments about Haraway's cyborg in relation to Jameson's schizophrenic, "the metaphor 'cyborg' represents profound possibilities... implications of hope... for Jameson's lost subject which 'can no longer extend its protensions and retensions across the temporal manifold.'" (Sandoval, 200: 375) In contrast to Jeanette, Nicholas embraces his mnemophrenia from an early age and manages to manipulate it. He, like his grandmother is dedicated to his job and strives to discover human truths. His vision is that Total Cinema will one day bring out the true potential in everyone who uses it and will eventually lead to the development of greater empathy in each and every person and encourage a more understanding and inclusive society.

4.1 Total Cinema

In *Mnemophrenia*, VR films offer the spectator the opportunity to experience events to which s/he could not have physical access in reality - purely fictional events that exist only inside the film, which "need not be measured against an ideal referent that it can never equal but only approximate because it is its own referent... [These films] close the gap between index and referent, achieving a sublime realism that is the subject of postmodern fantasy." (Rabinovitz, 2004: 120) Examples of this 'postmodern fantasy' are the VR films of Jeanette that Nicholas had created and experienced in the past, making an unfeasible meeting between the two of them possible. These VR films simulated experiences between Nicholas and his grandmother who he never actually met in real life but always felt very close to. They offered him artificial, though nevertheless precious, memories.

The technology that Nicholas develops on behalf of Memofilm in the second part of the film is called Total Cinema. My choice of the name for this advanced film format is deliberate, a reference to

André Bazin and his ideas on the reproduction of reality by cinema, "an integral realism, a recreation of the world in its own image." (Bazin, 1967: 21) Total Cinema apart from adopting the realism of VR films, goes one step further and stimulates all the senses, offering a full body experience, and, like the immersive cinema of today such as Imax it invades the body rather leaving it behind while experiencing the film. "[T]he spectacles of movie simulation... address their spectators as diegetic movie characters, who become for the moment unified subjects because they synthesize living inside of movies with the locatedness of living inside of their own bodies." (Rabinovitz, 2004: 121) The idea of the spectators becoming movie characters in their own film was part of VR Memory Palaces as explored in Jeanette's documentary and is further advanced with Total Cinema. As Lauren Rabinovitz comments about any cutting edge cinema, Memofilm's products promise to be "more than the movies." (Rabinovitz, 2004: 104) Paraphrasing her writing, Total Cinema is not a vision "of cinema's future because of what [it] depict[s] but because of the ways [it] represent[s] an instantiation of the apparatus… the name of the apparatus… supercede[s] the name of any particular movie being shown." (Rabinovitz, 2004: 104)

With Total Cinema, Nicholas strives to extend VR films and foreground the body itself as a site for an all-sensory experience within a three-dimensionally contained space. Like Imax films, Nicholas's Total Cinema "attempt[s] to dematerialize the subject's body through its visual extension into the cinematic field while... emphasize[s] the spectator's body itself as the center of an environment of action and excitement." (Rabinovitz, 2004: 105-6) Charles Acland notes that in Imax "the filmic representation is less central than the effort to create the sensation that the screen has disappeared, that it is truly a window and that the spectator sits right in the image." (Acland, 1997: 290) Total Cinema is even more immersive and vivid and offers real, life-like experiences that are more intense than the experience that several astronauts shared when attended a special screening of the Imax movie *Destiny in Space* (Ben Burtt, Phyllis Ferguson, James Neihouse and Gail Singer, 1994). This film, as they reported, was very close to their own real life experiences of space missions, "in many respects it was actually better... They could sort of sit back and experience the gestalt of the entire scene. They said

that the Imax experience was replacing their own real memories of what it had been like in space."
(Fisher & Rhea, 1994: 66) Total Cinema is a much more advanced version of the Imax and aspires to
reach the realness of actual lived experiences and even supersede them like Videodrome in David
Cronenberg's film. Professor O'Blivion characteristically says in *Videodrome* (1983) "the television
screen is the retina of the mind's eye. Therefore the television screen is part of the physical structure of
the brain. Therefore whatever appears on the television screen emerges as raw experience for those who
watch it. Therefore television is reality and reality is less than television." Likewise Total Cinema's
reality competes with actual reality and endeavours to complement or at times substitute it.

4.2 CCTV aesthetic and temporal indexicality

During Nicholas's period the near equation of reality with fiction due to the advanced VR
films and the development of Total Cinema contribute to the change of perception in relation to the
idea of surveillance; since being recorded is part of reality and an affirmation of people's existence.
Thus, actual experience and recorded experience become one, blurring even further the dividing
line between reality and fiction. For the first segment of the film with Jeanette, I used documentary
codes and conventions in order to offer a depiction of reality; I apply here the CCTV aesthetic to
simulate a truthful representation of Nicholas's experience. Nicholas approaches mnemophrenia
and its subsequent effects from a scientific and pragmatic point of view. In order to successfully
represent his clinical attitude, all his scenes are set in his laboratory, which he treats almost as his
home. As the border between reality and fiction collapses, so does any separation between personal
and public, home and work. The lab is equipped with several cameras that record everything
throughout the day, every day. Their presence represents their natural integration in the physical
reality and the symbiosis of technology and humans that in turn emphasizes the cyborgian identity
of Nicholas that is discussed further below.

All Nicholas's scenes are seen through these cameras, depicting a CCTV environment of the

future. These cameras are not controlled or monitored by anyone and they could be considered 'agentless'; they are 'smart' cameras with a 'brain' of their own that can interact with Nicholas. The CCTV cameras demonstrate the lack of any apparent human mediation and their constant recording refers to an unobstructed capture of reality. As Jon Dovey suggests, CCTV footage can be seen to be 'real' because, "[t]he CCTV image appears to simply calibrate visual perception; it is operated by a machine, and no human mediation is involved in its production of 'pure' evidence." (Dovey, 2001: 136) Nicholas in his lab always wears a specific head device that records his brain stimulation (the activity of the head device will be visually signalled by different superimposed graphics). This head device allows the lab cameras to respond to the brain signals they receive from Nicholas and change their framing and focus accordingly, for example zooming in on Nicholas when they detect high levels of brain stimulation. This aspect will allow his lab activity and experiments to be viewed in the future in a Total Cinema (TC) format since the recorded brain stimulation is the foundation for achieving an all sensory TC experience.

The surveillant images offer an ostensible sense of realism although they depict a world that finds it hard to distinguish between reality and fiction. They represent the seemingly unhindered unfolding of reality, and as Thomas Y. Levin argues in his article "Rhetoric of the Temporal Index: Surveillant Narration and the Cinema of 'Real Time'" that popular understanding perceives surveillance images as reliable images of something that has happened in reality since they are commonly used as a means of prevention or identification of actual criminal acts. They generally appear in contrast to the large amounts of fake or manipulated digital images.

> If the unproblematic referentiality of cinematic photograms is under siege, it makes great sense to start appropriating a type of imaging characterized by definition (at least according to a certain popular understanding) in terms of its seemingly unproblematic, reliable referentiality. Surveillance images are always images of something (even if that something is very boring) and thus the turn to surveillance in recent cinema can be understood as a form of semiotic compensation. (Levin, 2002: 585)

Levin further comments that in many films of the 1990s such as *Menace II Society* (The Hughes Brothers, 1993), *Sliver* (Phillip Noyce, 1993), or *Snake Eyes* (Brian De Palma, 1998), surveillance functions as both mode of production and important narrative subject, creating "a spectatorial

position that is in large part identical to that of the surveillance operator." (Levin, 2002: 590) Levin believes that this transition and incorporation of surveillance image as script element and filmic structure is a response to the decline of the guaranteed veracity and claim to truth of photographic representation. The surveillant image subsequently substitutes the photographic and thus claims a non-interventionist approach. Levin is influenced by Mary Ann Doane's ideas on time as the semiotic signature of television compared to the importance of space (pro-filmic space, photographic space, narrative space) as the primary category of cinema (Doane, 1990). He claims that:

> [w]hat has happened here is that the spatial indexicality that governed the earlier photographic condition has here been replaced by a temporal indexicality, an image whose truth is supposedly guaranteed by the fact that it is happening in so-called real time and thus by virtue of its technical conditions of production is supposedly not susceptible to post-production manipulation. The fundamentally indexical rhetoric of cinema's pre-digital photo-chemical past thus survives in the digital age, albeit now re-cast in the form of the temporal indexicality of the real-time surveillant image. (Levin, 2002: 592)

As André Bazin has suggested about the truth of the long take, the CCTV images of Nicholas introduce a form of realism that is based on the time indexicality that Levin discusses. These surveillant images replace the documentary images of Jeanette and are closely linked to the specific time period that Nicholas lives in when reality and fiction merge and the photographic or spatial indexicality of the previous period is almost non-existent.

A film that approaches surveillance as a narrative and aesthetic element is the 1998 film *The Truman Show* (Peter Weir, 1998), where the main character is born and raised in a TV studio in order to become the main subject of a reality TV show without his knowledge. "[W]hat marks this type of surveillance is the foregrounded diegetic recasting of cinematic narration as a live and thoroughly televisual multi-camera production." (Levin, 2002: 591) In *The Truman Show* the audience is aligned with the television spectators, "[t]he particular format of the film lends itself to an ambitious experiment: the entire film is shot almost completely free of classic point-of-view sequences (shot of character looking, eyeline match of what they are looking at, shot of character looking which registers emotional reaction)." (McMahan, 1999)

In *Mnemophrenia* Nicholas, like Truman, is constantly being recorded while he is in the lab

although, in contrast with Truman, this happens with his consent. Nicholas is recorded with the aid of multi-cameras and the lack of traditional over-the-shoulder or reaction shots contributes to the intended depiction of unmediated reality. Alison McMahan argues in relation to *The Truman Show* "the subjective stance here is one of agentless perception: though the show is run by its creator, Christof, and watched by millions, it could also be said to be controlled by none. The gaze of those cameras has grown into an institution unto itself." (McMahan, 1999) In a similar vein, the cameras in Nicholas's lab are not controlled by anyone, and their sensitivity to Nicholas's brainwaves gives them the ability to interact with their environment without, meaning that they can be controlled by Nicholas or any other human being that interacts with them through the head device. They, instead, become intelligent mechanical observers, and as in Jeanette's case where the camera was always present and played an active role, these cameras are even more active and dynamic. I use surveillant images in order to depict the transition from Jeanette's time, when the camera was controlled by George, to the cameras in Nicholas's lab that, as McMahan comments, constitute an institution themselves. I intend to show the advancement of the technology that records lived experience, a technology that gets closer to its human subjects and in this case creates an intimate relationship with Nicholas through the connection with his brain. This technological innovation leads to a further change of perception around actuality and memories, since it brings recorded experience one step closer to reality, hence minimising the differences between reality and fiction.

4.3 Total Cinema chronicle

The constant telepresence in *The Truman Show* and Truman's unintentional submission to an omnipresent surveillance create an infosphere, as detailed by Timothy Druckrey. *The Truman Show* could be seen as "the 'Truman' Test, a social Turing Test[21] developed to problematize the

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21 The Turing Test was introduced by Alan Turing in his 1950 paper "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." Turing's main question was "Can machines think?" and he proposed a test of a machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behaviour.

boundaries not just between the machine and person, but to test the increasingly technical derealization of the relationship between subjectivity and subjection." (Druckrey, 2002: 153) The important difference between Truman and Nicholas is that Nicholas is well aware of and welcomes this surveillant atmosphere, without this eliminating his possible subjection, as analysed further below. This infosphere is integrally linked to the development of TC, a technology that can simulate actual life as truthfully as ever. The presence of the CCTV cameras and Nicholas's acknowledgement of their existence visualize Paul Virilio's ideas about "Vision Machines," a system where machines watch us, and where we watch them as they watch us, *ad infinitum*, mimicking the endless gaze of two mirrors side-by-side reflecting each other's reflection: an undecipherable world of *mise-en-abyme*. (Virilio, 2002) This reflection that Virilio talks about is accentuated by the connection between the cameras and Nicholas's brain. Nicholas's acceptance of this interaction demonstrates his mnemophrenia, since he is someone who cannot distinguish between real and artificial memories, experiencing and appreciating actual and fictional or recorded events with the same intensity.

Nicholas as a mnemophrenic and inventor of Total Cinema supports the idea of recording his experiments that could become a potential TC experience for others. He embraces the VR technology that has 'created' him and the connection of the surveillance cameras with his brain is part of its further development that will revolutionize the film production and consumption. Hence Nicholas welcomes the constant recording of himself and becomes an active part of his experiments, since these recordings are part of the process. Not only do they have scientific and archival importance, but are also the first few TC examples that one can revisit in the future and have an all-sensory (re)experience of them. The recorded surveillance images function as a kind of TC chronicle that Nicholas can go back to, if necessary, either for information or quality check of the TC results. This TC chronicle can also be accessed by anyone who is authorised and interested in the progress of his experiments.

As Levin wrote about *Thelma and Louise* (Ridley Scott, 1991) and the surveillance tape that recorded Thelma's robbery, "[t]he surveillant image is here functioning as a memory that is both personal (it is introduced as Thelma's narrated flashback) and, qua tape, as public (since as a tape it can also be seen by others here the police and at different times and places)" therefore the surveillance images can work as enacted recounting and enacted flashback respectively. (Levin, 2002: 587) According to Levin "[w]hen one sees what one takes to be a surveillance image, one does not usually ask if it is real (this is simply assumed) but instead attempts to establish whether the real that is being captured by the camera is being recorded or is simply a closed-circuit real time feed." (2002: 585) Thus, it is not the reality of the surveillant image that might be questioned, but whether what we are watching is taking place in real time or is just a replay of something recorded in the past and thus invested with possibly different meanings. My aim is to use this questioning in conjunction with the audience's realisation that Nicholas's footage has been chosen and re-assembled by Robyin, in order to emphasise the investment of different meanings to his recorded images and therefore encourage the questioning of their assumed 'realness.'

4.4 Postdocumentary culture

The role of the CCTV cameras in *Mnemophrenia* is twofold, on one hand they help Nicholas record his experiments and assist the development of his invention and on the other they represent the surveillant and controlling environment that Memofilm supports. Nicholas's acceptance of his constant videorecording effectively leads to the reversal of Bentham's panopticon-society where the subject almost needs the camera's gaze as proof of his/her existence. The recorded images of Nicholas become as important and as real as the actual ones, as in *Strange Days*, where the recorded images of Lenny's ex-girlfriend, Faith, substitute for reality. This re-visioning of surveillance exemplifies what Slavoj Zizek commented on in his article "Big Brother, or, the Triumph of the Gaze over the Eye",

[w]hat we obtain here is the tragi-comic reversal of the Bentham-Orwellian notion of the Panopticon-society in which we are (potentially) 'observed always' and have no place to hide from the omnipotent gaze of the Power: today, anxiety seems to arise from the prospect of NOT being exposed to the Other's gaze all the time, so that the subject needs the camera's gaze as a kind of ontological guarantee of his/her being. (2002: 225)

Nicholas and his contemporaries are part of a "postdocumentary" culture in which, according to John Corner's article "Performing the Real: Documentary Diversions," there is a shift in the range of cognitive and affective investments in relation to "seeing others" and "seeing things" on the screen. This shift "involves changes in the nature of public and private life... and the complex ways in which both the contours of social knowledge and emotional experience have been reconfigured." (Corner, 2002: 265) Seeing others on the screen or in VR is equated with actually seeing them in person, and thus being recorded means to exist; a two-way progression from image to reality and vice versa. Corner believes that in audio-visual culture the aesthetics of performance will play an increasingly important role even in images of the real. (Corner, 2002: 267)

The idea of performance is also discussed by Zizek with regard to the subjects of Big Brother and as he says,

[they] act their roles in an artificially secluded space, they act them "for real," so that, literally, fiction becomes indistinguishable from reality... The distinction between real life and acted life is thus "deconstructed": in a way, the two coincide, since people act their "real life" itself, i.e., they literally play themselves in their screen-roles. (Zizek, 2002: 226)

Zizek then takes this idea even further and poses the question "what if Big Brother was already here... In other words, what if, in our 'real lives,' we already play a certain role - we are not what we are, we play ourselves? The welcome achievement of 'Big Brother' is to remind us of this uncanny fact." (Zizek, 2002: 226) Nicholas lives in a future period when the idea of recording experiences and the re-experience of real or fictional events has become an extension of real life, if not part of real life itself. These circumstances contribute to the aforementioned tendency of playing a role to be internalized to such extent that it becomes the norm, leading to the stage where Nicholas and his colleagues take for granted their recording, without challenging it, simply, continuously 'playing' themselves. Hence Nicholas assumes a simultaneous double existence; an actual one and a

video recorded one in Total Cinema. Baudrillard comments that Truman in *The Truman Show* is telemorphosed suggesting that reality itself transfuses into the screen, for Nicholas as well "[n]othing any longer separates the screen and the world. The osmosis, the telemorphosis is absolute... the screen is no longer that of the [VR], it is that of reality itself - one could call this complete reality." (Baudrillard, 2002b: 484-5)

However, apart from the telemorphosis that Nicholas embraces, the existence of the CCTV cameras and their constant surveillance bears an additional meaning. As McMahan comments in reference to *The Truman Show* "[h]ere the technology that terrifies is that of telepresence, those twenty-four hour cameras that film a beach scene or a young woman's bedroom and broadcast it live on the Internet." (McMahan, 1999) Nicholas is effectively the descendant of peep culture, a cultural movement made possible by technological change and is defined by Hal Niedzviecki in his 2009 book *The Peep Diaries:* "[p]eep culture is reality TV, YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, MySpace and Facebook. It's blogs, chat rooms, amateur porn sites, virally spread digital movies… cell phone photos—posted online... and citizen surveillance." (Niedzviecki, 2009: 1-2) Apart from the use of the CCTV images as a scientific tool, this surveillance culture that Nicholas and his colleagues have accepted produces a "readiness to give up one of the fundamental principles of civilization—that of the legally protected private sphere and personal intimacy." (Frohne, 2002: 260) Brett Mills argues in "Peep Show", "the surveillance society functions to control without an explicit display of authoritative power." (Mills, 2008: 59) The smart cameras and constant surveillance that Memofilm endorses is a way of ensuring control, and depict the informatics of domination that Haraway analyses in her "Cyborg Manifesto." According to Haraway, the informatics of domination is the merger of communication technologies and modern biotechnologies toward a single purpose: "the translation of the world into a problem of coding, a search for a common language in which all resistance to instrumental control disappears and all heterogeneity can be submitted to disassembly, reassembly, investment, and exchange." (Haraway, 1991: 164)

4.5 Mnemophrenia as a means of control

Memofilm is a company that merges communication technologies and biotechnologies, by creating VR films that stimulate different parts of the brain in order to achieve an all-sensory experience. As part of the controlling environment that Memofilm supports, and as a big corporation that merely wants to increase its profits, it welcomes the potential permanent effect that TC will have on the brain's hippocampus, transforming everyone into a mnemophrenic. By doing that, the number of potential customers is projected to increase radically and Memofilm, as the major player in this business, will have instrumental control over the TC films they consume. Memofilm wants to use Nicholas's TC technology for its own benefit. TC promises to make possible communication across different people and mnemophrenics by the sharing of similar underlying protocols and codes. Once everything becomes codeable, all life will share a structural similarity that can be controlled by Memofilm. Thus, heterogeneity can be reassembled, as Haraway writes, and the one code that Memofilm wants to promote through TC will translate all meaning perfectly and reinforce the hierarchical dualisms that I refer to below, and which Nicholas strives to subvert in the first place.

The plurality that Memofilm promises is illusory. Scott Bukatman argues in a similar vein, that

> *[t]*he plurality of channel selections serves as a kind of guarantee of the freedom of the subject to choose, to position one's *self* within the culture, while the constant flow of images, sounds and narratives seemingly demonstrates a cultural abundance and promise. Yet the choice is illusory: to view is to surrender. (Bukatman, 1990: 197)

Memofilm, as the TC image-maker, will be the ultimate decision maker of what films the customers can consume whilst offering the deception of free will. The impact that VR films and the even more powerful TC has on the human brain and subsequently memories and identity reminds us of *Videodrome* and Spectacular Optical, a company that specializes in defence contracts. Spectacular Optical has developed a signal that induces a tumour in the viewer, leading to hallucinations which are then televised, blurring any dividing line between reality and fiction. "This tumour causes hallucinations

which can be recorded, then revised, then fed back to the viewer: in effect, the individual is reprogrammed to serve the controller's ends." (Bukatman, 1990: 204) Like Spectacular Optical, Memofilm welcomes the permanent impact on the brain's hippocampus in order to increase the control over its consumers. Similarly in *Robocop* (1987) people are manipulated by a cold, corporate capitalism and are treated almost like automatons and economic counters. Murphy/Robocop is the product of this ruthless capitalist system and, after the pre-planned death of Murphy, Robocop is bound by his programming. "Like the replicants of *Blade Runner*, Robocop seems unable to 'realize' the body, to operate free of his programming—or corporate planning. He is, after all, the unwitting subject of a corporate experiment, the real aim of which is his death." (Telotte, 1995: 154)

Nicholas is also the product of greedy corporations, since he is a mnemophrenic due to the VR films made by Memofilm that his grandmother, Jeanette, had consumed when she was young. He is being used to develop a technology that would potentially turn everyone into a mnemophrenic and eventually a consumer that can in theory be more easily manipulated. In a similar way to Robocop, who is guided by four prime directives which do not allow him to go against or arrest any of the OCP senior officers, Nicholas is bound by the various confidentiality agreements that he has signed with Memofilm that prevent him from exposing any wrongdoings on the part of the company. As President Dick Jones in *Robocop*, "who, in keeping with this film's schizophrenic pattern, is behind both OCP's robotic law enforcement program and much of the crime in Detroit, puts it, 'We can't very well have our products turn against us, can we?' Freedom of action is simply not permitted." (Telotte, 1995: 156) It becomes evident then that the dystopian elements of technological intrusion presented in Jeanette's period are still present in this second era. However, there is a big difference between the first and second eras since I use Nicholas as a metaphor for a transitional period, when dystopian aspects are being transformed into elements that could possibly lead to a positive and emancipatory change in the future. In order to show this transition I present Nicholas's mnemophrenia as something that has negative as well as positive connotations, since the condition can repress while at the same time

enabling him. On one hand, mnemophrenia and the blurring between reality and fiction foster a controlling, surveillant environment but on the other hand, if approached differently, mnemoprehnia bears the potential for empathy and an awakening that can lead to resistance against any official control. I will now examine Nicholas's relationship to his mnemophrenia and the shift that is explored in this second film segment that signals the transition from a dystopian past and present to a more positive and optimistic future.

4.6 Nicholas: a mnemophrenic cyborg

Nicholas's mnemophrenic character shares similar traits with the cyborg as defined by Haraway in her seminal "A Cyborg Manifesto." (1991) He is "a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction." (Haraway, 1991: 149) "High-tech culture challenges these dualisms in intriguing ways. It is not clear who makes and who is made in the relation between human and machine." (Haraway, 1991: 177) The idea of machine is extended here to the soft technology of VR that has a direct effect on the human brain and creates mnemophrenia that equates to both reality and fiction at once. Nicholas as part of his cyborgization has developed a terminal identity, which according to Bukatman is "an unmistakably doubled articulation in which we find both the end of the subject and a new subjectivity constructed at the computer station or television screen." (Bukatman, 1990: 201) In Nicholas's case the new subjectivity is constructed by the VR films and as Bukatman comments "[w]hat is at stake... is no longer the fusion of beings and the immortality of the soul, but the fusion of being and electronic technology in a new… subjectivity." (Bukatman, 1993: 244) Haraway also writes "[t]he machine is not an it to be animated, worshipped, and dominated. The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; they do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they." (Haraway, 1991: 180) Likewise, Nicholas welcomes his integration with the technology and thus is not wary of Total Cinema or the presence of the CCTV cameras that contribute to his project.

The cyborg according to Haraway is a collective entity whose multifaceted parts work successfully together and is no longer structured by the polarity of private and public. Nicholas is a collective entity since many of his memories are not linked to his actual experiences, thus neutralizing any difference between private and public and, like the cyborg, he does not accept the existence of one Truth or absolute knowledge. In "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," Haraway insists that partial perspectives must be used to build situated knowledge, which is reflective of her construction of the hybrid-cyborg. "The knowing self is partial in all its guises, never finished, whole, simply there and original; it is always constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and therefore able to join with another, to see together without claiming to be another." (Haraway, 1988: 586) Nicholas has the ability, by controlling his mnemophrenia, to join together, as Haraway's cyborg does, different bits of knowledge that he acquires through actual and VR experiences; these change him as a person and enhances his empathy to other people.

However, Nicholas's fluidity and mnemophrenia has not always been seen in a positive light. It is made clear from his dialogues with his colleague Bill that Nicholas faced quite a lot of negative prejudice as he was growing up and even his parents who were non-mnemophrenics never completely understood him. John Morton, a neuroscientist, had predicted in his interview in Jeanette's documentary that mnemophrenia could lead to a fragmentation of society. Morton commented, "[i]n the future I can see a fragmentation of society along certain lines, there are going to be those people who for reasons of their… personality traits…[and] predispositions [are] either susceptible to mnemophrenia or welcome it, seek it out. They are going to become increasingly different from the ordinary population, they may start forming societies themselves." As Morton predicted, the essential Truths that were accepted by the majority of non-mnemophrenic people were oppressive for Nicholas and many other mnemophrenics, forcing them to find/ create their own codes of behaviour.

So, the cyborg is a perfect metaphor for Nicholas whose identity cannot be bound by singular definitions grounded in claims to unmediated and self-evident truths. Nicholas truly believes that

mnemophrenia offers the ability to understand different perspectives, intensifying all experiences. As a cyborg, Nicholas is "not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints. The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other vantage point." (Haraway, 1991: 154) Although he might appear naive at first glance, Nicholas comprehends and manages to accept opposite views, on one hand, he understands Memofilm's capitalist, corporate perspective and on the other he adheres to the ideas of open sourcing and individual empowerment which he believes can bring people closer; thus he is not as pessimistic about the technology's potentials as his grandmother Jeanette.

4.7 Regeneration of self through artificial memories

In *Mnemophrenia*, although Nicholas, due to his fluid identity, knows and understands the corporate attitude of Memofilm, he believes that he can still work around it and contribute to the empowerment of individuals. He nonetheless does not seem to realise the extent of his conditioning, he is reinforced by the ostensible acceptance of his cyborgian identity from Memofilm, making him always feel accepted and comfortable in his own skin, whilst at the same time, restraint is imposed on him by the bureaucracy that secures Memofilm's benefits. His mnemophrenia, apart from promoting his collective and partial identity that is open to different views, has also led him to unquestioningly accept his subjugation by Memofilm and the surveillant environment that it promotes. This attitude has been taken advantage of by Memofilm in order to control him and treat him as a means to their ends. As Bob Morton asserts about his creation, Robocop, he "doesn't have a name; he's got a program. He's product."

The VR films with Jeanette that Nicholas had created in the past offer a good example of the ambiguous consequences that artificial memories can have[22]. On one hand, these artificial memories

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22 The fictional VR film with Jeanette is shown here in ambiguous light. It was something positive when Nicholas was young but started becoming negative when it affected what he remembered about her. However, that does not suggest that all VR films eventually have negative effects.

had helped him to deal with the condition by creating an artificial ally and to get through the difficult moments of exclusion caused by his mnemophrenia but, on the other hand they offered him a 'constructed' image of Jeanette that did not reflect the real Jeanette. Haraway argues that the "cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centres structuring any possibility of historical transformation." (Haraway, 1991: 150) However, the imagination part of the cyborg identity could potentially have detrimental consequences, since it could lead to the unintentional confusion of the person, and even to his/her manipulation, as in the case of Nicholas and his controlling by Memofilm. The VR films with Jeanette were Nicholas's ticket in to this big corporation and his false impression of Jeanette benefited Memofilm, since he always thought of her as a person that had come to terms with her mnemophrenia and who simply chose to live her life with Douglas through the VR films made by Memofilm, enjoying her unconventional life thereafter. However, Jeanette was never actually happy with her condition and instead it drove her to reclusion. Nicholas's self-mislead offers an example that shows that Haraway's cyborg, hybrid identity does not always lead to freedom and should not uncritically be thought of as utopian. Thus it becomes clear that the regeneration welcomed by the cyborg can have either negative or positive impacts and one needs to be watchful and critical, always questioning his/her living situation.

In Nicholas's case, a certain chain of events helps him realize his conditioning and restraint and leads him to question Memofilm's agenda, encouraging his resistance. These events are triggered by the discovery of the results about the permanent effect of TC on the brain and the irreversible effect it will have on each consumer and Michael's (his boss) refusal to make this information public. Michael's attitude then leads to Bill's resignation, which coincides with the company's final decline of Nicholas's requests to open source part of the TC code after its launch. Nicholas, in all this confusion and struggle, resorts to the only source that he believes can help him make a decision, Jeanette. However, this time he does not choose to re-experience the VR films that he has himself created but goes to the last 'real' source that Jeanette had left behind, her documentary on mnemophrenia. By revisiting her film and

incorporating her memories as his own Nicholas realises that the idea he had of her was not accurate. The documentary reminded him that his version of Jeanette was what he wanted to remember and the 'reality' he himself constructed in order to deal with the difficulties of adapting and accepting his own mnemophrenia. Douglas develops an 'heteropathic memory' that according to Kaja Silverman, as examined in the first chapter, permits the subject to participate in the desires and struggles of the 'other', supporting an identification process that does not absorb the other but what the person, instead, gets out of his/her own cultural norms. (Silverman, 1996) Hence, Nicholas manages to re-remember and experience Jeanette's traumatic agony while she was making the documentary as his own, implanting and incorporating it into his own history and in this way feeling more strongly connected with her than ever before.

After a search into Memofilm's archives about the first launch of VR Memory Palaces, part of which were the VR films that Jeanette consumed, Nicholas discovers that Memofilm knew all along about the potential dangers of the technology on the human brain but nevertheless decided to keep it secret and never publicized these findings. This discovery in conjunction with the artificial memories he acquired through Jeanette's documentary make Nicholas think that Memofilm needs to take responsibility this time and feel that he cannot be part of this project under the current conditions. When Nicholas tells Michael about the way he feels, Michael assumes that Nicholas is only looking for a promotion in the same way his colleague Bill had and treats him as a person who cannot have a mind of his own, being under the constant control of Memofilm and always ready to submit for some extra money. In contrast, after Nicholas finds out that Bill's resignation was only a kind of power play in order to achieve a promotion, his awakening is completed and while he rediscovers Jeanette through her documentary, he at the same time reconstructs and regenerates himself and rediscovers his interest in a non-unified self. Jeanette's memories and real life experiences affect how Nicholas feels about Memofilm, making him reassess his relationship to the corporation and what he can actually achieve by working with them.

4.8 Cyborg writing for an all-inclusive society

Nicholas as a true cyborg rejects the anti-science metaphysics and the demonising of technology and instead embraces the task of reconstructing the boundaries of daily life through science, developing a technology that gives him the opportunity to be in partial connection with others and as well in communication with all the different parts that constitute himself. "Cyborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves. This is a dream not of a common language, but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia." (Haraway, 1991: 181) Nicholas is interested in this fusion of different voices, events, experiences. "To be One is to be autonomous, to be powerful, to be God; but to be One is to be an illusion... Yet to be other is to be multiple, without clear boundary, frayed, insubstantial." (Haraway, 1991: 177) Nicholas can understand different viewpoints and embraces the other without ever becoming the other, but always is regenerated and reconstituted through his interaction and incorporation of different voices. Thus, he understands that TC can allow the pasts or the realities of other people, such as Jeanette's past has affected him, to destabilize the lives of TC users, who will then follow an empathetic and affective approach to 'difference'.

As a cyborg that has been repressed in the past due to his mnemophrenia, Nicholas uses his knowledge and scientific expertise in order to produce cyborg writing, which is "about the power to survive, not on the basis of original innocence, but on the basis of seizing the tools to mark the world that marked [him] as other." (Haraway, 1991: 175) Thus, Nicholas's main tool is to retell origin stories that subvert hierarchical dualisms of naturalized identities, of stories that differentiated mnemophrenics from non-mnemophrenics and his main task is that of "recoding communication and intelligence to subvert command and control." (Haraway, 1991: 175) According to Judith Butler, the power simultaneously acts on and activates the subject by naming it and although the terms by which we are hailed are rarely the ones we choose they might lead to some kind of an agency. She argues that the "'I' who would oppose its construction is always in some sense drawing from that construction to articulate

its opposition; further, the 'I' draws what is called its 'agency' in part through being implicated in the very relations of power that it seeks to oppose." (Butler, 1993: 122) I argue that Nicholas self-interpellates himself paraphrasing Althusser's idea about the process by which ideology addresses and confers subject positions. Thus, Nicholas chooses for himself the ideology that is attached to him and distances himself from Memofilm after revisiting Jeanette's documentary, experiencing the 'betrayal' by Bill and realising the extent of Memofilm's opportunistic and profit-based decision making. "[C]yborgs offer a new map, a new way to conceive of power and identity, one potentially more effective in understanding, confronting, and reshaping the actual networks of power in late capitalism and its mutations... The cyborg metaphor offers a unique validation of different identities." (Hables Gray & Mentor, 2000) Nicholas as a cyborg chooses an ideology that adheres to the creation of a society where almost everyone is a mnemophrenic, but the reasons behind this are different from Memofilm's. He hopes for everyone to become mnemophrenic so prejudice can be minimized but does not want to promote one code, in contrast he longs for a heteroglossia, which ensures that all differences are respected and welcomed.

Telotte argues that Robocop holds out the potential for the human that "even when transformed into a subject body, to 'take control' of itself and act independently of the subjecting forces of culture." (Telotte, 1995: 156) Nicholas similarly realises that he can act independently and decides that he does not want to be part of Memofilm and its ideology anymore. He comes to grasp that what he considered as a desirable situation till now, is really a threat, a possible nightmare that he does not want to live in. As Haraway comments in an interview about her 'Manifesto'

> inhabiting the nightmare is not to give in to it as if that is all there is, but as a way of getting that that's not what has to be... it's about trying to live on these edges – not giving in to nightmares of apocalypse, staying with the urgencies and getting that everyday life is always much more than its deformations – getting that even while experience is commodified and turned against us and given back to us as our enemy, it's never just that. A whole lot is going on that is never named by any systems theory, including the informatics of domination. (Gane, 2006: 150-1)

Nicholas always lived on the edges (of society) because of his mnemophrenia, and as Haraway argues cyborgs are the illegitimate offspring of patriarchal capitalism, and Nicholas himself is the offspring of

Memofilm's technology gone wrong. He is the result of a greedy corporation that is mostly interested in increasing its profits. "But illegitimate offspring are often exceedingly unfaithful to their origins. Their fathers, after all, are inessential." (Haraway, 1991: 151) Hence, Nicholas decides to leave the place that has illegitimately 'created' him. His character, as the offspring of capitalism, exemplifies what Jameson has written about capitalism as "at one and the same time the best thing that has ever happened to the human race, and the worst." (Jameson, 1991: 47)

Memofilm depicts the ruthlessness and negative side of capitalism but the development of VR films and the new technology of Total Cinema inadvertently 'creates' people like Nicholas that offer a hope for a potentially better future. Haraway argues,

> I suppose there is a kind of fantastic hope that runs through a manifesto. There's some kind of without warrant insistence that the fantasy of an elsewhere is not escapism but it's a powerful tool... It's about here and now if we could only learn that we are more powerful than we think we are... You don't have any ground for that, it's a kind of act of faith. (Gane, 2006: 152)

According to Sue Short in *Cyborg Cinema* "the ideas raised by cyborg narratives may... help to shape awareness and understanding, on both a personal and political basis, of both the world and our place in it. It is in this questioning ability that the cyborg's most progressive potential lies, posing fundamental questions about identity and existence." (Short, 2005: 52) Nicholas understands that he can use his position on the edges, to challenge the structures of the informatics of domination and his last actions can be seen as acts of faith.

> … the cinematic cyborg powerfully addresses neglected issues of exploitation and alienation, usefully symbolising Marx's concept of the alienated worker through being programmed and rebuilt in the interests of Capitalism. While such narratives do not suggest an alternative economic system, they make the important point that technology can be used to both repress and enable the cyborg worker, with such figures invariably relying upon a modified humanism to exist within a techno-logised world, which is shown to equip them with the means for resistance and survival. (Short, 2005: 48)

Haraway argues that cyborg politics insist on noise and advocate pollution, subverting the given structure and modes of reproduction of 'Western' identity. She argues that "[t]he networks aren't all-powerful, they're interrupted in a million ways. You can get flicker feelings: one minute they look like they control the entire planet, the next minute they look like a house of cards. It's because they are both." (Gane, 2006: 151) Nicholas acknowledges the fact that he cannot fight Memofilm as a whole

especially since he is bound by the numerous confidentiality agreements he has signed with them, however, he adheres to the cyborg politics and plays out his resistance through the technology and noise, or the breakdown of communication. Before he leaves Memofilm, he indirectly prompts the researcher interviewing him about Total Cinema to look deeper into the potential dangers of TC. He also leaks a small part of the source code of TC, knowing that one day this small part will help others, such as Robyin, to figure out the code and reformulate it, leading to its potential opensourcing that he always dreamed of and thus, subverting Memofilm's monopoly. The breakdown or noise that Haraway talks about is used as a metaphor for Nicholas's actions that disrupt the smooth domination of the one code as planned by Memofilm. "Noise is only one figure, one trope that I'm interested in. Tropes are about stutterings, trippings. They are about breakdowns and that's why they are creative. That is why you get somewhere you weren't before, because something didn't work." (Gane, 2006: 152) Nicholas knows that after his departure he will leave the forces of the informatics of domination largely intact, but hopes that the small hole in the system he himself created will help future generations. He does not represent a radical positive change but offers the hope for such change.

4.9 Conclusion

To summarise, the idea of the cyborg follows Jeanette as a schizophrenic and is used as a metaphor to convey the complexities of Nicholas's existence and character. "When the 'privileged pathology' of postmodernity is communications breakdown, how can we differentiate cyborg heteroglossia from the schizophrenic's 'rubble of distinct and unrelated signifiers?'" (Woods, 2004a) At a first glance, the schizophrenic and the cyborg appear opposed, representing binary positions: "fragmentation and synthesis; isolation and collectivity; disembodied (non)subject and cybernetic organism; political dysfunctionality and oppositional agency." (Woods, 2004a) However, as Angela Woods discusses in "Schizophrenics, Cyborgs and the Pitfalls of Posthumanism," "the intimacy of their relationship complicates such neat binary coding. As schizophrenia can be seen as a distinctively

cyborgian fear of communication breakdown and subjective fragmentation, and the cyborg a schizophrenic delusion of unity, no simple delineation between them is possible." (Woods, 2004b) There is a strong connection between the schizophrenic Jeanette and cyborg Nicholas, apart from their blood relationship, they are connected by the lack of any clear boundaries in their life, boundaries between reality and fiction. The schizophrenic and cyborg are used as symbols or metaphors that represent the response to this new way of living due to mnemophrenia, approaching it from different perspectives while at the same time their paths are crossed, essentially being different points on the same continuum. "The 'privileged pathology' of Haraway's cyborg is communications breakdown, isolation in a schizophrenic chaos of disassociated signifiers, but the integrity and agency of the cyborg body could equally be a delusion of Jameson's depthless and disoriented schizophrenic." (Woods, 2004b) Jeanette's approach to the condition is pessimistic and negative and Nicholas's is hopeful and positive. Mnemophrenia connects them on a deeper level, letting Jeanette's memories and experiences affect Nicholas's life and choices.

Nicholas is an optimist who believes in the power of mnemophrenia to bring people together and aspires to help in this with his own invention, Total Cinema. Nicholas's identity is an amalgam of different events and experiences that are either actual or fictional and uses his own fluidity and cyborg existence to guide him in his life. The CCTV surveillance in his lab is welcomed by him as part of his experiments and in support of his invention but, at the same time is a reminder of the controlling environment that is fostered by Memofilm. Memofilm as a capitalist corporation nurtured and took advantage of the fluid and cyborgian identity of Nicholas for its own profit. It used him to build its most advanced technology, Total Cinema that would work on the foundation of the one code. However, Memofilm did not take into account that Nicholas as a cyborg is not truthful to his origins but welcomes regeneration and is free from dependence, a "man in space" as Haraway argues. "In a sense, the cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense - a 'final' irony since the cyborg is also the awful apocalyptic telos of the 'West's' escalating dominations of abstract individuation, an ultimate self untied at last from

all dependency, a man in space." (Haraway, 1991: 150-1) Thus, Nicholas manages to create some "noise" and nurtures the potential for a future breaking and reworking of the one code, indirectly supporting the creation of his envisioned empathetic and all-inclusive society. Nicholas's acts of faith successfully contribute to the development of the conditions that lead to the 'creation' of Robyin, the third link within this familial chain and mnemophrenic continuum, a descendant of both Jeanette and Nicholas who lives in the far future. Robyin, as explored in the film, represents the next and final stage of mnemophrenia and is presented as a Deleuzian and Guattarian schizophrenic that almost reaches transcendence and introduces a new kind of human species, 'homo mnemonicus'.

We used to dream of flying carpets and magic castles; now we dream of tiny video recorders implanted in our retinas and computer RAM inside our sculls supplementing our own short-term memory. In short, we dream of becoming neuro-cyborgs. We used to flock to movie houses where our mental mechanisms were projected on a huge screen. Soon each of us will be able to put back this screen inside her or his head. (Manovich, 2007)

Chapter 5: Mnemophrenia and a new humanity

Roboticist Hans Moravec, has discussed the idea of human consciousness being uploaded into computer software, a step that would free us from mortality. He envisions a future where a distinction between human and artificial intelligence will be impossible. Goodman and Parisi argue that memory has become prosthetic, it can be archived via uploading and can be easily accessed via downloading. "General memory capacity appears therefore to have been increased like computer memory; it can be moved, erased, recombined, and upgraded." (Goodman and Parisi, 2010: 343) Katherine Hayles also writes about the cybernetic possibility of immortality and refers to Marvin Minsky's idea of extracting human memories from the brain and importing them to computer disks similarly to Moravec and Goodman and Parisi. "The clear implication is that if we can become the information we have constructed, we can achieve effective immortality." (Hayles, 1999: 13) The main character of the last period of *Mnemophrenia*, Robyin, represents the potential of all the above ideas, especially the fusion of human and machine by belonging to the first generation of humans who have a brain implant, the latest breakthrough in computer and neuroscience. Robyin not only embraces her mnemophrenia but also reaches a stage that, as Moravec suggests, can set her free from mortality and signals the birth of a new humanity.

Robyin's character has an important significance since she expresses my ideas as the director and author of *Mnemophrenia*. She is the conduit of the optimism[23] I hope to suggest in the film and that distinguishes my approach from previous science fiction films that deal with similar

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23 I identify with Katherine Hayles who writes, "[w]hat about the pleasures? For some people, including me, the posthuman evokes the exhilarating prospect of getting out of some of the old boxes and opening up new ways of thinking about what being human means." (Hayles, 1999: 285)

subjects. Robyin is an amalgam, I created her based on characters from previous science fiction films, as I did with Jeanette and Nicholas, but with the main difference that Robyin's hybridity offers a hopeful message for the future. Therefore, throughout this chapter I refer to Robyin's common traits with other science fiction film characters but, also indicate her differentiation, especially when I examine her mnemophrenia.

Robyin's main research goal is to find the ways her brain implant develops prosthetic memories[24] and empathy and their ramifications. The main materials she uses in her research are Jeanettte's documentary on mnemophrenia and Nicholas's Total Cinema chronicle. As part of her research Robyin realizes that her re-experience of their films, which document their experiences and memories, has a direct effect on her. In order to depict this effect she decides to make a film, which essentially constitutes my film, *Mnemophrenia*; she combines different parts of each one's life, including hers. Pierre Janet has stated that memory is essentially "the action of telling a story" about the past. (Janet, 1919: 273) Robyin tells a story, a filmic one in order to demonstrate the impact of the implants and share her memories, including the prosthetic ones she has acquired through it. I use her film in order to show the continuous dialogue and interaction between past, present and future, an amalgamation of different memories and how this film can create new prosthetic memories to its potential viewers. Through Robyin's film, I manage to offer a familial "video diary" that depicts all three stages of mnemophrenia and the memories that are linked to them and reveals the ways that they influence each other, opening up the potential of an optimistic and possibly utopian future.

Robyin is presented as the director and editor of the resultant film, effectively representing my own creative choices. Robyin's implant acts like an internal camera that records every living moment of her life and plays them back on request in her mind's screen as well as any other films that she "digests" and saves on this advanced microchip. Her story is depicted with the use of point of view shots and we never really see her face, apart from a few reflections. This choice has several

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24 I use the terms prosthetic and artificial memories interchangeably in this chapter.

effects: it allows the viewer to identify with Robyin and see everything from her perspective, it permits the personification of my authorial voice and visualizes the empathetic engagement with her experiences and memories. The idea of constant recording is a further step, after the CCTV mentality welcomed by Nicholas and the interaction between the lab cameras and his brain has unsurprisingly led to the complete fusion of Robyin's brain with the camera; thus she becomes the camera herself in the film's final era. In this chapter, I examine Robyin's character, a postmodern schizophrenic based on Deleuze and Guattari's writing; but in contrast to Jeanette's debilitating schizophrenia, Robyin's condition offers her the potential of freedom and emancipation. Robyin's schizophrenia[25] is the natural progression from Jeanette's schizophrenia and Nicholas's cyborgisation and its analysis is based on Deleuze and Guattari's ideas as explored in their book *Anti-Oedipus*.

5.1 Transparent medium

The fusion of the human brain with the implanted microchip that records and plays back life indicates the 'disappearance' of the medium and the beginning of mediated experience that is indistinguishable from actual life. This fusion is part of what Paul Virilio calls microtechnologies. "Now that the most powerful technologies are becoming tiny - microtechnologies, all technologies can invade the body... Research is being conducted in order to create additional memory for instance... technology is invading our body because of miniaturisation." (Virilio, 1996) This kind of invasion and transparency is explored by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin who argue that the goal of such a medium is immediacy, a style of visual representation that aims "to make the viewer forget [its] presence (canvas, photographic film, cinema, and so on) and believe that he is in the presence of the objects of representation." (Bolter & Grusin, 2000: 272-3) According to Julianne Newton, "human visual behavior can be external or internal, meaning that people can… act on the

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25 Robyin's mnemophrenia is seen from the perspective of postmodern schizophrenia, as analyzed by Deleuze and Guattari;, hence the two terms are used interchangeably.

basis of something outside of themselves, such as someone else or a photograph, or on the basis of interior visual activity, such as imagining or dreaming, that may not be observable to others unless acted on externally." (Newton, 2001: 133) In Robyin's case, part of the external visual behavior has been internalized due to the implant and the interior visual activity is no longer limited to imagination and dreams but now includes all kinds of downloaded visual material. What Bolter and Grusin write about the SQUID technology in *Strange Days*, also rings true for Robyin's implant, both serving as examples of media transparency utilizing a technology that "bypasses all forms of mediation and transmits directly from one consciousness to another." (Bolter & Grusin, 2000: 3) As Lenny, the main character of *Strange Days* successfully describes it "[t]his isn't like TV only better. This is life. It's a piece of somebody's life. Pure and uncut, straight from the cerebral cortex. You're there. You're doing it, seeing it, hearing it…feeling it… I'm your priest, your shrink, your main connection to the switchboard of souls. I'm the Magic Man, the Santa Claus of the subconscious."

In a similar way, a precursor to *Strange Days*, *Futureworld* (Richard T. Heffron, 1976) depicts a machine that turns one's dreams into a film that can be recorded and screened for everyone to see. "So all that we normally internalize, repress, keep to the self can here be turned outward and monitored, or be replayed for others as a kind of ultimate home movie." (Telotte, 1995: 141) Moreover in *Brainstorm* (Douglas Trumbull, 1983) when a researcher discovers that his invention can also record memories, he prepares a "tape" for his estranged wife, a kind of home movie as Telotte says. And when she asks him what it is, he simply says, "Me." In all these examples, including *Mnemophrenia*, cinema has become the medium of visual memory, which records pieces of life and gives the opportunity to different people, not only the 'producer' to relive them.

In Robyin's period, there is no longer any distinction between reality and fiction. The antagonism between real and virtual reality ceases and both constitute one single reality, or it would be more appropriate to say they create many different, dispersed, nomadic realities - as I will

analyze below based on Deleuze's and Guattari's writings. According to Paul Virilio the fusion of actual and virtual reality can have very profound consequences for everyone's life:

> [T]his might sound like drama, but it is not the end of the world: it is both sad and happy, nasty and kind. It is a lot of contradictory things at the same time. And it is complex... We are far away from simulation, we have reached substitution! I believe this is, all in the same time, a fantastic, a very scary and an extraordinary world. (Virilio, 1994)

This is the new world that *Mnemophrenia* explores through Robyin focussing on the potentials that could arise. In contrast to the films that I mention above and all the science fiction films that I discuss throughout my thesis, the third period of Mnemophrenia offers an optimistic perspective. This optimism is diffused throughout the film due to the fragmented editing that interweaves all three periods together. I use Robyin as the trigger of the whole story and also finish it with her, offering an open ending. Robyin's character effectively encompasses Jeanettte and Nicholas, blending different aspects of their experiences together. I do not present Robyin's symbiosis with technology as something negative as *Mnemophrenia's* predecessors do, but suggest instead a positive vision about the fusion of human and technology and the advancement of this transparent medium.

5.2 Prosthetic memories

In this new world Robyin cannot distinguish between her own 'real,' experienced memories and the 'prosthetic' memories of Jeanette and Nicholas that she acquired through her implant. The idea of 'prosthetic' memory is linked to Alison Landsberg's suggestion that prosthetic memories have the progressive ability to produce empathy and social responsibility. Her concept of prosthetic memory emerges between a person, and a narrative about the past and is mediated through a mass medium like the cinema. Thus, the person does not only comprehend a past event but experiences it in a more personal, physical way and assimilates it as a personal experience which himself/herself did not actually experience, so there can be identification with people and experiences far from one's own. Prosthetic memories are transportable and challenge traditional forms of memory, offering the

potential for increased responsibility and alliances that transcend cultural, racial and any other kind of social differences.

> Prosthetic memories originate outside a person's lived experience and yet are taken on and worn by that person through mass cultural technologies of memory... Prosthetic memories are not "socially constructed" in that they do not emerge as the result of living and being raised in particular social frameworks. At the same time, prosthetic memories are transportable and hence not susceptible to biological or ethnic claims of ownership. (Landsberg, 2004a: 19)

Landsberg believes that cinema is a medium that transports people into lives that they have not lived in the traditional sense, but that they are nevertheless invited to briefly experience and even inhabit; it has the capacity to carry viewers to faraway places and alternative temporalities. "The cinema, then, might be imagined as a site in which people experience a bodily, mimetic encounter with a past that was not actually theirs." (Landsberg, 2004a: 14) Robyin similarly has, due to her implant, full bodily and all-sensory experiences that are indistinguishable from 'real' life. The implant brings Landsberg's idea to its full potential and not only leads Robyin to re-remember the past, either hers or others', but acts as a means of re-experiencing it and of sensually re-remembering it, consequently affecting her identity. Robyin's implant dissolves the distinction between representation and event and creates an equivalence between spectating a cinematic experience and living through an experience. *Mnemophrenia* demonstrates mediatized memory as an experiential form of memory, depicting "spectatorial 'experiences' that shape and inform the subjectivity of the individual viewer." (Burgoyne, 2003: 225) Robyin's experience is similar to Joel's in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, a kind of experiential spectatorship as Carolyn Jess-Cooke writes. "Joel not only 'spectates' his memories, but re-experiences their various sensual processes and emotional contexts." (Jess-Cooke, 2007) Robyin's experiential memories include her own as well as those prosthetic ones that originally belonged to Jeanette and Nicholas. The experience of these prosthetic memories helps Robyin create different alliances with Jeanette and Nicholas and develops her empathy, which is visualized in her film.

However, the idea of prosthetic memory as developed by Landsberg offers a one-way account of the relationship between film and memory, presenting cinema as a medium with

remarkable powers that implants memories into passive spectators without reflecting on the spectator's internal digestion of these images. Radstone argues that Landsberg's vision builds on "the ways in which cinema audiences may feel emotionally 'possessed' by a character long after a film has ended… [and] promulgate[s] the view that cinema can implant memories of the unexperienced, or reprogram existing memories." (Radstone, 2010: 335) As Radstone argues, these theories, do not offer "full explanations of the processes by which cinematic prosthetic memories come to be integrated into the memories of spectators." (Radstone, 2010: 335) Radstone suggests a different approach that she calls 'cinema/memory' in answer to this oversight. In theories of "cinema/memory, the relations between cinema, film, and memory emerge as more porous and more deeply interpenetrating." (Radstone, 2010: 326) Cinema/memory offers a different understanding of film spectatorship, taking into account the inner worlds of spectators to demonstrate that personal memories are informed by cinema. "One-way theorizations that conceive of cinema as that which programs, substitutes for, or supplements memory become transformed into a fully two-way exchange." (Radstone, 2010: 336) Radstone offers the work of Annette Kuhn and Victor Burgin as examples of theorists who have explored the transitional or hybrid world of 'cinema/memory.' Kuhn's memory work was examined earlier in this thesis in relation to Jeanette's approach towards her memories through her documentary and Victor Burgin's *The Remembered Film* addresses the fragments of films that cross our minds in our everyday life and reflects on the association between these fragments and memory. Radstone describes the concept of cinema/memory as a world "constituted of images, sequences, and their associated affects. Situated within the mind, yet positioned between the personal and the cultural, cinema/memory melds images remembered from the cinema with the inner world's constitutive 'scenes' or scenarios." (Radstone, 2010: 336) In cinema/memory, the boundaries between memory and cinema are dissolved, which suggests their inseparability and that "the process that binds together the personal and the collective constitutes the inner world's psychical mediation of cinema." (Radstone, 2010:

336) The cinema/memory expands and revises Landsberg's idea of the prosthetic memory by focusing on the often overlooked mutual and two way relationship between film and memory and illuminates the intimate and 'micro' processes and subjective meanings that "an image might have for this or that individual." (Burgin, 2004: 70) The idea of cinema/memory successfully describes the process that Robyin goes through due to her implant and her condition, binding her subjectivity and experiences with cinematic images that, in this case, are part of the memories of her ancestors, Jeanette and Nicholas.

> …cinema/memories prove to be composites and condensations, belonging wholly neither to the public world of the cinema nor to the personal and interior realm of fantasy. In this sense, cinema/memory, with its binding together of images assimilated from cinema with the psyche's currency of 'scenes,' serves to highlight the fact that memory is *never* straightforwardly or irreducibly subjective. (Radstone, 2010: 338)

Robyin negotiates and integrates these cinematic images into her inner world and they become cinema/memories that she does not passively absorb. It is this negotiation that leads her to a better understanding of Jeanette and Nicholas and develops her empathy towards them. Her identity is therefore transformed by the prosthetic cinema/memories that are the result of the interplay between cinematic images and her as the spectator.

5.3 Mindscreen: eye = camera; brain = screen

I present Robyin's film as a first-person film since it is arranged by her, the director or organizer of the images. Her film includes parts from Jeanette's and Nicholas's films as well as parts from her own life. Bruce Kawin examines the fictitious presenters of first person films in *Mindscreen: Bergman, Godard, and first-person film and their self-consciousness*. "[A]lthough a camera does not have consciousness, and cannot therefore literally be an I, it is possible to encode the image in such a way that it gives the impression of being perceived or generated by a consciousness." (Kawin, 2006: xi) Kawin argues that there are two ways of using the concept of 'subjective camera', in order to show what the character sees, which is linked to the physical eye or to show what he thinks, that is, the

mind's eye. He introduces the term 'mindscreen' as the visual (or aural) field that presents itself as the product of a mind. "The term I propose… is mindscreen, by which I mean simply the field of the mind's eye." (Kawin, 2006: 10) *Mnemophrenia* equates Robyin's mind's eye or mindscreen with her physical eyes due to her use of the implant. All the images that are part of Jeanette's or Nicholas's stories or Robyin's own experience of the current period are incorporated in Robyin's brain and become part of her consciousness. What Robyin sees is integrally linked to what she thinks since her thoughts take the form of images associated with Jeanette's, Nicholas's and her experiences or memories and vice versa; this is conveyed by her film. Robyin experiences the images of Jeanette and Nicholas in her mind's eye as well as the recorded experiences of her everyday life, and she combines them all together in her mind's eye. The film is ultimately the end result of Robyin's thought process, and a manifestation of her mindscreen; her mind narrates this filmic story and the screen is the retina of her consciousness.

Deleuze (2003) has written about the internalization of the film camera in the human mind and described memories as filmic projections of the present. In *The Time-Image* (2003), he discusses the close relationship between memory and cinema – between moving images in the mind and moving images on the screen. He stresses the interdependency of the brain/mind and the technology/materiality of the camera in the act of memory. Deleuze has suggested "the brain is the screen", meaning that recollection is defined by the input of actual moving images which are always partly constructions of the brain. (Deleuze, 2000) As a literalisation of Deleuze's theory, the camera in *Mnemophrenia* coincides with Robyin's physical and mind's eye and the screen with her brain suggesting the connection between thought and the technology that facilitates its manifestation. For Robyin, the eye is the camera and the home movie is shot straight from the visual cortex, which resembles *The Final Cut,* a film that explores real-life memory as film in a future world where implanted microchips can record all moments of an individual's life. As José van Dijck comments on *The Final Cut* in his article "Future Memories: The Construction of

Cinematic Hindsight" it takes Deleuze's idea of the brain as screen very literally. (van Dijck, 2008: 83)

The idea of the mindscreen helps describe Robyin's experience of real and prosthetic memories. By introducing Robyin into the film, the audience slowly realizes that the images from all three periods do not simply appear, but they have been chosen by her and they call attention to their subjectivity. This selection visualizes Robyin's mindscreen and constitutes its final product[26]. Robyin chooses which sections to include and she cuts them together in a similar way to the cutters in *The Final Cut*. Maria Poulaki in "Implanted Time: *The Final Cut* and the reflexive loops of complex narratives" suggests that *The Final Cut* prompts the spectators to become aware of its own making.

> The narrative is intentionally self-referential about issues such as the reality that films conceal, the selections that they make, the 'cuts' through which they proceed. *The Final Cut…* attempts rather consciously to reflect on the procedure of filmmaking as 'cutting' of recorded footage that used to be live, and making out of it coherent –but inevitably distorted – stories. (Poulaki, 2011: 431)

Robyin's film, like *The Final Cut*, is self-referential, it could be seen as the result of Robyin's subjective relationship with the material and the medium as the filmmaker and emphasizes the overarching theme of *Mnemophrenia* around the connection between film and prosthetic memories. The revelation of the filmmaking process also reflects my own practice by extension, commenting on the deliberate 'cutting' choices I made as the director. This self-reflexivity is linked to Kawin's idea of self-consciousness, which according to him demonstrates the awareness of the film or the fictitious narrator of the act of presentation.

> It must be emphasized… that mindscreens belong to, or manifest the workings of, *specific* minds. A mindscreen sequence is narrated in the *first person*… All three modes of first-person discourse… can be presented as if they were fictitious in origin… All three present their origins as outside the image field; the audience is led to imagine an offscreen speaker, seer, or image-maker. (Kawin, 2006: 12)

As Kawin argues, the organizer can be a character that includes an image of himself/herself or an indicator of his/her 'offscreen' presence in the filmed field without compromising his/her status as narrator. I present Robyin as the speaker, seer and image-maker and her 'offscreen' presence as the

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26 I do not attempt to represent Robyin's visual experience of other people's films and recorded memories on her mindscreen, but I, focus on the recorded footage from Jeanette's documentary and from Nicholas's Total Cinema lab chronicle.

'director' successfully manifests my own views as the author of the film. Her presence is visualized with the use of point of view (POV) shots. "[I]t will simplify matters to identify the camera as the narrator's vehicle, his principal means of guiding the audiences' attention." (Kawin, 2006: 13) The experience of Robyin's everyday life is depicted from her personal point of view throughout the film with the use of subjective, first person camera style, which attempts to visualize the immediacy of her experience.

5.4 Point of view (POV) and its link to immediacy, directorial agency and empathy

Carolyn Jess-Cooke writes that "memory narratives are specifically point-of-view based" (Jess-Cooke, 2007) and particularly in Robyin's case, when the medium has disappeared, we see everything through her eyes, which have become the camera; a representation of the transparent medium and immediacy that Bolter and Grusin have written about. Laura Rascaroli echoes the idea of transparency and the way it is visually depicted in *Strange Days* in her article on Kathryn Bigelow's cinema.

> Bigelow works towards a reduction of the distance between the human eye and the camera's eye, towards a more and more 'transparent' cinema, towards a transcendental vision... a very conscious use of the subjective... camera... whose mechanical eye becomes the medium of the enunciation so strongly that, in a sense, it takes the place of the human medium - the director's eyes. (Rascaroli, 1997: 237)

In *Mnemophrenia*, the POV style depicts visually how the implant works and its potential for empathy. Robyin is never visible apart from when seen through few reflections in order to establish her as the main agent of perception and action during this period. The use of POV is linked to the idea of 'imagining from the inside' that Murray Smith has explored. Smith argues that POV plays an important role in prompting 'imaging seeing' and is linked to central imagining as explored by Richard Wollheim in *Painting as an Art* (1987). "What the POV shot itself does - and does in a way that no other shot can - is to render certain aspects of visual experience. By so rendering the visual experience of a character, the POV shot is apt to prompt us to imagine seeing as the character does." (Smith, 1997: 417) Smith combines his idea that POV shots provide information about a character's visual experience with Gregory Currie's concept of secondary personal imagining in order to emphasize the

importance of POV for 'imagining seeing'. (Smith, 1997: 422) According to Currie, secondary imagining occurs when we are able, in imagination, to feel as the character feels. "This process of empathetic reenactment of the character's situation is what I call secondary imagining. As a result of putting myself, in imagination, in the character's position, I come to have imaginary versions of the thoughts, feelings and attitudes I would have were I in that situation." (Currie, 1995: 153) Smith argues that the POV shots trigger the viewer's perceptual imagination because they depict the perceptual states of the characters, but also imagining what the character's experience is like, what the character thinks and feels. Thus, the spectator is given access to the subjective state of the character.

Edward Branigan in *Point of View in the Cinema* labels the POV as subjective narration or focalization where the information is given through a character. It is "a specific instance or level of narration where the telling is attributed to a character in the narrative and received by us as if we were in the situation of a character." (Branigan, 1984: 73) Thus the subjective shot replicates human experience of perception and the potential viewers of Robyin's film are encouraged to imagine what she sees and how she experiences different events in her everyday life.

> Clearly, in the subjective shot the 'real' viewer is not the character, but the film's body - with the camera as its perceptive organ. Nevertheless, the eye of the camera, those of the character and even those of the spectator are superimposed in the POV to produce an intentional gaze which is actually charged with a triple presence: that of the film's body, that of the character's body, and finally that of the spectator's body. (Rascaroli, 1997: 234)

The idea is to make the viewer feel like they are watching the events with their own eyes rather than through the lens of a camera, thus, directly depicting Robyin's experience. Similar to *The Blair Witch Project* (Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez, 1999) or the more recent science fiction film *Cloverfield* (Matt Reeves, 2008), the POV suggests a direct link to real events. This immediacy is also helpful to convey my own directorial perspective, since there is no distance between Robyin's eye and the camera's eye, creating a 'transparent' cinema as Rascaroli writes about *Strange Days*. I believe that the POV structure successfully expresses my authorial voice. I, as the director, am represented by Robyin and I see and act through her; this is why I choose to use the first person camera style that can visually imply my agency.

According to Smith, the POV shots work in a two-part structure, pairing a POV shot with a reaction shot. The POV shows us what the character is looking at and the reaction shot tells us how the character reacts to the object of attention, the facial expression suggests the psychological state of the character. (Smith, 1997: 417) Although there are no reaction shots in Robyin's period, this nevertheless does not prohibit the depiction of Robyin's psychological state. The lack of reaction shots is compensated by the selected images of Jeanette and Nicholas. Robyin's way of demonstrating her own experience of empathy and her way of encouraging the same in any future viewer of her film is to show her own psychological state through the assemblage of Jeanette and Nicholas. This technique refers to Robyin's encounter with Jeanette's and Nicholas's films, since she is able to experience their emotions and feelings, which consequently leads to the empathy towards them. Robyin identifies with Jeanette and Nicholas at different points and she uses their own emotional states, as expressed by their facial expressions, actions and words, in order to depict her own psychological state; - what she thinks and feels. For example, Robyin feels at times hopeless and confused like Jeanette and other times optimistic and positive like Nicholas. In sum, the selected parts of Jeanette's and Nicholas's experiences and memories depict Robyin's reaction to her own situation through the combination of all three characters into one. This creative choice uses the POV to visually represent the empathy that can be achieved by future viewers of Robyin's film, echoing Landsberg's idea of prosthetic memories and their ability to produce empathy.

I present Robyin's film as a motivator of affect, a medium of sharing other people's feelings and emotions. To return to Smith, central imagining offers an imagined, self-directed emotion, rather than an imagined, other-directed emotion; imagining being in one's position: "Such emotions are crucial to the larger psychological and social value of fictions: we come to a better understanding of both ourselves, and others, through such central imagining." (Smith, 1997: 426) Moreover, Margrethe Bruun Vaage in her article "Fiction Film and the Varieties of Empathic Engagement" argues that the POV structure mimics our natural perceptual behaviour when we are interested in someone and this

could lead to empathetic engagement. "[T]he POV structure does perhaps signal to the spectator that the character is now experiencing something of relative importance; that it is worthwhile to engage empathically in his state of mind in order to maximize narrative engagement." (Bruun Vaage, 2010: 161) The use of POV acquires an added importance and indicates the empathetic engagement linked to it by the end of the film when the audience realizes that Charlie, Robyin's partner, has been watching the film all along. Charlie represents the ultimate viewer of this construction. He manages to achieve an empathetic engagement with Robyin's 'identities' that enriches his experience of her film and offers a deeper understanding of her as a person. Robyin's film, apart from being a story about the past is a message to Charlie, as well as to any other potential viewer. And if one asked what this construction, this film is about, Robyin could answer like Michael Brace in *Brainstorm*, "Me".

5.5 Spatialized memories and coexistence of time planes

The implant helps organize real and prosthetic memories and allows Robyin to identify, arrange and re-arrange them as she wishes, as well as giving her the ability to create her memory-film. Bergson argued that our obsession with space has led us to ask where memories are stored up. In Robyin's case her brain implant offers her a receptacle for all memories to be stored there, to be accessed and manipulated at will. Jess-Cooke comments about *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* a film that has influenced *Mnemophrenia* that it "suggests memory as a malleable narrative that can be retold, remade, and re-edited over and over again." (Jess Cooke, 2007) The manipulability of memory in both films emphasizes the way we perceive time, which directly influences how we think about our memories and our past.

Bergson discusses our spatialized treatment of time, time as a set of items laid out end to end as divisible into separate parts. "Now, let us notice that when we speak of time, we generally think of a homogeneous medium in which our conscious states are ranged alongside one another as in space, so as to form a discrete multiplicity." (Bergson, 2001: 90) Bergson believed that "our life unfolds in space

rather than in time" (Bergson, 2001: 231) and we use space to represent time. When something is considered malleable that means it can be controlled, influenced, adapted which presupposes that we apprehend it as an entity that can be distinctively identified, arranged and re-arranged. Thus, visualizing time in spatial terms affects the way we think of events that happened in the past, such as our memories that are perceived as entities placed in space and sorted accordingly. The idea of spatialized memories brings forward the belief that memories can be manipulated since they are thought of as distinct entities that can be rearranged, as happens in *Mnemophrenia*.

Robyin had a wide range of material to select from and Bergson's writings resonate the process that she used in her search for the right ones for her film. The technology at Robyin's time brings these theories to the fore, since the implant actualizes them. Bergson's ideas successfully describe Robyin's perception and experience; the spatialization of time is consciously perceived and manipulated by Robyin due to her implant. Robyin had to detach herself from the present in order to re-place herself in a certain region of the past, either hers, Jeanette's or Nicholas's. The selection of the past experiences and memories that she includes in her film are all triggered by her experience and situation in the present. "[I]t is from the present that the appeal to which memory responds comes, and it is from the sensori-motor elements of present action that a memory borrows the warmth which gives it life." (Bergson, 1991: 153) Robyin selected the parts that she was interested in and added to the film story she wanted to tell, encompassing the other two segments, working simultaneously in different time planes. The past is preserved in itself and, at the same time, contracted in various states by the needs of action that are always set in an actual present. This repetition of memory-images through action not only involves the conservation of past images, but it also prolongs their utility into a present moment, enabling a useful combination to emerge between past and present images. It is in the present that Robyin makes memories as part of the future, as Deleuze writes, in order to make use of them in the future when the present will be past. (Deleuze, 2003: 50) Robyin, in her present searches into the past for the right film material, which then becomes part of the present and, at the same time, the future

since they are intended for future viewing, by Charlie for example; without however, losing their 'pastness.'

The temporal layering found in *Mnemophrenia* is similar to the layering in *The Final Cut*. Towards the end of *The Final Cut* there is a juxtaposition of a subjective POV from the character's present and 'digital' POV shots of the same event that has already become past and watched by someone else in the future due to the implant. We see the main character, Alan, and his death, and then we see Fletcher watching the footage of Alan's implant, a scene that juxtaposes past, present and future. Likewise, in *Mnemophrenia*, different past events run concurrently. Bergson has discussed the coexistence of different time planes in *Matter and Memory*.

> Quite evidently, it is both on this side and on that, and what I call "my present" has one foot in my past and another in my future. In my past, first, because "the moment in which I am speaking is already far from me"; in my future, next, because this moment is impending over the future… The psychical state, then, that I call "my present," must be both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future. (Bergson, 1991: 138)

Gilles Deleuze, influenced by Bergson, refers to the present as the actual image and the past as the virtual image. All the past images that Robyin deals with are virtual images, and they become actual because she dwells upon them and makes them part of her present. According to Deleuze, past and present coexist: "the image has to be present and past, still present and already past, at once and at the same time… The past does not follow the present that it is no longer, it coexists with the present it was." (Deleuze, 2003: 76) Deleuze's idea is depicted through Robyin's story, since the material of her film is already past and becomes present; this coexistence plays a central role in the whole film. "We are in the situation of an actual image *and* its own virtual image, to the extent that there is no longer any linkage of the real with the imaginary, but *indiscernibility* of the two, a perpetual exchange." (Deleuze, 2003: 262) Thus the interchange between actual and virtual image results in the dissolution of any distinction between reality and fiction as well as past and present that becomes literalised in Robyin's film and in *Mnemophrenia* as a whole.

5.6 Robyin and schizophrenia

The blend of different time planes and experiences demonstrates the re-construction of Robyin's identity, which is effectively a fusion of identities. It is therefore evident that Robyin does not have one single identity, but multiple identities that reveal her schizophrenic persona linked to Deleuze and Guattari's ideas. Their description of the schizophrenic's journey is very similar to Robyin's experience. According to them, the journey of the schizophrenic is stationary and in place, s/he refers to another world even when s/he does not displace herself/himself in space, rather her/his journey is in intensity. "Such a voyage does not necessarily imply great movements in extension; it becomes immobile, in a room and on a body without organs-an intensive voyage that undoes all the lands for the benefit of the one it is creating." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 350-1) Robyin likewise displaces herself in space without even leaving her house, and her experience that is very intense leads to the creation of her film. Using Deleuze and Guattari's words, I argue that Robyin

> produces [herself] as a free [person], irresponsible, solitary, and joyous, finally able to say and do something simple in [her] own name, without asking permission; a desire lacking nothing, a flux that overcomes barriers and codes, a name that no longer designates any ego whatever. [She] has simply ceased being afraid of becoming mad. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 142)

For Deleuze and Guattari schizophrenia can be an emancipatory process of ego-loss that liberates desire and leads to permanent revolution. They believe that schizophrenia is produced and repressed at the same time by the capitalist economy. Deleuze and Guattari argue that capitalism fosters schizophrenia because it replaces meaning and belief-systems as the foundation of society.

> Yet it would be a serious error to consider *the capitalist flows and the schizophrenic flows* as identical, under the general theme of a decoding of the flows of desire… Our society produces schizos the same way it produces Prell shampoo or Ford cars, the only difference being that the schizos are not salable. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 266)

As capitalism decodes and deterritorializes it reaches a point that it needs to re-territorialize in order to secure its development and the accumulation of surplus-value. However, the schizophrenic resists that reterritorialization and only accepts a constant decoding and de-territorialization; s/he makes and breaks connections, appropriates and redirects flows. Robyin is a product of capitalism herself, her

mnemophrenia that originated at Jeanette's time as the result of VR films. Robyin is the descendant of the schizophrenic Jeanette, but their experience of schizophrenia is very different, if not the opposite. The condition of mnemophrenia is experienced very positively by Robyin, in contrast to Jeannete's pessimism.

Deleuze and Guattari disagree with Jameson's argument that schizophrenia reinforces and contributes to the hegemony of capitalism. For them the schizophrenic is a revolutionary, nomadic wanderer who resists oppressive power and has the radical potential to bring down capitalism. There are two cases in relation to schizophrenia according to Deleuze and Guattari, in the worst cases capitalism cannot tolerate the process of schizophrenia it has produced, treats it as 'madness' and attempts to repress it. The idea of the schizophrenic as a sick person is represented by Jeanette in the first period. However, Robyin belongs to the best cases where schizophrenia can lead to free-form human interaction and, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, referring to R. D. Laing, madness need not be all breakdown but can be a breakthrough. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 143) Robyin uses her schizophrenia as a tool for emancipation and freedom and lets her desire be the productive force behind the film she makes. Robyin is also the descendant of cyborgian Nicholas with whom she shares specific traits such as the fragmentation and dissolution of subjectivity; "both 'schizo' and cyborg are effective insofar as they remain partial and "deterritorialized." (Woods, 2004a) Schizophrenics in a similar way to cyborgs "escape coding, scramble the codes, and flee in all directions [they are]: *orphans* (no daddy-mommy-me), *atheists* (no beliefs), and *nomads* (no habits, no territories)." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: xxiii)

Deleuze and Guattari believe that capitalism and Freudian psychoanalysis lead to the same oppression based on lack. We cannot be forced "to choose between production and acquisition. From the moment we place desire on the side of the acquisition, we make desire an idealistic… conception, which causes us to look upon it as primarily a lack: a lack of an object, a lack of a real object." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 26) According to them, desire is not for something we lack, instead it is

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integrally linked to production.

> Lack is created, planned and organized in and through social production. . . This involves deliberately organizing wants and needs amid an abundance of production; making all of desire teeter and fall victim to the great fear of not having one's needs satisfied; and making the object dependent upon a real production that is supposedly exterior to desire (the demands of rationality), while at the same time the production of desire is categorized as fantasy and nothing but fantasy. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 29-30)

Deleuze and Guattari insist that desire does not lack anything and it is not linked to a fantasy world that is apart from the real world. In contrast, desire is a productive force that produces the real world. "If desire produces, its product is real. If desire is productive, it can be productive only in the real world and can produce only reality… Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 28) Robyin uses her implant for desire production, as a means to reinvent herself and explore the implant's wider potentials, outside its pre-given objectives of capitalism. Robyin, as a schizophrenic, "is the universal producer." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 7) Robyin's desire produces reality since her film constitutes a real part of her life and has the potential to make and break connections and redirect flows and experiences in other people's lives as well. Nicholas planted the first seeds for this process by leaking a small part of the Total Cinema code, giving Robyin several generations later, the chance to begin a schizophrenic decoding through her film. Robyin's film is a desiring machine that promotes free-form schizophrenia and is connected to other machines, other recorded experiences and memories, functioning "as a break in the flow in relation to the machine to which it is connected, but at the same time is also a flow itself, or the production of a flow." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 39)

5.7 Schizophrenic multiplicity vs. I

Eugene Holland in his analysis of *Anti-Oedipus* uses improvisational jazz as a metaphor for schizophrenia,

> where the past enables rather than constrains the present: the improvised performance always exceeds the pre-existing musical composition or structure in complexity, nuance, and originality… [it suggests] the use of accumulated wealth as a basis for the shared production and enjoyment of life in the present rather than the reproduction and reinforcement of power-structures from the past. (Holland, 1999: xi)

Robyin combines the wealth and knowledge of her ancestors (Jeanette and Nicholas) with her film and creates something new that is life affirming and potentially liberating. Deleuze and Guattari believe that desire is multi-variable and poly-vocal instead of succumbing to univocity and belief. They celebrate schizoid, nomadic dispersions of desire and subjectivity. According to them, the schizophrenic does not believe in the ego. "There are those who will maintain that the schizo is incapable of uttering the word I, and that we must restore his ability to pronounce this hallowed word… And if he does chance to utter the word *I* again, that won't make any difference either. He is too far removed from these problems, too far past them." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 24-25) Robyin likewise does not believe in the I, although I have argued that she can say that the film is about "Me." It is important to note that her self is not unitary but forms a multiplicity that is depicted in her film, an ever-changing creation of the desiring-machine. Her film is not the one single "Me" but one of the possible "Me"s. Furthermore as Deleuze and Guattari argue, this leads to a transsexuality, and so the woman contains the man and vice versa. "Schizoanalysis is the variable analysis of the *n* sexes in a subject, beyond the anthropomorphic representation that society imposes on this subject, and with which it represents its own sexuality. The schizoanalytic slogan of the desiring revolution will be first of all: to each its own sexes." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 325)

Ilaria Serra in her article regarding female spectatorship, where she uses different ideas from *Anti-Oedipus*, she suggests that cinema is "dream making" and invites complete identification "with all the protagonists (not only men), with the camera as the means of our gaze. This can be seen as… a triumph of a thousand new identities, in a joyful, schizophrenic breaking of all schemes." (Serra, 2003: 101) Although there is a big difference between how we currently watch a film and the way Robyin experiences films, Serra's writing helps me describe the idea of spectatorship at Robyin's time since the implant develops Serra's ideas to their full potential. I hence argue that when Robyin watched Jeanette's and Nicholas's films, there was a continuous process of production of identities at work, including female and male. When Robyin watches and re-experiences the films she is ready to become

n people, and live n lives according to schizoanalysis. "Watching a movie is a state of hallucination or delirium… where the subject produces itself through new identities… This 'becoming' the character, not only identifying with him, is a production of the desiring-machine that is the spectator." (Serra, 2003: 113, 118) I have argued earlier that Robyin's film is a desiring machine, as Serra suggests the spectator is. In relation to these ideas, I intend to show below how Robyin realizes that her film is her, even though only one version of her self.

At first glance there is an inherent contradiction since Robyin represents free will and decides to re-create herself, but, at the same time, her artificial memories reveal her fragmented subjectivity. Since there is not a single subjectivity that influences the 'film', the question arises, who decides for each edit and connection between the three stories? But by applying schizoanalysis as described by Deleuze and Guattari the potential for many different outcomes arises. *Mnemophrenia* is only one of the many potential films that could be created by the multifaceted Robyin. Each time the combinations can be different, blending various elements in different ways. Therefore the resultant film is one of the different possible combinations and not the only version, demonstrating Robyin's schizophrenic multiplicity.

I have stated before that Robyin represents me as the auteur of this film. However, her fragmented subjectivity is in contrast to my singular voice. Therefore I decided to represent and reflect this fragmented identity with the aid of improvisations, a practical experiment used to develop Jeanette's (and to be used to develop Nicholas's and Robyin's) character. Robyin is an amalgam of different characters. This fusion is successfully represented through the practical involvement of different actors in the creation of these characters; an organic process that involves different voices and points of view. Thus, the singularity of my role as the director and main writer, who dictates the main storyline, is broken and enhanced by the actors who offer their own sensibilities and views and contribute to the creation of a multiplicity that is celebrated in the film. The characteristics and attributes of all three characters are the result of my collaboration with the

actors, allowing the fusion of different perspectives. The improvisation technique is part of the experimentation and participation in practice that I incorporate in my research, which then leads to the interpretation of this practice by analyzing Robyin's multifarious identity. Thus, as Henk Borgorff suggests in *The Debate on Research in the Arts*, I employ experimental methods that reveal and articulate the tacit knowledge that is situated and embodied in the artwork and artistic process. (Borgforff, 2006: 18) It is the one area in my project where practice actively leads the research (rather than research leading the practice), and this reveals a reflexivity in relation to the methodology used and the relationship between theory and practice. "As a result of this reflexive process, methodologies in artistic research are necessarily emergent and subject to repeated adjustment, rather than remaining fixed throughout the process of enquiry." (Barrett, 2007: 6) It is the experimental method that contributes to the representation of a fragmented identity created by 'artificial' memories as explored in the theory. The schizophrenic identity that I examine in my exegesis, informed by the work of Deleuze and Guattari, comes to life through the improvisation practice that generates a combined and reflexive praxis.

5.8 Robyin's film: a 3-stage schizophrenic process

Deleuze and Guattari argue that schizophrenia is a three-stage process. The desiring machines operate according to three syntheses: the connective synthesis of production, the disjunctive synthesis of recording and the conjunctive synthesis of consumption-consummation. I will now examine Robyin's three-stage process towards her film project. The first stage includes the research and collation of her material, the second stage deals with the editing process and the last stage concerns Robyin's realization about her film as the final product, which represents only one version of her multifarious identity. These three stages relate to the three syntheses suggested by Deleuze and Guattari. They write that, in the first stage, the productive desire makes connections between part-objects that do not belong to whole persons. These connections are multiple, heterogeneous and

continual. Robyin, in the first stage of her project had to view and choose various memories and experiences from Jeanette's and Nicholas's films and connect them to the different recorded parts of her own life. These partial fragments of memories do not belong to any whole person as the connective synthesis of production dictates. This phase includes the research and collation of relevant real-life film 'footage'.

However, according to Deleuze and Guattari the connective synthesis needs a counter-force in order to avoid any mechanical repetition that would lock the person into instinctual or habitual patterns of connection. In relation to Robyin, this counter-force means that the collation of her material and their connections should always be challenged and reconfigured, in order for Robyin's identity to be continuously flexible and mutable. This counter-force called anti-production allows connections to be broken, allowing others to be made in their place and so on in an open-ended series. "Desiring-machines make us an organism; but at the very heart of this production, within the very production of this production, the body suffers from being organized in this way, from not having some other sort of organization, or no organization at all." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 8) This idea focuses on how the body is organized and how it might be actively disorganized in order to enable the production of other forms of organization. Thus, the desiring machines, and in this case Robyin's film, needs to break down, so production is coupled with anti-production which is achieved due to the body without organs, which is non-productive. The body without organs is part of the second synthesis, the disjunctive synthesis of recording, and constitutes the surface that records networks of relations among connections instead of producing connections themselves. The body without organs forms a system of relations, comparing one thing in relation to another not linearly but synchronically, operating in a mode of free association. "[A] multiplicity so complex that we can scarcely speak of *one* chain or even of *one* code of desire…. The code resembles not so much a language as a jargon, an open-ended, polyvocal formation." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 41) For Robyin's film, this second stage can be seen as the film editing phase, where no more productive connections are made in the form of new

footage, but many different, multiple relations are recorded and compared synchronically. As Eugene Holland comments the

> body-without-organs can be compared to a kind of *tabula rasa*, freeing the organism from the purely mechanical repetition of instinctual determination… What is essential is that even while anti-production interrupts or suspends existing productive connections on the body-without-organs, it at the same time registers their diverse possibilities, and ends up multiplying the relations among them to infinity. (Holland, 1999: 31)

Robyin uses part of her brain as a body without organs, a tabula rasa where different combinations and possibilities between her actual memories and the artificial memories acquired by Jeanette and Nicholas's films are registered.

The last stage is the conjunctive synthesis or the production of consumption, where the subject emerges. The subject is not the agent but the result of desire and the various disjunctive and connective syntheses. Although many subjects indulge in the illusion of sovereign subjectivity, thinking they chose their pleasures and desires, Deleuze and Guattari dismiss this illusion and insist that the productions and anti-productions come before the appearance of the subject.

> This is tantamount to saying that the subject is produced as a mere residuum alongside the desiring-machines, or that he confuses himself with this third productive machine and with the residual reconciliation that it brings about: a conjunctive synthesis of consummation in the form of a wonderstruck "So *that's* what it was!" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 19)

The resulting subject mistakenly considers itself as an autonomous entity and claims possession of products that actually created it. "The subject as product claims as its own the very process that constitutes it as subject." (Holland, 1999: 34) Thus, the subject recognizes its desire as well as itself as subject retrospectively. Although that was Robyin's original thinking, that she was the agent behind the film, she realizes before she dies that the film itself was what actually created her as a subject or more accurately produced and depicted one of the many possible identity configurations linked to her. Robyin therefore understands something profound, the most important aspect in relation to her schizophrenia and the desire production, that she as the subject has actually no fixed identity and that, in order for her condition to reach its true potential, no specific goal or aims should be assigned.

> This subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentered, *defined* by the states through which it passes… the subject is born of each state

in the series, is continually reborn of the following state that determines him at a given moment, consuming-consummating all these states that cause him to be born and reborn. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 21-22)

Robyin's film constitutes an open-ended project that can create and break connections with other people's experiences and memories and combine and redirect various flows. Schizophrenia as free-form desire does not have any assigned goal or end, it is polyvocal, multiple, inclusive, non-specific, and nomadic. The result of desire cannot be established once and forever because submitting desire to pre-conceived goals and ends would make it reactive rather than productive and creative. Thus, the whole process produces a perpetually different, dispersed subject, a part made up of parts "or rather 'some' subjectivity: series of lived subject-states – but without necessarily culminating in a fixed subject possessed of a specific identity." (Holland, 1999: 36) Therefore, the film itself actually presents only a small part of Robyin, merely one possible combination of different parts that after her death can continue to be combined incessantly with other memories (hers or other people's) and thus be restructured with no assigned goal.

5.9 Schizophrenia as the road to revolution and immortality

The path that has been paved by Robyin with the help of Jeanette and Nicholas creates the potential for a revolution; a revolution of multiple, dispersed subjectivities. Deleuze and Guattari advise revolutionaries to follow the schizo process because the schizophrenic threatens the social order. "Desire is what the established power fears; that is why 'the leadership has a tendency rather to reply: when I hear the word 'desire', I pull out my gun.'" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 279) Deleuze and Guattari argue that capitalism wants to inhibit schizophrenia's tendencies, "for capitalism it is a question of binding the schizophrenic charges and energies into a world axiomatic that always opposes the revolutionary potential of decoded flows with new interior limits... Hence schizophrenia is not the identity of capitalism, but on the contrary its difference, its divergence, and its death." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 267) And what is the revolutionary path?

To go still further, that is, in the movement of the market, of decoding and deterritorialization? For perhaps the flows are not yet deterritorialized enough, not decoded enough, from the viewpoint of a theory and a practice of a highly schizophrenic character. Not to withdraw from the process, but to go further, to 'accelerate the process'. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 260)

I have deliberately created Robyin's character based on Deleuze and Guattari's schizophrenic who does not believe in any univocal meaning or representation. Robyin embraces the schizophrenia that is enhanced by her implant and represents the prime mover of the revolutionary path that sets her apart from other science fiction film characters and their ambiguous relationship to technology. Robyin welcomes the idea of constant decoding and her film has the potential to contain multiple meanings and be endlessly decodable by the different viewers that essentially share her schizophrenia.

Pier Paolo Pasolini refers to life as one long take that only cuts at the moment of death. (Pasolini, 1980: 5) He also argues that it is necessary to die, because while living we lack meaning, and the language of our lives is untranslatable since it is "a chaos of possibilities and a search for relations among discontinuous meanings." (Pasolini, 1980: 6) He believes that death performs a montage of a life's significant moments that are seen from a single subjective perspective and converts our infinite and uncertain present into a clear and stable past. *Mnemophrenia* could be read as a hyper-long take of Robyin's death montage, but if we take a closer look at it we understand, along with Charlie, her partner, that this chaos of possibilities that Pasolini talks about does not disappear with Robyin's death but, due to her schizophrenia and the implant, it continues to exist into infinity. Robyin's past can always become the present and create discontinuous relations for someone who watches her film or any other of her memories.

Maria Poulaki writes that in *The Final Cut*, agency is expressed "through the reflection upon the passage of time, which cannot be recuperated, but only *a posteriori* observed through another." (Poulaki, 2011: 432) In *Mnemophrenia*, the past is also observed and retrieved a posteriori, but cannot be changed, only re-arranged, bringing out new meanings. The past can be put to a different use and influence the present and future of the viewer. As Aylish Wood argues regarding *Strange Days*, each time the recorded memories are experienced they accumulate new sets of meanings from their different

users and contexts. "Experiences commodified through the SQUID become incorporated into the realm of simulation and information exchange. Once there, they are no longer located in relation to any originating act, and as they shed meanings they accrue others." (Wood, 2002: 99-100) So, Jeanette and Nicholas's memories mean one thing for them, and they acquire different meanings for Robyin, and the same memories can mean something entirely different for Charlie. The various interpretations and creation of different meanings highlight *Mnemophrenia*'s main theme of artificial memories acquired by advanced visual media and question further the 'reality' of all experiences and memories depicted in the film.

5.10 Conclusion

Robyin uses the past in order to understand and represent her present and reconstruct her subjectivity, but she also manages to foresee the future. She realizes that her film is only a fraction of her multiple self and different parts of her will still manage to exist even after she has died when her memories or parts of her memories are re-experienced by other people, as she did with the memories of Jeanette and Nicholas. This realization that her memories can be part of the future and lead to something different echoes the idea of postcybernetic conception of memory by Steve Goodman and Luciana Parisi.

> [R]ather than imagine a cybernetic archive of the past, we argue by way of an engagement with the nonlinear temporalities of media that new technologies have realigned the archive away from merely storing or reconstructing the past of human experience, so that it becomes something that anticipates change, anticipates the not yet experienced. From the archive of the past, then, to a conception of memory or an archive of the future: This, we argue, takes us toward a postcybernetic conception of memory. (Goodman and Parisi, 2010: 344)

This conception of memory is similar to Robyin's experience of past, present and future. Bergson holds that perception and memory interlace and all memories must become actual in order to become effectively real. He notes, that memory begets sensations as it materializes, but when it does, so it ceases to be a memory and becomes something actually lived by passing into the condition of a present

thing. (Bergson, 1991: 139) Similarly Robyin's memories transform from mere memories into something actual and present by being experienced by people in the future; they cease then to be memories and become something actually lived. Robyin realizes that by bringing memories to the present and making them live and actual, these memories and the people linked to them become 'alive' again and become part of the present tense, so fragments of their selves actually never die. This is something that she understands that can also happen with her through her film and all her recorded memories, a realization that she comes to before she dies. "Memories are therefore material relations. They are not confined to individual subjects. Neither are they specifically human. Memories no longer relate purely to a trace of the past but, more importantly… hint at the activity of the future in the present. Every actual body is shadowed by its virtual double." (Goodman and Parisi, 2010: 358) Robyin's film, a combination of different memories, in effect becomes 'actual' by being watched by Charlie. This idea of immortality through multiple, dispersed subjectivities due to schizophrenia is directly linked to the potential of revolution suggested by Deleuze and Guattari. However, it is important to note that this whole process has revolutionary potential, but it is not the revolution itself.

> There is a whole world of difference between the schizo and the revolutionary: the difference between the one who escapes, and the one who knows how to make what he is escaping escape… The schizo is not revolutionary, but the schizophrenic process-in terms of which the schizo is merely the interruption, or the continuation in the void-is the potential for revolution. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 374)

In the last scene of *The Final Cut*, as Fletcher edits the footage of Alan's implant, he watches the reflection of Alan in the mirror, to what appears to be a POV shot through Fletcher's eyes. Then the reflection of Alan leaves the frame suggesting that it is not Alan now looking at his reflection, nor is it Fletcher looking through Alan's eyes. "At the point that the narrative ends, the mirror/screen waits for us, the viewers, to fill it not with our reflection but with our own mnemonic records. This 'mind-game'… has rather been *The Final Cut*'s communicative condition all along, if we consider the false memories of the character." (Poulaki, 2011: 432) In a similar way with Robyin's death and Charlie's final speech regarding her film and its true potential, any future viewers are invited to 'continue' this revolutionary potential, identify with any or all of the characters, "become" mnemophrenics and

combine what they have watched or experienced with their own personal memories. "This is not linear continuity, where the past determines the present or the present constructs the past. Each present perception stirs what lies in potential, the futurity of the past, emerging again yet anew." (Goodman and Parisi, 2010: 354) As with *The Final Cut*, by the end of *Mnemophrenia* the viewer is directly invited to take part and as Poulaki very successfully writes in relation to *The Final Cut* "[s]elf-reflexivity thus takes us into the loop, where (narrative) closure is no longer possible. As the German DVD title of the film suggests, 'Dein Tod ist erst der Anfang' (the end is only the beginning)." (Poulaki, 2011: 432) At the end of *Mnemophrenia*, I imply that the real journey starts after Robyin's death, as Charlie concludes. I regard Robyin as the first of a new kind of human species that I call "homo mnemonicus" signalling the beginning of a new society that could lead to ground-breaking changes and human transcendence.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Robyin's character and her assemblage of different experiences, memories and approaches to mnemophrenia exemplify my method towards different theories and previous science fiction films that have inspired *Mnemophrenia*. Robyin represents the main core of my project, my/her film, a fusion of different memories, actual and artificial, embodies the combination of different theories and filmic elements that subsequently generate new ideas and meanings. *Mnemophrenia* is a homage to many other science fiction films and a visualisation of various theories that revolve around the themes of memory, identity and technology. In contrast to the films that have influenced it, *Mnemophrenia* is based on pre-existing theories. These theories gave birth to the film but then, the film contributed to their expansion and showcased how their ideas can be brought to life. *Mnemophrenia* and the thesis constitute part of an ongoing dialogue between sociocultural theories and cultural artefacts, specifically science fiction film. My project delineates the dialogue between film products and film studies contributing to the discipline by showcasing how practice and theory can coexist and organically develop together.

Mnemophrenia shows how form and content, practice and theory can collaborate and offer a wider and more complete picture of the link between film and artificial memories. It discusses this link from two perspectives: narratively and formally. The thesis analyzes the narrative of each period that is influenced by different theories and is enhanced by the distinct visual form used for each segment, displaying their organic relationship. My main objective was to bring theory alive in practice and in particular take different theoretical positions *vis-a-vis* virtual reality and artificial memories and explore their ramifications firstly for the person, then the society and finally discuss the possible transcendence. My project revolves around the development of mnemophrenia and applies theories by Jameson, Baudrillard, Haraway, Deleuze and Guattari to explore the transition of mnemophrenia from a negative and disorienting mental condition to a socially acceptable trait, offering hints of hope for the future and finally shown as the beginning of a possible revolutionary

path that promises freedom and immortality. The ideas of these theorists pave the way for the narrative development of the film and help me to show how mnemophrenia can lead from Jeanette's nervous breakdown and disorientation, to a transitional period with Nicholas who critically questions his condition and finally to emancipation as it is suggested with Robyin. Their ideas around schizophrenia and cyborgization get fleshed out through these three characters and get tested in a creative and dynamic way, contributing to my experiment on the interactive relationship between theory and practice.

This relationship is further enhanced by applying different visual styles to depict the various effects of mnemophrenia on each one of the main characters. *Mnemophrenia* is self-reflexive and creatively comments on the filmmaking process. The film forms used are: mockumentary, CCTV and POV consecutively, all of which are commonly used to depict or comment on reality. I use these forms in a subversive way to suggest that the reality of these images can be appropriated and become another person's reality even if it does not belong to that person, so in effect be transformed to an artificial memory. *Mnemophrenia* depicts the development of a different kind of reality, identity and existence that is based on artificial memories. The 'reality' represented by these three distinct film forms visually supports the aforementioned theories and the consequent ramifications for the characters.

This different reality is not shown through the use of special effects as previous films have done, since the main objective is not to be able to differentiate between reality and fiction. I do agree with Sobchack who writes, "the major visual impulse of all SF films is to pictorialize the unfamiliar, the nonexistent, the strange and the totally alien—and to do so with a verisimilitude which is, at times, documentary in flavor and style. While we are invited to wonder at what we see, the films strive primarily for our belief." (Sobchack, 2001: 88) I welcome the audience's belief, but not in order to celebrate the established reality, but to present another reality that is nevertheless so similar to ours that does not need any effects to be created. As Telotte comments "the science

fiction film seems a form that continues to explore the potential for rendering our world in all its promise and frustration ever more available for our inspection and instruction." (Telotte, 2001: 30) It is the familiarity of *Mnemophrenia* that makes us question our ideas and beliefs around the notions of reality and memory and opens up *Mnemophrenia*'s hypothetical but probable world for our inspection and possible instruction.

    Mnemophrenia talks about artificial memories and works as memory itself, it connects the three protagonists through their memories that in combination create one artificial memory that belongs to Robyin. The important factor that is played out in the film is not how actual or real the memories are, since a different kind of reality, as I mentioned above, is being produced that tampers with the audience's established and preconceived ideas around the subject, but what these memories can lead to, and the actions they put in motion. Quato, the mutant resistance leader in *Total Recall* says, "A man is defined by his actions, not his memories" and it is worth repeating Landsberg's insightful argument in relation to this, she writes: "[w]e might revise his statement to say that a man is defined by his actions, but whether those actions are made possible by prosthetic memories or memories based on lived experience makes little difference." (Landsberg, 2004b: 244) Robyin realizes by the end that she has actively recreated part of herself through the assimilation of artificial memories. This action can lead to significant changes since it offers people the ability to empathize, reconstruct themselves, and hence be born and reborn and live forever integrating seamlessly into other people's memories and identity. Therefore, the "reality" of the memories is not considered as important, an approach that depicts a different approach in relation to technology and how it affects our reality and human identity compared to previous science fiction films. *Mnemophrenia* is a critical dystopia that leaves a trace of hope for a possible utopia. It offers an alternative viewpoint to the usual anti-technology attitude and suggests a symbiosis with technology that leads to a different kind of humanity without lamenting the loss of reality, as we know it today. It, thus, challenges the conventional dystopic view that seems to be the common trait of most science fiction films. My

project combines a range of theoretical and filmic elements to suggest a different ending that does not ultimately confirm and affirm the supremacy of established reality.

As part of this unconventional ending, the audience is invited to the world of mnemophrenia and encouraged like Charlie, Robyin's partner, to continue the story assembled by Robyin. All spectators of *Mnemophrenia* are considered potential 'mnemophrenics' that might take on board some of the memories they have 'experienced' through the film and thus keep parts of the characters alive, since their experiences become part of the spectators' memory reserve. This conclusion reaffirms the self-reflexivity of my project and brings to the fore the significance of the audience's interaction with the film, an important element for the production of artificial memories. *Mnemophrenia*, Robyin's film, can be seen as a guide to how to develop empathy and successfully create artificial memories from the experience of a film and at the same time presents the possible negative and positive ramifications of this process, ending with a hopeful note for the future.

I believe that my project creates the ground for the development of further new research, offering a case study that opens new questions. One interesting avenue of research could be based on the characters becoming actors in their own films, revealing their affinity to film actors and the empathy process that actors have to go through in order to bring a character to life. This idea is also linked to the improvisation process that I followed, a method commonly used to produce naturalistic dialogue and acting, which could prompt an in-depth examination of its application for the development of a science fiction screenplay. Another possible avenue of research could be linked to the idea of spectatorship, and how the audience might remember parts of specific scenes and identify with different characters and what the implications would be if these characters were 'actual' people and the films depicted 'actual' experiences. These are only a few of possible research questions that could stem from my project and further some of the ideas that have been explored in my film and thesis. Finally, and most importantly, I believe that *Mnemophrenia* showcases that a film essay can be the core of a creative research project and that theory can trigger

the production of original practice, therefore, broaden the horizons of the discipline and suggest new approaches toward the study of theory and practice relationship.

Filmography

Alphaville (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965)

Blade Runner (Ridley Scott, 1982)

Brainstorm (Douglas Trumbull, 1983)

Brother from Another Planet (John Sayles, 1984)

Cloverfield (Matt Reeves, 2008)

Cypher (Vincenzo Natali, 2002)

Dark City (Alex Proyas, 1998)

Death of a President (Gabriel Range, 2006)

Destiny in Space (Ben Burtt, Phyllis Ferguson, James Neihouse and Gail Singer, 1994)

District 9 (Neill Blomkamp, 2009)

Don't Look Back (D.A. Pennebaker, 1967)

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (Michel Gondry, 2004)

eXistenZ (David Cronenberg, 1999)

Forrest Gump (Robert Zemeckis, 1994)

Futureworld (Richard T. Heffron, 1976)

Inception (Christopher Nolan, 2010)

Johnny Mnemonic (Robert Longo, 1995)

Journey to the Moon (Kutluğ Ataman, 2009)

La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)

Manchurian Candidate (Jonathan Demme, 2004)

Menace II Society (The Hughes Brothers, 1993)

Minority Report (Steven Spielberg, 2002)

Mission to Mars (Brian de Palma, 2000)

Primary (Robert Drew, 1960)

Repo Man (Alex Cox, 1984)

Robocop (Paul Verhoeven, 1987)

Sans Soleil (Chris Marker, 1983)

Sliver (Phillip Noyce, 1993)

Smallpox 2002: Silent Weapon (Daniel Percival, 2002)

Snake Eyes (Brian De Palma, 1998)

Solaris (Steven Soderbergh, 2002)

Strange Days (Kathryn Bigelow, 1995)

Teknolust (Lynn Hershman-Leeson, 2002)

The Age of Stupid (Franny Armstrong, 2009)

The Blair Witch Project (Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez, 1999)

The Day Britain Stopped (Gabriel Range, 2003)

The Final Cut (Omar Naim, 2004)

The Lawnmower Man (Brett Leonard, 1992)

The Matrix (The Wachowski Brothers, 1999)

The Thirteenth Floor (Josef Rusnak, 1999)

Thelma and Louise (Ridley Scott, 1991)

Titticut Follies (Frederick Wiseman, 1967)

Total Recall (Paul Verhoeven, 1990)

The Truman Show (Peter Weir, 1998)

Videodrome (David Cronenberg, 1983)

Virtuosity (Brett Leonard, 1995)

The War Game (Peter Watkins, 1965)

Zelig (Woody Allen, 1983)

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Appendix I: Improvisation process

I used improvisation in order to build the characters and the shooting script for the first period of *Mnemophrenia.* I believe that the improvisation process helped with the development of more realistic dialogue and performances that match the mockumentary style of the first period. However, my aim is to use improvisation for the other periods as well, since each period questions the distinction between reality and fiction and I believe that realistic dialogue and acting contribute to the blurring of this distinction. I will ask actors to watch footage from previous periods and take influence in the development of their character accordingly. Each period will be made in sequence so actors of the next period can watch the previous one/s and build their characters' experiences (Nicholas and Robyin) from what they have watched, since according to the premise of the film these videorecordings become part of their memories and identity. That is the reason why there is no final script at this stage. I use the improvisation as part of an organic approach that I want to apply to the whole filmmaking process from script development to execution.

When I decided that I want to develop the script and dialogue through improvisation it became apparent that I had to look for actors with experience in improvisation. Therefore, I auditioned several actors in December 2010 and January 2011 to choose the best for my film. The auditions were in two stages, in the first stage each actor had a 30-minute audition on their own, and they were put through three different improvisation exercises. After the first round, I selected the most appropriate actors and invited them for the second round for a group improvisation workshop that acted as their second audition. In this workshop, they had to work either individually or together in various group improvisation exercises. After the second round, I decided on which actors would play each role.

The improvisation workshops began in February 2011 and lasted until mid-April 2011. For the aims of the script three different groups were created. The first group was comprised of the actors who played Jeanette and George (her cameraman); the second group included Jeanette and

Douglas; and the third group included Jeanette, the therapist Tessa and the rest of the mnemophrenics that were part of the group therapy sessions. Each group met each week for at least one hour-long improvisation workshops that were at least an hour long.. The aim of the workshops was for the actors to understand who their characters were and develop their background stories and dialogues based on a given storyline. All workshops were video-recorded and - I have submitted an example from each kind of workshop as part of the supporting materials for my project. Each group worked in different ways. Freya (Jeanette) and Tai (George), for example, had to watch all the interviews of real scientists and theorists that I had taken in the past in order to familiarise themselves with the ideas explored in the film, so they could incorporate them in their own dialogues. Freya (Jeanette) and Tim (Douglas) had to find what Jeanette was looking for in the VR films and all their encounters explored different ways that Douglas could make Jeanette feel happy and excited whilst winning her trust. Finally, the mnemophrenic group was meeting each week at the same time, replicating the format of real group therapy sessions. They were led by Cally (Tessa/ therapist). These sessions did not include Jeanette from the beginning but began with only the other three mnemophrenics who along with the therapist, created the rules of their group and built different relationships among themselves. Jeanette became part of the group much later, in line with the story, where an outsider intrudes and asks the group to film these sessions as part of a documentary. Jeanette had to go through several group sessions until she was trusted by the other members and accepted as part of the group.

I barely talked during the improvisation workshops, and the only way I was directing or influencing the conversation or character development was by giving written notes to individuals throughout the workshops. This technique allowed for an organic development of the characters and dialogue, which was a result of the creative collaboration between the actors and myself as a writer and director. I consider all my actors as co-writers of the film, and they all have a writing as well as an acting credit. Finally, when all the improvisation workshops came to a conclusion I had to watch

all the footage and choose the best parts in order to write the shooting script. All the actors then had to learn the script that was based on dialogue that they had created. As part of the supporting materials for the project, I have included the interviews with a few of the actors from after the film shoot. In these interviews, they discuss the process they went through in order to develop their characters and script.

Appendix II: Storyline for the second period (Nicholas)

Background

Nicholas is Jeanette's grandson, but has never met her, she died when he was still a baby. His mother, Grace grew up with her father and saw Jeanette only on weekends and holidays. Jeanette became gradually a recluse, and eccentric and Grace did not have much contact with her from her teenage years until Jeanette's death. Both Nicholas's parents are non-mnemophrenics and especially Grace has always been against VR films and believed that they mostly have a negative impact and can be addictive like in her mother's case. Nicholas is a mnemophrenic, and although at his time, mnemophrenia started becoming more widely acceptable, he encountered discrimination and social exclusion while he was growing up. In contrast to his mother, Nicholas was always a big fan of VR films, especially since as he was a mnemophrenic and his experience of them was intense and exciting.

Nicholas was very interested in Jeanette because she was a mnemophrenic like him and also due to her documentary, which was a seminal film since it was the first to talk about mnemophrenia. Jeanette's film inspired Nicholas to become a scientist and look more into the condition. Although Grace never approved of the technology, Nicholas went against her will and decided to study neuroscience and computer science. Part of his PhD thesis was the development of VR films with a virtual Jeanette that was based on audiovisual data and information about her that he collected through her documentary films and from his mother. Although Jeanette died when he was a baby, he acquired many artificial memories of her due to these films and he always thought of her as a content mnemophrenic, which made him feel good about his mnemophrenia. His PhD thesis was well acclaimed and contributed a lot to the VR research, since the VR film companies never offered VR films based on real people. During the last year of his PhD, he also started developing his ideas for Total Cinema and published a few articles on the subject. His thesis and publications attracted Memofilm's attention, and he was offered a long-term contract with them

after the completion of his studies.

Nicholas has been working for Memofilm for 13 years and the last 9 years on Total Cinema project (TC). With TC the VR experience is all-sensory, synesthesia is purposely induced and manipulated in order to achieve the controlled stimulation of all 5 senses. The consumer, in order to experience TC, s/he is wired at the head and can interact with the TC environment by 'playing' one of the characters at a pre-determined storyline. Nicholas believes that TC can connect people and develop an empathy that will make differences disappear and help everyone understand each other better. His mnemophrenia has developed throughout the years and he is capable of more or less controlling it. However, there are many moments when he cannot distinguish between real and fictional memories, for example, he often forgets that he never actually met Jeanette.

Nicholas feels very much at home in his Memofilm lab where he spends most of his time and occasionally stays over. His connection to Jeanette, his scientific expertise, as well as his mnemophrenia, place him into a privileged position, and Memofilm is one of the few places he knows that being mnemophrenic is something very positive. He started working on TC hoping that the basic source code would eventually be open sourced and that the software will be available to everyone. At the beginning of the project he submitted a draft report of the advantages of open sourcing TC to Michael, his manager and the executive director of his specific department. He argued that it could increase the company's profits by Memofilm having the monopoly on the hardware and the expertise in making the best quality films. Michael had showed some interest in this report, but never committed to anything. However, Nicholas, always hoped that due to the fact that he was a privileged scientist his ideas would come to pass after the completion of the project. Nicholas has worked closely for the last seven years with Bill (non mnemophrenic), and this collaboration has helped him understand more the 'other' side. Bill always wanted to become mnemophrenic (he is not due to specific brain function), but also cherishes the moments that he can differentiate between real and artificial memories.

Film plot

All Nicholas's scenes are located at the Memofilm lab and filmed from the Artificial Intelligence (AI) 'CCTV' cameras' perspective. These cameras film from different angles and frames based on Nicholas's brain waves. Nicholas always wears a headset while he is in the lab that allows the AI cameras to process and 'read' his brain signals.

During the last few years, Nicholas has been approached by a group of hardcore mnemophrenics called FLM (Future of the Liberated Mind) that desire an all mnemophrenic society. FLM sees Nicholas as one of the key people that could make this happen. Nicholas distances himself from this group, but shares several of their beliefs.

Few months before the launch of Total Cinema (TC) Nicholas and Will discover that the technology will most probably have a permanent direct impact on the brain's hippocampus, which would eventually develop mnemophrenia to every TC user. They both have a meeting about these findings with Michael and he asks them to look further into it.

At the same period, Keri, an old friend of Nicholas and a researcher working at an international health organization, meets Nicholas at his lab and interviews him about TC and its possible consequences. During the interview she implies that Memofilm knew about the possible consequences of the first generation VR Memory Palaces films, but did not inform the public; questioning whether Memofilm will do the same with TC. Nicholas avoids commenting on this and merely states that all this is based on unfounded rumours.

In the meantime, Nicholas starts having an interest in one of TC's test subjects, Anna. Anna is a mnemophrenic who is quite happy with her mnemophrenia and shares the same views with Nicholas. Nicholas shows to Anna one of his main side projects, an advanced version of TC that allows him to share his own recorded experiences with her. This version of TC is what he always envisioned for this technology, however, Memofilm isn't interested in developing it further.

At Nicholas and Will's meeting with Michael, their manager, and David, the executive director, they are informed that Memofilm won't announce anything publicly about the possible consequences of TC. Will and Nicholas show their objection and frustration at these news.

Few days after this meeting and only few weeks before the launch of TC, Will announces to Nicholas that he wants to resign. He tells Nicholas that he will take few days off in order to think about it.

At the same day it is Nicholas's last meeting with Anna. She confides in him that she is a member of FLM and asks him to share the technology with them and become part of their group. Nicholas is dumbfounded and knows that this revelation can put both of them in trouble.

The following day Nicholas confronts Michael about the constant recording of the lab that was authorized by Michael behind Nicholas's back. Michael reveals that this was requested because Will blackmailed him for a promotion in the light of the latest findings. Michael also suspects that Will deleted some lab recordings from previous day. Finally, Michael announces to Nicholas that they are moving their lab to the main building, a sign that shows his growing mistrust.

Completely demoralized, just after his meeting with Michael, Nicholas gives Keri a part of the findings about the effects of TC, knowing that this could be very dangerous for his career.

At his last day in the office, Nicholas meets Will who reveals his personal reasons in relation to his unborn child for asking a promotion by using the findings too add pressure. Nicholas is surprised by the revelation but at the same time expresses his disappointment and informs Will about his resignation. Nicholas leaves the office by carrying a bag with him that possibly contains important documents regarding TC along with the TC headset that he has stopped wearing since he found out about the constant recording of the lab.

Appendix III: Storyline for the third period (Robyin)
"There is no past, present or future. There is no beginning nor end."

Background

Robyin is a descendant of Jeanette and Nicholas and lives further in the future. At Robyin's time, there is a new technology, a brain implanted microchip that is used to make phone calls, send emails and watch films without the need for any external devices. In addition, everything that you experience is recorded on this microchip; thus, it constitutes the ultimate internalized VR camera and player. There is a big market and database of VR videorecordings that you can 'experience' with the use of this microchip. This database becomes larger with time, including commercial films as well as personal videorecordings that are freely available (like today's Youtube). You can 'experience' any VR film that has been made since Jeanette's time, which is when the VR films became widely accessible. You can watch a film by closing your eyes and with a simple thought-command automatically download it in your brain and experience it with your mind's eye. The experience can either last only few seconds by imprinting the film in your brain through the microchip, a process that works like 'photographic memory' or you can experience the film in real time, which makes the experience more intense. You can also experience other people's personal videorecordings, but there are specific regulations for this; they should have died more than 50 years ago. So, Robyin is allowed to experience Nicholas's videorecordings.

Robyin is a researcher, and is one of the first people to get this implant. She is interested in empathy and shared consciousness and she has been researching for a while now on Jeanette's and Nicholas's videorecordings. She is one of the first to experiment on herself as part of her research around the effects of the new implant and its links to empathy. Robyin does not approach artificial memories as artificial but as a real experience and incorporates Jeanette's and Nicholas's films/videorecordings as part of her memories and identity. Robyin is in a relationship with Charlie, and they have a very strong bonding.

Film plot

All Robyin's scenes are shot as POV since she is effectively the camera due to the brain implanted microchip.

Robyin is a researcher, and is one of the first people to get the brain implant in order to research on empathy and shared consciousness. Robyin finds out that she has a rare blood disease. Charlie is always by her side and tries to comfort her. Her sickness prompts her to reflect on her mortality and makes her feel unstable and unbalanced. She feels helpless and without any control over her life. In the beginning she cannot accept the fact that she is sick and identifies with Jeanette and her difficulty to come to terms with her mnemophrenia and also identifies with Nicholas and how he felt out of control in relation to Memofilm just before he resigned.

Robyin realizes that her research has been affecting herself, the way she thinks and behaves more than she thought. She decides to push herself and experiment even further with Jeanette and Nicholas's memories, which possibly has a direct effect on her health. She wants to find out the things that affect her most and tries to focus on how she feels as a result. During this process she slowly reinvents herself through Jeanette and Nicholas. Although Charlie is worried more and more about her health, he is happy that she has found something to keep her going and in the meantime he researches on her condition and tries to find the right doctors and treatments.

As time goes by, and while Robyin's health deteriorates, Robyin decides to make a film that will depict how the research/experiment has affected her. She slowly accepts her condition in contrast to Jeanette and is inspired to continue with the research/film because of Nicholas who strived to stick to his principles and strongly believed in his invention, Total Cinema. Charlie gets worried with Robyin's decision and is against of the making of this film, because it will consume much of her energy. In addition, he becomes frustrated that he cannot find the information he needs for Robyin's disease. Regardless of Charlie's objections Robyin continues with the film. She gradually believes more and more that the implant can bring true harmony and emancipation through empathy, leading

to a successful fusion of community and autonomy. Before she finishes the film, Robyin asks Charlie to present it on her behalf at an upcoming conference that she will probably not be able to attend due to her disease. She tells him that he should experience it only after she has finished it and that he will be able to present it better than her since he will be a neutral outsider.

Just before the conference Robyin dies. Charlie experiences her film after her death and realizes that Robyin had really found out something very profound; a transcendental way to live 'forever', which was her secret true goal since she learnt about her disease. Robyin had discovered that Jeanette and Nicholas became 'alive' through her because she experienced and incorporated part of their memories as her own. This made her realize that her own experiences/memories can stay alive if experienced by others and thus parts of herself will live 'forever'. Robyin's own 'film' is the film that we have been watching all along, she has been the 'director-editor' who decided how the memories of the three of them will be fused together in order to produce meaningful 'guidelines' to immortality. At the end of the film we realize that we have been watching this film through the eyes of Charlie who was the first to experience it and *Mnemophrenia* finishes with his presentation of Robyin's film at the conference.

Appendix IV: Script for first period/ Jeanette

The shooting script is different from the actual film due to the fact that many scenes were cut during the editing process.

Mnemophrenia – period 1 – Shooting script (draft 1)

By

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April 2011   Eirini Konstantinidou
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1   JEANETTE INTRO

                              JEANETTE
                    Many people have heard about it
                    and talk about it. It was first
                    discovered about two years ago
                    but has still yet to be
                    officially classified as a mental
                    condition or disorder. Experts
                    refer to it as mnemophrenia.
                    Mnemophrenia manifests to the
                    individual as the inability to
                    decipher between real memories
                    and fake memories, and these can
                    be from a moment up to a whole
                    period of time. This film sets
                    out to explore if there is any
                    link between mnemophrenia and the
                    Memory Palaces Virtual Reality
                    films. This film is also a
                    personal journey. I myself am a
                    sufferer of mnemophrenia, so I
                    will be part of this film. This
                    is a way for me to deal with this
                    condition and hopefully we will
                    show you what help is out there
                    and the potential ramifications
                    of this condition for human
                    relationships. I'm not sure where
                    this journey will lead me but I
                    welcome you all to join me.

2   INTERVIEWS

3   GEORGE INTERVIEW

                              GEORGE
                    The most famous virtual reality
                    film company is Memofilm that
                    offers apart from mainstream VR
                    films, the Memory Palaces series
                    where you can choose different
                    experiences. So, people can use
                    VR to go on holidays or go skiing
                    or become an olympic runner for
                    15 minutes. These films are
                    tailored to each consumer. You
                    need to go through the sign on
                    process, and complete a detailed
                    questionnaire with your personal
                    tastes, interests, so like
                    certain styles of music you
                    listen to. These films can't be
                    reused, they are locked after one
                    use. After the experience you
                              (MORE)

                          GEORGE (cont'd)
          have the option to receive
          memorabilia and souvenirs linked
          to the experience. You can get
          holiday shots, or if you go to a
          concert you can get a t-shirt or
          live recording of the concert.

4   JEANETTE'S OFFICE 1

                          JEANETTE
          This whole thing about TMS is
          really worrying, what they're
          doing to our brains.

                          GEORGE
          Lorenzo was quite negative about
          a lot of it.

                          JEANETTE
          I tend to agree with Lorenzo and
          Esther Leslie. The idea of shared
          experience that Marco Gillies was
          talking about doesn't sound
          realistic.

                          GEORGE
          I just don't think technology is
          a monster. Dan a very good friend
          of mine that used to live down
          the street, he thinks he has
          mnemophrenia. He lives abroad
          now, in California, he reinvented
          himself in a good way. He had
          issues, antisocial problems, and
          fell out with his family and
          didn't know how to interact with
          people properly. But through VR
          films he kind of trained himself
          by having new experiences in VR.

                          JEANETTE
          He doesn't see any negative
          aspects in having fake memories?

                          GEORGE
          No, it changed his life, turned
          it round. Technology can open
          opportunities. It's not bad
          thing. Like... I learned to ski
          because of it.

                          JEANETTE
          Can you ski in reality or only in
          your films? (laughing)

                                              (CONTINUED)

                    GEORGE
          In reality as well (laughing).

                    JEANETTE
          Fair enough...

                    GEORGE
          The direction that Memofilm has
          gone. Don't get me started..
          Memofilm has saturated the
          market, this means these other
          applications aren't developed.
          There are lots of people that are
          developing the stuff that are
          more community based.

                    JEANETTE
          But that's the issue George,
          Memofilm is a big player and just
          want to sell more and more films
          and doesn't care if people end up
          with psychological problems or
          not.

                    GEORGE
          We should be careful we don't say
          it's becoming an epidemic
          though... because we are not
          anywhere near that.

                    JEANETTE
          You are still not convinced about
          mnemophrenia?

                    GEORGE
          I don't say that it doesn't exist
          but our understanding of it is so
          limited, I don't want it to
          become a just like a negative
          term, if it does exist.

                    JEANETTE
          At the end of the day if someone
          can't tell you from the bottom of
          their heart if something is real
          or not that's a condition, and
          that for me can only be negative.

5   INTERVIEWS

6   JEANETTE'S OFFICE 2

                    GEORGE
          Do you think we should look into
          making you maybe the main focus
          of the film? Make yourself a case
          study...

                    JEANETTE
          Oh...

                    GEORGE
          It just feels a bit like we're
          ignoring the elephant in the
          room.

                    JEANETTE
          Well... I need to think about
          it...

                    GEORGE
          Of course... I know it will be
          quite difficult for you.

     JEANETTE is lost in thoughts.

                    (BEAT)

                    GEORGE
          You would need to make your
          personal life quite public...

                    JEANETTE
          Yes, it's quite scary... might
          help me sort out myself. Let me
          think about it...

7   INTERVIEWS

8   TESSA INTERVIEW

                    TESSA
          The reason that I used a VR film
          is because I was having a crisis
          of confidence in my professional
          and personal life and another
          colleague suggested to use VR
          film and boost my confidence. Few
          years ago, my best friend took an
          overdose, paracetamol overdose,
          it doesn't kill you straight
          away. The day I found about her
          being in the hospital I was
          presenting a paper, and decided
          that I would present the paper
                    (MORE)

                         TESSA (cont'd)
          and then go to the hospital to
          see her and when I went to the
          hospital she was already in a
          coma so I never had the chance to
          speak to her... I was going
          though a grieving process but I
          couldn't get out of my head, she
          didn't leave a note, she didn't
          speak to her parents, husband, to
          me. And what was so awful in her
          life that she had to do this and
          me professionally I should have
          noticed...

9   GROUP THERAPY 1

                         JEANETTE
          I was clearing out some boxes
          from my parents house in the loft
          and I found the VR cases of
          Memory Palaces films that I had
          consumed when I was about 18. And
          the thing that drew my attention
          straight away was that the
          pictures were of the guy,
          Douglas, that until recently I
          always thought was a very
          important person of my life and
          who existed. And at first it was
          like a bizarre deja vu feeling
          but when I looked through the
          case some memorabilia were
          missing and I knew why, they were
          items I knew I had, a photo of he
          and I, some things we collected
          together like a shell from the
          beach...

                         JIM
          You say that you think you had
          mnemophrenia for about a year,
          why haven't you done anything
          before like we've been doing to
          try to come to terms? Why haven't
          you talked with anyone about this
          and suddenly it's the topic for
          your film?

                         JEANETTE
          I believe that when I first found
          the VR card and cases, for a long
          time I didn't want to believe
          that the memories were not true.

                         JIM
               Aren't you interested in
               discovering about yourself,
               shouldn't your drive be to solve
               this issue as a personal thing
               rather than making it into a
               film?

                         JEANETTE
               I can see your point but I can't
               understand why to do that first
               before making a film.

                         JIM
               It makes a difference to me.
               Isn't your primary search your
               mnemophrenia?

                         JEANETTE
               No, my primary search isn't for
               my own answers. My primary goal
               is to make an honest and truthful
               documentary. This
               documentary will be the first
               that actually informs people
               about this condition and perhaps
               from that there will be more
               people coming forward to say that
               is affecting them too. At the
               moment, I don't know about you
               but my experience is that I feel
               ashamed to have it.

                         JIM
               Are you really a mnemophrenic? Or
               is it that this makes it a more
               interesting film?

                         JEANETTE
               Yes, I am... and I'm at a
               supportive group now.

                         TESSA
                    (to JIM)
               We've all have different reasons
               to be here. Don't project
               something what you think that
               someone should or how they should
               behave.

                         (TO JEANETTE)
               I think what Jim is trying to
               say, would you have come along to
               this group even if you weren't
               making a film?

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                  JEANETTE
Perhaps I would, I feel relief
knowing that other people have it
it's so great, I feel so
relieved. I'm not here as some
person who wants to exploit the
group if you watch my previous
films, you will see that it's not
my style of filmmaking at all. We
include our participants, you
will have control over this film
all the way through. I want you
to have access to the research
that we are getting. And I want
you to know that all the profits
that we make, if we make any, it
will go to mnemophrenia research,
so, we are not going to come out
of it with some big bonus.

                  TESSA
So, you say that you want to take
part, do you want to become part
of the group?

                  JEANETTE
Yes.

                  TESSA
With no difference on the way you
participate?

                  JEANETTE
Exactly.

                  TESSA
That's great. Would the rest of
you like to share why you are
here?

                  NINA
My name is Nina and I've used
Memofilm for quite a while. Main
thing for me is I was going on
holidays, travelling really and I
ended up being with one
particular character in the film
who is called James who I
basically have been dating for
like two years. And that's been
my main issue that I need to
separate from him.

                  JIM
My name is Jim and I like to rob
banks and there are elements of
one of the experiences that
                (MORE)

                              JIM (cont'd)
             seemed to be in my life for real.
             The confusing thing for me is if
             it is an experience I had through
             Memofilm or I actually robbed a
             bank. I was at a pub this guy
             came up to me, he knew me, had my
             file from Memofilm and he said
             that this guy called Jeremiah
             that works on Memofilm passed on
             my details and that I like
             robbing banks and they are one
             man down and passed me the file
             and asked me if I would like to
             work for real. And I said yeah.
             And we planned and operated and
             executed and we buried some money
             in Hampstead Heath. And when I
             was trying to get in touch with
             these guys I couldn't at all and
             I was convinced that one of them
             is going to take the money. So I
             was getting up in the middle of
             the night to go and check in
             Hampstead Heath if the earth had
             been disturbed, and it hadn't.
             And I went back there one night
             and dug a hole and there was no
             money there. It was gone. And now
             I feel I'm being followed because
             I think that one of these guys
             has taken the money but the other
             one thinks that it might be me
             because I went into the middle of
             the night and dug a hole.

RICHARD looks reluctant to talk.

                              TESSA
                       (to RICHARD)
             Richard, the issue with your wife
             is still strong reason for you to
             come?

                              RICHARD
             It hasn't changed overnight.

                              JIM
             Why aren't you talking about it?

                              RICHARD
             Because I don't like talking when
             you are criticizing every little
             thing that I say, you will be
             criticizing bigger things twice
             as much. It's like let's see
             Richard in tears, shall we?

                                              (CONTINUED)

                         TESSA
          We don't want to see any tears,
          if people don't want to share
          things that's fine.

                         RICHARD
          I know you are going to criticize
          that or whatever, but my wife
          left me on Valentine's day.

                         TESSA
          She doesn't trust you anymore?

                         RICHARD
          She doesn't and she says that if
          I don't know what's real, how can
          she know? Maybe she was right to
          leave me...

                         TESSA
          What are you questioning?

                         RICHARD
          I'm questioning whether previous
          affairs was it VR or real?

                         NINA
          You wanted to cheat on your wife,
          that's what your desire was.. I
          went through hell when my husband
          cheated on me with this little
          bitch down the road, and you are
          all like feeling rubbish... take
          responsibility for yourself.

                         RICHARD
          I thought that I would feel
          better by sharing it with you,
          proven not...

                         JIM
          Have you actually cheated on your
          wife?

                         RICHARD
          I didn't think I had, I don't
          know whether I have. I think if I
          had talked to my wife as much as
          I have talked to you guys
          probably we would still be
          together.

                         NINA
          Are you really cross with me?
          Richard.. I'm sorry.

                              RICHARD
                    I know I've been argumentative
                    today, I just didn't have a
                    release and that's a kind of
                    release so I apologise.

10   TESSA INTERVIEW

                              TESSA
                    I got obsessed about the
                    professional thing, not so much
                    about losing my friend, but not
                    having helped her professionally.
                    And it's possibly a displacement
                    and it was during all of that
                    that my colleague suggested VR
                    films, because I was really
                    questioning myself. I don't think
                    I would have done VR films
                    otherwise. So, a peak at my
                    career that I thought was real,
                    it actually never happened. I
                    found the Memory Palaces VR card
                    about a year ago, behind my desk.

11   JEANETTE INTERVIEW

                              JEANETTE
                    I suppose it was weird being in
                    the film, being subject than just
                    researcher. I have two hats,
                    filmmaker and subject and the
                    process is the same. Need to see
                    footage of myself as the subject
                    and treat it as footage from any
                    other subject.

12   INTERVIEWS

13   JEANETTE'S OFFICE 3

                              GEORGE
                    Jim, my god. It's amazing now to
                    meet people that actually have
                    got it.

                              JEANETTE
                    Yes, Jim is a perfect example.

                              GEORGE
                    That's one extreme end of it. My
                    friend Dan I guess is the
                    flipside of that. There are few
                              (MORE)

                                                        (CONTINUED)

                    GEORGE (cont'd)
          people I know that are focused on
          the beneficial side of
          technology, looking ways on how
          it can be used for community
          based stuff and projects for
          those that are house-bound,
          disabled or agoraphobics so it
          might worth interviewing them,
          too.

                    (BEAT)

                    JEANETTE
          Yes, could look into that.

                    (BEAT)

                    JEANETTE
          I tried calling Memofilm
          yesterday. I tried to speak to
          the Managing Director and
          Marketing Manager but surprise
          surprise...They don't want to
          make any statements regarding
          mnemophrenia. It was almost like
          they had their answer rehearsed.
          It makes me feel even more that
          they are hiding something.

                    GEORGE
          We can say that Memofilm didn't
          want to comment anything.

                    JEANETTE
          Sometimes this can be more
          powerful.

                    GEORGE
          In a sense it's good... stupidly
          for them it's leaving the
          audience's imagination open.
          Although to be fair noone has
          actually given us any statistics
          or evidence that pinpoints the
          link between VR and mnemophrenia.

                    JEANETTE
          That's why our research is so
          ground breaking.

                    (BEAT)

JEANETTE looks into her notes.

                                            (CONTINUED)

                    JEANETTE
          Do you think we could hack into
          my Memory Palaces VR films to
          watch them again?

GEORGE looks a bit surprised.

                    GEORGE
          It's about 15 years old, right?
          When I was working for them, I
          found out that there are
          loopholes for older batches... I
          will check... it might take few
          days. What do you want it for?

                    JEANETTE
          I think it could be a good idea
          to watch the films again and
          potentially use them in the film.

14   VR FILM - HOUSEBOAT 1

                    JEANETTE
          Wow, this is it! It's really
          sweet. It looks like a museum.

                    DOUGLAS
          My friend is well off and this is
          one of his toys.

                    JEANETTE
          I can't believe you live in an
          antique.

DOUGLAS shows JEANETTE around. A bit later...

                    DOUGLAS
          Are you looking forward to
          starting at uni?

                    JEANETTE
          Yes, really looking forward.

                    DOUGLAS
          Sociology, so, you like watching
          people, I'm the opposite, the
          less people the better. I
          definitely want to do something
          with coastal conservation. But I
          decided to travel around the
          world first... What about
          you? If you could do anything
          you wanted this summer? What
          would you do?

                                           (CONTINUED)

                              JEANETTE
                    Travel somewhere amazing, maybe
                    at a warzone in South America, do
                    something important.

                              DOUGLAS
                    That's great! What else do you do
                    other than watching people?

                              JEANETTE
                    Going to the cinema with friends,
                    we have like a film club, watch
                    old films not only 3D or VR, even
                    silent films. You can still get
                    so much from these films.

                              DOUGLAS
                    I'm a true believer that less is
                    more.

15   GROUP THERAPY 2

                              TESSA
                    Jeanette, have you managed to do
                    your task?

                              JEANETTE
                    Yes, I've made a sort of chart
                    from when I met Douglas until the
                    present day. I feel like all my
                    life choices have been taken away
                    because going back to the
                    beginning, I felt supported with
                    my parents problems because of
                    him, I had a phobia that I
                    believe he was a big part of
                    overcoming, I was courageous and
                    spontaneous at university because
                    of meeting him, I was attracted
                    to older men because of him and
                    all those things then led on at
                    the MA I chose the person I
                    married, the relationship I had
                    with Robert, the fact that I
                    brought a baby into the world
                    with somebody who I am not in
                    love with, the fact that I'm now
                    divorced. I feel angry not
                    knowing how life would have been.

                              TESSA
                    What would it mean to let him go
                    now?

                    JEANETTE
That's the logical thing to do
but...

                    TESSA
What we have done in the sessions
until now and thought about is
does it always have to be
negative if something is false if
it led us to a good place?

                    JEANETTE
I feel angry with the fact that
knowing him affected what
happened in my marriage. I always
compared my husband to him
unfavourably and when I found out
he wasn't real, the shock of that
made me think I don't want this
marriage anymore.

                    TESSA
Isn't there a chance that you
would get a divorce anyway?

                    JEANETTE
Yes, maybe I would come to the
conclusion.

                    JIM
Did you question your feelings
towards your husband in the past?

                    JEANETTE
Yes, I probably confused respect
and admiration with love and
passion.

                    JIM
So, it was still your choice, you
didn't have a choice taken away
from you. You are blaming
something else for the choices
you have made yourself.

                    TESSA
How does it feel that you
ultimately need to take
responsibility for your own
choices?

                    JEANETTE
I don't agree wholly, because
certain experiences change the
ways you think.

                              JIM
                    How come he was so important then
                    and you didn't even mind what
                    happened to him?

                              JEANETTE
                    He was free and independent and I
                    was bit scared of that freedom.

                              JIM
                    So you forgot about him?

                              JEANETTE
                    Clearly I didn't forget about
                    him.

                              JIM
                    If he was such an influence to
                    your life, how come you never
                    tried to reach him?

                              JEANETTE
                    I think that deep down I felt
                    that it couldn't have worked, I
                    was 18, quite reserved from
                    reserved family, an element of
                    him scared me. Even if I tried to
                    contact him I wouldn't be able to
                    find him.

                              JIM
                    It doesn't make sense to me,
                    that's all I'm saying.

                              JEANETTE
                    Someone going to Hampstead Heath
                    trying to dig up non existing
                    money doesn't make sense to me,
                    okay?

                              TESSA
                    We shouldn't judge each other,
                    try to include Jeanette and
                    forget about the documentary. In
                    some cases the cut off needs to
                    be stronger if it is about
                    something very strong. How about
                    you Nina, how do you feel?

                              NINA
                    My mum is freaking out and she
                    started making me freak out. It's
                    not just watching the film. I was
                    watching 4, 5 a week at a point
                    and that's why I think James is
                    so embedded in my psyche... maybe
                    you know. I don't need the films
                              (MORE)

                              NINA (cont'd)
          anymore, he is just there, and my
          daughter met him, my family met
          him, my friends... they just
          don't know about it. But that's a
          bit fucked up, isn't it?

                              TESSA
          That's why you are coming to
          these sessions.

                              NINA
          I'm here for my daughter, I don't
          want my daughter to have a mother
          that appears to be mad. Although
          I don't think I'm mad. What
          scares me Tessa is that I was in
          a mess before James and he was
          what sorted me out, but before I
          got him I was doing all sorts to
          be honest and I'm terrified to
          going back to that place. I'm
          constantly trying to be a good
          mother and show I'm a solid
          grounded person but I'm not
          really.

                              TESSA
          At some point you will need to
          face the loss of James, if you
          don't deal with it it will come
          out in other ways.

                              NINA
          You are right.

                              TESSA
          Jim, what about you?

                              JIM
          To be honest I'm still sceptical
          about mnemophrenia thing, I think
          it might be bullshit. I actually
          think I might have done something
          in reality, something might have
          happened. People are following
          me...

                              TESSA
          My question really Jim is if you
          don't believe you have
          mnemophrenia, why are you here?

                              JIM
          Because I made a promise to my
          wife to come here. And she and my
          kid aren't going to come back to
                         (MORE)

                                                   (CONTINUED)

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                         JIM (cont'd)
me unless I attend these meetings
and if there is something wrong
with me and if this mnemophrenia
does exist need to fix whatever
is wrong. I'm in a state of
anxiety all the time. I can't
sleep, I can't concentrate on
anything at all, I feel I'm
being followed, watched.

                         RICHARD
Did you try to call the police?

                         JIM
If I tell the police that I'm
being followed, I've got no real
proof. And on Wednesday I went
for a walk and there was a white
van that was similar to the one
used in the experience that was
following me.

                         JEANETTE
If they are following you and you
don't have the money or you are
not going to rob a bank, then it
doesn't matter.

                         NINA
But he doesn't know if he has
robbed a bank or not.

                         TESSA
                    (to JIM)
Why do you think you started the
VR films in the first place?

                         JIM
I was bored, I wanted a sort of
exhilaration you know. My life
was great, beautiful wife, lovely
kid a job that I love, I actually
love teaching. There was probably
a bit of me that wants to push it
a little bit further how much
more I can get out of my life. Be
in a place like a bank and claim
and say this is mine. Fuck all
the rules! I want this!

                         RICHARD
I completely identify with what
you are saying about experiencing
the danger. That's why I think
for me, I experienced the
cheating on my wife and then I
                    (MORE)

                                              (CONTINUED)

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                    RICHARD (cont'd)
wanted to do it in real life as
well. But if it's not just a VR
experience then you are risking
everything.

                    TESSA
So to get this straight you had
the experience and then you
actually cheated on your wife?

                    RICHARD
That's the way I think it
happened. I feel guilty about the
real ones.

                    JIM
Real ones?

                    TESSA
So, you experienced guilt?

                    RICHARD
I experienced guilt for the ones
I believed were the real cheating
but not the virtual.

JIM is laughing.

                    RICHARD (cont'd)
I don't blame you for laughing.

16   VR FILM - HOUSEBOAT 2

                    DOUGLAS
You look distracted.

                    JEANETTE
It sounds really stupid. It's
getting dark... I'm actually
scared of the dark.

                    DOUGLAS
Did something happen?

                    JEANETTE
When I was around 10, I was
returning back from school, it
was already dark, and someone was
following me. I got really
scared. I was fine, nothing
happened in the end but I started
crying when I was home, since
then I'm really scared of dark.

                              DOUGLAS
          I understand... I was almost
          drown when I was young at the
          small river at the back of my
          house. I never told anyone, and
          when my mum asked why I looked
          like that soaked and full of mud
          didn't tell her the truth. After
          that I was enthralled by water,
          I'm thinking the reason why I
          didn't tell them is I thought
          that they could discourage me
          from being around it.

                              JEANETTE
          Do you see your parents?

                              DOUGLAS
          I don't really have relationship
          with my dad, don't really speak
          to him.

                              JEANETTE
          I have similar thing with my dad.
          My dad had an affair about a year
          ago. My mum talked to the woman
          and found out that my dad was
          planning to go to Australia with
          her. He just wanted to be away
          from us.

                              DOUGLAS
          That's really bad.

                              JEANETTE
          They went to couple therapy and
          everything seems like it was
          before, but it has definitely
          changed how me and my brother
          feel about him.

                              DOUGLAS
          I understand...

                              JEANETTE
          Although he is with us now I feel
          that there must be times that mum
          is thinking if he stayed out of
          duty. I wonder if my dad really
          misses her... that woman... I
          think he was really in love with
          her. I kind of feel sorry for
          him...

                              DOUGLAS
          My mum married my dad when she
          was 17, she only knew him. I
                              (MORE)

                    DOUGLAS (cont'd)
          can't imagine what brought them
          together. You can see she is
          dying inside and she deserves so
          much more. I think my dad it's
          with my mum out of obligation, no
          passion, I'm determined not to
          live my life like that.

                    JEANETTE
          I feel like I can trust you.

                    DOUGLAS
          You know I'm going away next
          week. I'm gonna miss you. I
          really enjoy spending time with
          you. I think you are the first
          actual friend I made since I came
          here.

                    JEANETTE
          I feel the same way, I've got my
          friends but it feels like an
          escape when I come to see you.

JEANETTE starts crying, they hug.

                    JEANETTE
          Haven't told anyone about you.

                    DOUGLAS
          Any reason? You want it just for
          you?

                    JEANETTE
          It's like a secret. (smiling)

17   JEANETTE INTERVIEW

                    JEANETTE
          This documentary won't be huge
          surprise for my ex-husband,
          haven't really kept anything from
          him. But it will probably be hard
          for my parents, since a lot came
          from a time when I was having
          problems with them and them
          splitting up and I never really
          spoken to them about it and
          especially to my dad, how I
          felt... he kinda knew but nothing
          was discussed, nothing was ever
          mentioned. That would be weird,
          maybe it will open a new channel
          of communication and if not,
          knowing them it will just be
          ignored.

18   JEANETTE'S OFFICE 4

                    JEANETTE
          I watched the films that you
          unlocked for me.

                    GEORGE
          How did you find it?

                    JEANETTE
          Feeling weird watching them
          again, it only feels like
          yesterday, in some ways it was so
          so nice, but on the other hand
          bittersweet because I knew what I
          was experiencing wasn't real.

                    GEORGE
          You'ld be happy to show that to
          the audience?

                    JEANETTE
          Some of it yeah, not everything.

                    GEORGE
          Do you think you can be objective
          about which bits to show?

                    JEANETTE
          I don't really know, I'm in bit
          of a daze with it all. I miss him
          a lot. I think I would prefer if
          he was real and he died, I know
          it sounds awful... I know how
          Nina feels, I know that he isn't
          real, but sometimes I catch
          myself wondering what he is up to
          now.

                    GEORGE
          Nina's story is really affecting
          me. Any nagging little doubts or
          scepticism about mnemophrenia is
          kind of been blown away by
          meeting these people.

                    JEANETTE
          That's good. No offence to you,
          but you are the only one I was
          discussing it with and you don't
          really know what is like. I feel
          some relief to talk to them.

                    GEORGE
          That's optimistic. Some kind of
          resolution, eventually.

                                        (CONTINUED)

                         JEANETTE
              Yes, maybe... eventually.

                         GEORGE
              If you feel that you need time to
              go through your own process, for
              your own stuff and then come back
              to documentary... just tell me.

                         JEANETTE
              I think going through the process
              in the documentary is good. We
              want to show the reality of it.

19   VR FILM - HOUSEBOAT 3

                         JEANETTE
              Do you see yourself travelling
              for ever?

                         DOUGLAS
              I see myself settling once I find
              what I'm looking for - when I
              find it, I'll stay. What are you
              looking for?

                         JEANETTE
              I definitely want someone
              adventurous that likes to do many
              different things.

                         DOUGLAS
              Something came up, I was invited
              to observe a nature reserve in
              Australia and I would need to
              leave right after Cornwall. I
              can't turn it down, it will give
              me a lot of stuff for my thesis.

              (Beat)

                         DOUGLAS (cont'd)
              Meeting you was the best accident
              that has happened to me. I don't
              want to go.

                         JEANETTE
              I don't want you to stay and
              resent me for staying.

                         DOUGLAS
              Would you ever consider coming
              with me?

                        JEANETTE
            I... I can't...

                        DOUGLAS
            I'm just a guy you met and asking
            you to trip around the world, you
            got your whole life.

                        JEANETTE
            I feel jealous of you, I wish I
            could go travel everywhere but I
            have to go to uni.

                        DOUGLAS
            Will you at least come to
            Cornwall with me?

                        JEANETTE
            I'll think about it...

                        DOUGLAS
            I'll be there about 2 weeks. If
            you come I'll be on Porth island
            every day.

20   GROUP THERAPY 3

                        TESSA
            Jim, to come back to you. Did you
            have a conventional upbringing?

                        JIM
            Yes, more or less. But I really
            wanted to be an actor but never
            really happened to me. I tried
            few drama schools, I didn't get
            in. Well the truth is that my
            parents never wanted me to be an
            actor. Maybe there is something
            inside of me that it's been
            repressed.

                        TESSA
            Do you feel that you put that
            ambition to a side?

                        JIM
            As an actor I could rob banks...
            of course it's not as real or the
            same as with VR films. There is
            nothing more exciting than going
            back into work the next day and
            knowing what you've done.

                         TESSA
              What about you Nina, you were
              saying that you were using drugs
              quite heavily why did you need
              them?

                         NINA
              I don't think you wake up one day
              and you want to do drugs, it's
              all your friends are doing them
              and just want to have a good
              time. Just going to really good,
              exciting parties. I guess it was
              rebellion.

                         TESSA
              Do you like yourself as a person
              on drugs or not?

                         NINA
              On drugs because they make me
              feel very free and happy and I
              can be friends with everyone and
              be very calm because I'm quite
              nervous, always worried about
              what people thought of me.

                         TESSA
              Is there any recognition going
              from that into having James?

                         NINA
              Yes, completely. Because he makes
              me feel safe, wonderful and
              loved.

                         TESSA
                   (to RICHARD)
              Richard, why do you think you get
              your first VR film?

                         RICHARD
              Some women may not think I was as
              masculine as I could be, maybe it
              was partly control.

                         TESSA
              To control the way other people
              see you?

                         RICHARD
              Maybe control isn't the right
              word. Maybe some women, including
              my wife, might question my
              manhood in general. In VR films I
              could have an experience with
              someone that does like me for who
              I am maybe in different areas.

                         TESSA
               When you say question your
               manhood that's something you had
               a conversation about it or you
               have a feeling about it?

                         RICHARD
               There is something I feel. We
               haven't discussed it. It sounds
               stupid but even.. collecting the
               bins it's not that great. But I
               don't aspire to become much more
               than the guy that collects the
               bins everyday...

                         TESSA
                    (to JEANETTE)
               How do you feel about Douglas?

                         JEANETTE
               I watched the VR films back.

Everyone seems quite surprised with this.

                         TESSA
               I didn't know you could do that.

                         JEANETTE
               There are ways.. I thought it
               would be useful for the
               documentary.

                         TESSA
               How did you feel?

                         JEANETTE
               On one hand I think it's good I
               did it, but emotionally it's like
               I'm straight back there, still
               feels as real as ever. I just
               want to be with him and keep on
               having these experiences and then
               I remember it's not real and it
               makes me feel like there is no
               point to anything...

                         TESSA
               I'm concerned if it takes you
               backward. My worry is like you
               are starting again.

                         JEANETTE
               It's the first nice thing I've
               done for years, like total escape
               from everything.

21   TESSA INTERVIEW

                        TESSA
                I have read different things
                about mnemophrenia. By triggering
                something that you really want
                and desire, it triggers that and
                then it starts to develop.
                Usually you make choices in order
                to achieve a desire, this is like
                a fast track, it cuts out our
                normal emotional responses to
                choose something and we leap over
                it.

22   JEANETTE INTERVIEW

                        JEANETTE
                I don't generally feel positive
                about mnemophrenia. Any
                condition, whether organic or
                not, that affects your perception
                of truth, it's not good.

23   TESSA INTERVIEW

                        TESSA
                Interestingly with the support
                group I have realized that I'm
                glad that I have a false memory
                because it made me more confident
                and I don't see why I should let
                that go, it doesn't hurt anyone
                and if it gives me confidence...
                I see it as positive for me. One
                thought is about my clients and
                losing trust in my work, knowing
                that I'm mnemophrenic, they might
                not think that I'm capable.
                Although I'm 100% sure that I am.

24   VR FILM - CORNWALL 1

        JEANETTE is at the beach waving at DOUGLAS who just
        finished surfing and is coming out of the water.

        DOUGLAS is running towards JEANETTE.

                        DOUGLAS
                I hoped but didn't expect you to
                come.

        They hug.

                    JEANETTE
          I just suddenly thought, what's
          stopping me?

                    DOUGLAS
          I'm glad our goodbye wasn't at a
          station.

                    JEANETTE
          I don't want us to talk saying
          goodbye or anything, just have
          nice time.

                    DOUGLAS
          How about we never say goodbye?

                    JEANETTE
          What do you mean?

                    DOUGLAS
          We just don't say it.

                    JEANETTE
          Ok, yeah.

DOUGLAS is showing JEANETTE around, dragon cave, etc.

A bit later...sitting at the beach or at a cliff
overlooking the sea.

                    JEANETTE (cont'd)
          You are so lucky that you are so
          adventurous and confident.

                    DOUGLAS
          I don't have anything you don't
          have. I just have the will,
          that's it and you can have it.
          You don't need to do something
          extreme. Go out and get what you
          want, you deserve it. Don't let
          anybody tell you otherwise.
              (BEAT)

                    DOUGLAS
          Don't take life so seriously.

                    JEANETTE
          It's hard sometimes though.

                    DOUGLAS
          It's all a big illusion.

25   JEANETTE'S OFFICE 5

              GEORGE comes into the office and sees the Memory Palaces
              VR cases of Douglas on JEANETTE's desk.

                              GEORGE
                    Are you watching them again?

                              JEANETTE
                    I watched couple of them to get
                    some details. I wanted to decide
                    which bits to include in the
                    documentary.

                              GEORGE
                    You should be careful with this.

                              JEANETTE
                    I know what I'm doing.

                              GEORGE
                    All the group was wary.

                              JEANETTE
                    (smiling) They were just jealous.
                    They want to rewatch theirs.

                              GEORGE
                    You've seen Grace?

                              JEANETTE
                    Yes, saw her briefly, just for
                    few hours, she was cranky. She is
                    more used to her dad.

                              GEORGE
                    It's good to see that Nina is
                    getting better.

                              JEANETTE
                    Yes...

                              GEORGE
                    It's good for her daughter
                    although it must be difficult for
                    her.

                              JEANETTE
                    The daughter won't understand,
                    she is too young.

                              GEORGE
                    Will you continue therapy after
                    the documentary?

                                              (CONTINUED)

>   JEANETTE
>   I don't know... Don't want to end
>   up as fucked up as the people in
>   that group.
>
>   GEORGE
>   I see...
>
>   JEANETTE
>   Do you think that even if it's 15
>   years ago that you can buy the
>   same story? Like a continuation
>   of the same story? Maybe it could
>   help me... It might help
>   continuing it now that I know
>   it's not real, to really get over
>   it.
>
>   GEORGE
>   That doesn't seem the best way
>   getting over it. What if you go
>   down Nina's route?
>
>   JEANETTE
>   I won't, it's not real. By the
>   way, you seem very interested in
>   how Nina is getting through it.
>
>   GEORGE
>   What?

JEANETTE laughing sarcastically

>   JEANETTE
>   I wouldn't go there...
>   honestly... (smiling)
>
>   GEORGE
>   Go where?
>
>   JEANETTE
>   You know what...
>
>   GEORGE
>   She is attractive fine...
>
>   JEANETTE
>   In all seriousness from an
>   ethical point of you, while we
>   are still making the film you
>   can't go out with her. When we
>   are done you can ask her to go
>   out.
>
>   GEORGE
>   Fine, that's not even an issue...
>   What I was saying is that Nina
>   (MORE)

                              GEORGE (cont'd)
                    started making things up by
                    watching the VR much to much. And
                    you as a documentary filmmaker
                    not being able to distinguish
                    real and fake, you are
                    jeopardizing your career.

                              JEANETTE
                    What's got to do with you anyway?

                              GEORGE
                    Because I like working with you.
                    Your career affects my career.

                              JEANETTE
                    Don't worry. I won't let it
                    affect my professional life.

26   GROUP THERAPY 4

                              TESSA
                         (to RICHARD)
                    Is the counselling that you are
                    doing with your wife helping?

                              RICHARD
                    I'm thinking that maybe we don't
                    match, she wants children more
                    than I knew about it. We haven't
                    really talked as much as we
                    should have done.

                              TESSA
                    How do you see the future of you
                    as a couple?

                              RICHARD
                    I'm thinking that maybe Memofilm
                    made me feel like the grass is
                    greener and that I could behave
                    like 17, I don't feel ready,
                    although I don't feel like the
                    young gun.

                              TESSA
                    Do you still have affairs?

                              RICHARD
                    I still look for experiences
                    through Memofilm. It's not
                    looking good...

                              TESSA
                    Are you anticipating that will
                    end badly, would that be fair to
                    say?

                    RICHARD
          Yeah.

                    JIM
          Well, to be honest with you, it
          will end badly if you have
          decided that will end badly. Is
          that simple.

                    TESSA
          How are you today Jim?

                    JIM
          I was looking forward to come
          here today. I start to believe
          that I'm making some progress,
          and my wife is considering coming
          back. We are meeting in a bit so
          I'll need to go soon.

                    TESSA
          That's great news!

                    NINA
          Fantastic!

                    JIM
          I've gotta thank my wife because
          I didn't want to come here and I
          came because of her. But I feel
          like I'm making progress. I start
          to think that I'm paranoid and
          that the following isn't real.
          But the thing that really
          frightens me is that this feeling
          isn't going to go away...

                    TESSA
          How did it feel to come to this
          realisation?

                    JIM
          It's like facing your fear but
          not conquering it. Whatever
          Memofilm has done to me maybe
          something fired in my cortex,
          rewired it in a way, that the
          experience doesn't leave me, like
          a dream. You know... I was very
          sceptical about mnemophrenia
          being a condition, I didn't
          believe in it. I think my
          position has changed.

                    TESSA
          That's a big step, because you
          can start doing something with
          it.

                                        (CONTINUED)

                              JIM
                    I have done a lot of work during
                    these last few weeks and had
                    benefits from it. If I seemed a
                    little bit chippy or antagonistic
                    at all it's simply because is
                    very hard for me to do that. I
                    did come from an environment
                    where you didn't show your
                    emotions and one thing that drama
                    gave me was the ability to stand
                    in front of other people and
                    express emotions without feeling
                    like a tit.

                              TESSA
                    So, maybe you had the experiences
                    in order to replace something
                    that you had for a while but then
                    it was repressed.

                              JIM
                    It's possible. I think Memofilm
                    gave me an opportunity maybe to
                    be an actor in my own film.

                              TESSA
                    Any suppressed strong desire will
                    come out one way or another. So,
                    if you find a way to release
                    that, whether join a local group
                    or college or acting classes.

                              JIM
                    Maybe I should tell my wife about
                    my past.

                              TESSA
                    Well, this film, your wife after
                    she has seen it she will have a
                    better understanding, where you
                    are and your relationship to us.

                              JIM
                    Yes... I've never really thought
                    about that.

                              TESSA
                         (to NINA)
                    Did you manage to go cold turkey?

                              JIM
                    Ok I really need to go now.

JIM gets up to leave.

                                                        (CONTINUED)

                    TESSA
          Ok, good luck.

                    OTHERS
          Good luck!

                    JIM
          Thanks!

JIM leaves. TESSA turns back to NINA.

                    NINA
          I did, yes. And I'm feeling very
          good about it. My mum gave me my
          daughter back and I sort of see a
          way out. I mean not doing the VR,
          like when I stopped smoking.

                    TESSA
          How do you feel?

                    NINA
          It's hard because it makes me
          feel single, I was always a
          serial monogamist. But I should
          give some time to my daughter, I
          should be braver.

                    TESSA
          You have decided that the
          memories are fake and that you
          are ok?

                    NINA
          Yes, I'm trying not to think
          about it much... need to be in
          the moment...

                    TESSA
          How is your relationship now with
          your daughter? Different?

                    NINA
          It was great, it was a normal
          week. That's what I want, not
          wild experiences. I don't need to
          travel around the world with
          strange men that don't even
          exist.

                    TESSA
          Jeanette do you feel you made any
          progress?

                    JEANETTE
          I've been thinking a lot lately,
          I realize more and more how much
                    (MORE)

                                          (CONTINUED)

                         JEANETTE (cont'd)
                    I denied myself through the years
                    the life I should have lived.

                         TESSA
                    Is it about Douglas or the whole
                    experience?

                         JEANETTE
                    I suppose it's Douglas and the
                    things he represents and the
                    ideals he holds for me, parts of
                    my personality are encompassed in
                    that person.

JEANETTE shows that she is angry.

                         TESSA
                    Who are you angry with?

                         JEANETTE
                    I'm angry with Memofilm, they
                    gave him to me and ripped him and
                    left me the condition.

                         TESSA
                    What is the impact on your
                    daughter?

                         JEANETTE
                    To be honest since I split up
                    with Robert, she is spending most
                    time with him, the plan was to
                    split it half and half, but I'm
                    so invested in this film and had
                    so many things to do.

                         TESSA
                    Do you feel like you have a good
                    relationship with her?

                         JEANETTE
                    She is only 18 months.

                         TESSA
                    How do you relate to her?

                         JEANETTE
                    Obviously I really love her and
                    care for her but if I'm really
                    honest I don't feel like I can
                    deal with her now. I put her in a
                    deal with it later box and I'm
                    lucky that I do have Robert who
                    was willing to take so much
                    responsibility.

                    TESSA
          Do you associate anything with
          Douglas and her?

                    JEANETTE
          No, but if I put them in the same
          sentence, if Douglas had never
          been taken away from me and if he
          was real, then Grace would never
          have been born.

                    TESSA
          How would that make you feel?

                    JEANETTE
          It hurts me to think that she
          wouldn't exist.

                    TESSA
          If you had to make a choice
          Douglas or your daughter.

                    (BEAT)

                    JEANETTE
          Obviously I would have to choose
          my daughter I guess.

27   VR FILM - CORNWALL 2

                    JEANETTE
          How do you see your life in the
          future?

                    DOUGLAS
          I like to see myself with a
          purpose, doing some good and
          sharing my life with someone.
          This is life right now. This is
          your life. Live the moment, it
          works for me. How about you?

                    JEANETTE
          I always used to think, going to
          uni, move back to Surrey, marry
          someone from school or uni.

                    DOUGLAS
          That sounds bit like a formula.

                    JEANETTE
          Yes, I know, I don't like it
          anymore...

                    DOUGLAS
          If a fairy came to you...

                    JEANETTE
          You are like ready to start to
          fight... (laughing)

                    DOUGLAS
          Yes, come here... No, she is not
          a gangster fairy godmother... she
          is a more no-nonsense... yes, she
          is from New York... (laughing) If
          she could give you the life you
          want?

                    JEANETTE
          I don't know. Part of me says to
          go for the side that I know it's
          safe and the other half says that
          I want to live camping for ever.

                    DOUGLAS
          Close your eyes.

                    (BEAT)

                    DOUGLAS
          I want you to think of the word
          happiness and let images come to
          your head. What do you see?

                    JEANETTE
          Sunny sky... bees...

                    DOUGLAS
          Put yourself in. What are you
          doing?

                    JEANETTE
          Running across a field, it's full
          of some yellow flowers.

JEANETTE opens her eyes.

                    DOUGLAS
          It sounds to me like happiness to
          you is being free.

                    JEANETTE
          Yes, I suppose so.

                    DOUGLAS
          So, when you reach that next part
          of your life don't let anyone
          pull you in a direction that you
          don't want. You've got the chance
          to be whoever you want to be now,
                    (MORE)

                                        (CONTINUED)

                              DOUGLAS (cont'd)
                    that's the beauty of it, you have
                    a fresh start.

                              JEANETTE
                    I feel closer to you than to
                    anyone.

                              DOUGLAS
                    I feel the same. Will you keep in
                    touch even once in a blue moon?

                              JEANETTE
                    I want to...but I don't know if
                    I'll be more sad... I'm afraid to
                    keep contact, missing you and
                    have you not come back.

                              DOUGLAS
                    There is a part of me hoping that
                    if I show up again there will be
                    a place for me in your life.

28   GROUP THERAPY 5

                              TESSA
                    Jim won't be joining us today. He
                    told me that he is going on a
                    small trip with his wife and kid.

                              NINA
                    Great!

                              RICHARD
                    Good for him!

                              JEANETTE
                    Very good news.

                              TESSA
                    Nina, did you manage to think
                    what progress you have made until
                    now?

                              NINA
                    I definitely have done progress,
                    in the beginning I was really in
                    a mess, it's a grieving process,
                    Jeanette I feel for you. I think
                    I have gone through the worst
                    part, and have been through it
                    with rehab in the past and try to
                    learn from it. Like not get
                    attached to other things, not
                    needing other things and people.

                                                      (CONTINUED)

                    TESSA
          If we say that mnemophrenia is a
          condition and there won't be a
          cure?

                    NINA
          I think the more you fight it it
          gets worse, you need to go with
          it. At least we know that other
          people have it.

                    TESSA
          How do you feel emotionally?

                    NINA
          Quite tearful, when I don't do
          stuff. I do cry most times, but
          it's better than losing my shit.

                    TESSA
          Will you keep watching Memory
          Palaces VR films?

                    NINA
          No, the only chance for me
          dealing with the condition is to
          stop watching VR films. All or
          nothing.

                    TESSA
          How about you Richard?

                    RICHARD
          I'm tempted for the quick fix,
          since you can dictate what
          feeling you want. You programme
          it for a positive experience, no
          confusion.

                    TESSA
          So it's about control?

                    RICHARD
          I suppose...no negativity on it.

                    TESSA
          Can you be more specific about
          what you mean negativity?

                    RICHARD
          We all know the situation with my
          wife, it has gone worse, the VR
          films were a release and a
          distraction. Not wanting to think
          too deeply. With VR films you
          just live that moment.

                                              (CONTINUED)

                  TESSA
So you would you go back to
Memory Palaces?

                  RICHARD
I think so... It's interesting
what you said Tessa to see the
films as gifts from Memofilm, and
put your life in direction that
wouldn't have gone in. That's how
I feel, I feel like I have wasted
my life doing wrong things with
the wrong people and life is too
short. Although Memofilm doesn't
recognize what they are doing, it
can have positive effects down
the line. I decided... I won't be
doing the dustbins anymore, I
want to explore different
options... maybe charity work.

                  TESSA
That's very good...

                  NINA
I was thinking of simplifying my
life as well and moving somewhere
else, move away from triggers of
things.

                  TESSA
If you move to a new place, will
it be just you and your daughter?

                  NINA
Yes, and my mum is very
interfering, just need to move
away and do my own thing.

                  TESSA
What about you Jeanette?

                  JEANETTE
At the moment I wouldn't be
completely against watching them
again and specifically continuing
the story where I left off.

                  NINA
Maybe I should get a film where I
dump James, put an end to it?

                  TESSA
               (to JEANETTE)
You are saying that you might
pick up from where you left off,
what do you feel that would
achieve?

                             (CONTINUED)

                         JEANETTE
          I guess the last year or so
          everything has been so crap in my
          life that that memory is the only
          nice thing, is my only holiday
          from crap.

                         TESSA
          What worries me is the idea that
          if Douglas will be so difficult
          to let go what happens to the
          relationship with your daughter
          because you put her in a separate
          do later box.

                         JEANETTE
          I really don't think there is a
          problem with my daughter, that is
          no why I come here to talk about
          her...

                         TESSA
          How would you like to live?

                         JEANETTE
          I would like to have the exciting
          life that I always wanted to
          have. Maybe travel, do some of
          the things I would do with
          Douglas.

29   JEANETTE'S OFFICE 6

                         JEANETTE
          We need to be careful how we
          present my condition... I'm just
          concerned that I'm being lumped
          in with people that have a
          lifelong problem anyway - need to
          make sure the way we edit it that
          I segregate myself slightly from
          the rest of the story.

                         GEORGE
          What do you mean?

                         JEANETTE
          Obviously I'm saying I'm
          mnemophrenic but I don't really
          want to be lumped in with a
          person who has bought guard dogs
          and sees things... and someone
          that sees things and another
          serial adulterer... We need to be
          sensible with editing... I'm not
          like them.

                                              (CONTINUED)

                              GEORGE
                    Do you regret that you are the
                    main subject?

                              JEANETTE
                    I don't regret it.

                              GEORGE
                    Are you embarrassed by it? Any
                    condition is extreme compared to
                    normality, otherwise you wouldn't
                    turn up every week to talk to
                    someone.

                              JEANETTE
                    When I turn up every week is
                    because you suggested I'm in the
                    film, if I wasn't making the film
                    why would I ever want to go to
                    that group?

                              GEORGE
                    I know you are under pressure.

                              JEANETTE
                    The fact that they are all
                    sitting there and say 'oh yeah,
                    we accepted it and we are happy,
                    even we wouldn't change things...
                    that is fake, I just don't
                    believe that they are, they are
                    lying.

                              GEORGE
                    Maybe you should stop revisiting
                    the VR films.

                              JEANETTE
                    I don't keep revisiting, I don't
                    know why everyone has got this
                    idea. At the end of the day you
                    don't have any clue what is like
                    to go through all this and I'm
                    sick and tired of your
                    judgemental attitude quite
                    honestly.

                              GEORGE
                    I've been trying to help you as a
                    friend...

                              JEANETTE
                    Why would I need help? You can
                    sit up there at your pedestal
                    that you've made for
                    yourself and say that 'I'm not
                    mnemophrenic' but you don't
                              (MORE)

                         JEANETTE (cont'd)
               actually know. You never really
               understood how I feel. Although
               you seem to understand how Nina
               feels...

                         GEORGE
               At least I'm interested in a real
               person...

                         (BEAT)

JEANETTE seems really hurt.

                         GEORGE
               I'm sorry. That was uncalled for.

                         JEANETTE
               You're very judgmental. You must
               feel so superior, not being prone
               to this condition. Like your
               brain is so much better.

                         GEORGE
               No you're wrong. I actually feel
               like I'm missing out sometimes.
               I've been saying all along I
               think it could be really
               beneficial if it's used right...
               one day we might be able to
               control it.

                         JEANETTE
               Maybe you truly believe that,
               George. But I'm the one who has
               to live with it.

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                         JEANETTE
               The documentary hasn't gone the
               way I expected, I wanted more
               evidence. The positive is it
               leaves doors open for researchers
               to search possible causes and
               possible predispositions.
               Possibly yes, I'll be making more
               films in the future about
               mnemophrenia. Let's see how the
               audience reacts to this first.