

Narrative and Mediatized Memory in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

Carolyn Jess-Cooke, University of Sunderland, UK

A recent surge of films depicting memory have indicated the increasing prominence of memory narratives in the public sphere. [1] Although memory has occupied film as a major thematic interest since modernity, the cinematic treatment of memory and amnesia has altered significantly throughout the course of the last few years, particularly in terms of memory's operation in media spaces. The focus of this essay is therefore on "mediatized" memory, or the notion of a collective, mediated memory narrative through which the past can be re-experienced, and by which processes of memorialization can be socially organized as visual events. Mediatized memories are filmed, televised, or digitally-rendered reproductions of the past which create a collective mnemonic reality that reproduces the past to the extent that the "real" event is displaced from public memory. Consequently, a mediatized memory re-constructs a past that is "deprived of its substance" (Žižek, 2002: 11). As Slavoj Žižek puts it,

[t]he authentic twentieth-century passion for penetrating the Real Thing (ultimately, the destructive Void) through the cobweb of semblances which constitute our reality thus culminates in the thrill of the Real as the ultimate "effect", sought after from digitalized special effects, through reality TV and amateur photography, up to snuff movies (Žižek, 2002: 12).

Speaking of 9/11 -- the most mediatized tragedy in history -- Žižek identifies confusing similarities between the "real" event of 9/11 and previous Hollywood portraits of disaster, and between its memorials and replays across mass media. In addition, the "cobweb of semblances" surrounding 9/11 indicated increasingly ruptured temporalities inherent in media practices and memory processes. For whereas memorialization normally requires distance from the event, the proximity of 9/11, or its function as both a recently traumatic occurrence and an archived memory, pointed towards a shattered temporality inherent in its attendant memory processes. 9/11's double occupation of "live-ness" -- or live footage which was replayed almost constantly on multiple news stations for weeks afterwards -- and "past-ness" created subjects and spectators who experienced the event without being present, and who were subsequently interpellated by memory practices in its wake. In short, media activities confined 9/11 to memory almost as soon as it transpired.

Set in the geographical and ideological aftermath of 9/11, Michel Gondry's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004) comments upon media's acceleration of memory by showing that the absence of temporal distance, as well as the absence of a symbolic and temporal framework, blurs boundaries between the past and present and risks repetition-compulsion at the level of both individual and collective memory processes. This essay uses *Eternal Sunshine* to examine the impact of mass media upon memory in contemporary popular culture as a "narrativizing" agent, or as a means by which history is rendered accessible as a mediated narrative to be spectated and publicly remembered (see also Grainge, 2003). Others have shown that mediatized memory shatters the boundaries between personal and collective

memory, causing, to some degree, the "prosthetic" effect of memory and, in the case of cinema, mimicking the sensuous affective-ness of memory (Burgoyne, 2003; Landsberg, 2004; Sturken 1997). To this I would add that the present "state" of popular cultural memory is defined by its reproducibility within media spaces. Cultural memory as a signifier of a signified "real" at the current historical juncture was suggested by the fall of and subsequent rush to memorialise the twin towers, which, as Andreas Huyssen has observed, were already a "monument to corporate modernism" (Huyssen, 2003: 159). The memorialization of memory inherent in this global trauma indicated a shift in contemporary memory discourses towards the remembering of memory itself.

This is exactly what happens in *Eternal Sunshine*. Featuring a fictional company called Lacuna Inc. which erases the memories of traumatised customers, the film depicts the subconscious efforts of Joel Barish to preserve his memories of his ex-love, Clementine, during an operation by Lacuna Inc. to erase those memories. Joel's attempt to preserve his memories in the event of losing Clementine is used here to investigate the "double-ness" of mediatized memory, as well as the difficulties of remembering or indeed retrieving -- by media or otherwise -- that which has been lost. What happens in the course of mediatized memory is that a memory of a memory is created. This re-memory involves specific narrative processes with which "spectators" are called upon to interact and fashion personal "memories", which can lead to their displacement and possible erasure. That Joel's post-erasure actions are geared towards a deeply subconscious re-enactment of his lost memories also suggests a remnant of memory which cannot be erased, and must be framed within a narrative structure. My primary attention is therefore directed toward the processes and methods of re-remembering demonstrated in *Eternal Sunshine*, which in turn reflect, to an extent, the media's transmission and reception of memories in popular culture. In terms of its narrative strategies -- which involve devising a "double" film narrative and website to feed into our interpretation of the film as memory consumers -- *Eternal Sunshine* also suggests that media memory practices are complicit with commercialism and with moves towards redefined models of interactivity. The interactive modes showcased in the film offer progressive redefinitions of the relationship between subjective and objective memory, yet there is a suggestion that they can also be regarded as invasive, hegemonic, and violent, hacking into and re-writing the unconscious.

To explore these notions of mediatized memory to greater extent, I begin by examining the notion of narrativization, which can be considered primarily as re-remembering. Michael Schudson outlines narrativization as an important feature of "socially structured patterns of recall" (Schudson, 1997: 347). Whereas memory provides the past with meaning, narrativization describes the process of rewriting memory. Narrativization is charged in Schudson's analysis with the social imperative to transmit ideologically-charged memories to other collectives and generations which "distort" an original memory by offering boiled-down narratives of a subjective past. Here I depart from Schudson's reading to explore factors beyond the ideas of distortion and social transmission inherent in narrativization, and, in particular, to reconsider the latent passivity imposed upon subjects in this reading. The revisionary activities inherent in narrativization seem to suggest the opposite, and transmission is regarded in terms of a constructed interactivity.

Narrativization underlines mediatized memory's construction of a double subjectivity. *Eternal Sunshine* figures memory as filmic, with superimpositions, overlapping voices from the past and present, and an editing process that reflects the invasive technologies of mnemonic erasure. In this kind of memory, the subject is also the spectator, both participating

in memories and gazing upon himself as a "double" entity. The film suggests in addition that the act of re-remembering involves doubling the "original" memory. As a consequence, the "original" or "real" historical event is not doubled, but instead a double rupture is created between history and the act of remembering. As Dominick LaCapra claims, "[t]o the extent an event is traumatic, it creates a gap or hole in experience" (LaCapra, 1998: 20). In its representation of the aftermath of a memory erasure procedure, *Eternal Sunshine* portrays the notion of a "double rupture" that is created by mediatization. As the titling of Lacuna Inc. after the Latin "lacuna" suggests, the film explores the spaces created by mediatized memory, or the "gaps" between the past and the present. Collective memory sites ordinarily serve to "bind" together a collective subjectivity within a socially-constructed narrative of the past. However, *Eternal Sunshine* shows that the "copying technologies" of mass media and subsequent displacement of notions of originality and authenticity create duplicated memories and doubled subjectivities (Luhmann, 2000: 2). Like Joel, the subject of a mediatized memory is forced to hunt after the "real" event and his/her subjectivity, both of which are often only retrievable in the form of memory narratives.

My discussion of narrativization proceeds in part from the notion of narrative memory, which derives from Pierre Janet's statement in 1919 that memory is essentially "the action of telling a story" about the past (Janet, 1919: 273). Developed throughout the twentieth century, narrative memory has figured prominently in trauma studies to refer to the necessity of a narrative structure in dealing with a traumatic past. Bessel A. van der Kolk, and Cathy Caruth et al point to traumatic memories as fragmented and disturbing psychic scenarios over which the individual has no control (van der Kolk & van der Hart 1995; Caruth 1996). Narrative is thus looked to as an ameliorating method of situating traumatic manifestations -- nightmares, repetition-compulsion, and paranoia -- into a framework of meaning so that the patient can begin to make sense of his or her traumatic past (van der Kolk & van der Hart, 1995: 178; Bal 1999). Although trauma confuses temporalities and inserts the individual firmly in past-ness, narrative's temporal structure -- with a distinct beginning, middle, and end -- prescribes trauma with an organized temporality, and enables the individual to separate past from present by understanding the meaning of his or her past in relation to the present.

The relationship between past and present is portrayed in *Eternal Sunshine* according to primary and secondary narratives that are organized within a memory framework. The film's primary narrative, which bookends the film, begins immediately after Joel's memory erasure procedure. The primary narrative shows him unable to account for the ripped-out pages of his diary, nor for those spaces in his life that were previously occupied by Clementine. Joel meets Clementine for the first (remembered) time at Montauk. She asks, ironically, "Do I know you?", and they begin a relationship. At the commencement of the credits, seventeen minutes from the film's beginning, the secondary narrative moves in reverse from the events immediately preceding and during Joel's memory. We learn that Joel decided to erase his memories of Clementine upon discovering that she, too, had erased him "as a lark". As the trajectory of the secondary narrative develops, a causal pattern emerges between Joel's memory "scenes". The secondary narrative may be described as what Gérard Genette called "analeptic", or a narrative which is a "backward continuation (i.e., what came before), meant to work its way upstream, from cause to cause, to a more radical or at least a more satisfactory starting point" (Genette, 1997: 177). By figuring a causal relationship between each of Joel's memories -- such as a group of memories linked by his humiliation, depicting his experiences of peer pressure as a young child, a teenager caught by his mother while masturbating, and his more recent humiliation by Clementine at a flea market -- the film suggests a "starting point" for each of Joel's memories that begins within a previous memory,

or an "original" memory that is revised by each subsequent relational memory. The process of re-remembering, then, is suggested as the continual revision or re-telling of a core memory.

The revisionary logic of the primary and secondary narratives is suggested by Joel's reprisal of his relationship with Clementine immediately after their erasure operations. As Freud implies in his discussion of *nachträglichkeit* ("afterwardsness"), the revision of memories as the subject matures is necessary "to fit in with fresh experiences or with the attainment of a new stage of development" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988: 112). In the absence of these memories -- and, additionally, the symbolic grammar with which to revise them -- the subconscious repetition of the past seems inevitable. This is evident in *Eternal Sunshine* by the portrait of psychic trauma and its effects. After their respective erasure procedures, Joel and Clementine simultaneously re-visit sites of particular importance to their relationship -- Montauk beach, the frozen Charles River in Boston, and each other's homes -- ostensibly prompted by a psychic impulse that could not be erased; a mnemonic compulsion that urges repetition instead of re-remembering. The return to these "memory spaces" is a subconscious effort to re-create the "gaps" from the remembered past which, although traumatic, are crucial for psychic development and continuity.

These traumatic side-effects notwithstanding, the company that performs the memory erasure procedure, Lacuna Inc., sells memory "gaps" precisely to provide memory continuity without the bad bits of the past. With the emphasis on spectatorship -- showing a patient weeping at footage of a basketball game, for instance, and creating a "cognitive map" of patients' memories before erasing them -- Lacuna represents media's effect on individual memory processes. Whereas this effect has previously been identified in terms of the commodification of media images and narratives of memory, Lacuna commodifies the erasure of psychic memories -- or selective amnesia -- as a necessary social healing procedure (see Landsberg, 2004: 18-21). By involving its own spectatorship in its commodifying discourse, moreover, Lacuna implies cinema's role in fashioning memory narratives as contributing to a cultural "forgetting". This implication occurred before the film hit cinema screens. Stating the "marketing of memory" that is complicit with contemporary memory's collective narrative regimes, *Eternal Sunshine's* advertising campaign involved a trailer "commercial" for Lacuna, featuring Dr. Howard Mierzwiak who addressed cinema audiences as potential Lacuna customers: "Why remember a destructive love affair? Here at Lacuna, we have perfected a safe, effective technique for the focused erasure of troubling memories" (Huyssen, 2003: 3). From the outset, the film pointed towards the idea of a dichotomous spectator/consumer of memory: the spectator who pays to forget.

Accordingly, the film's website (www.lacunainc.com) stages the Lacuna company as a "real" entity with which the film's spectators can engage and -- like the film's characters -- erase unwanted memories. Containing concealed links to various promotional paraphernalia for the film (such as a link to "experience the procedure" which takes the viewer to another browser with links to purchase the DVD), www.lacunainc.com invites the film's spectator to participate in a fictional testimonial network that in turn promises personal happy endings, or closure, as per the dimensions of classical film narrative. We are invited, like Joel, to erase our traumatic memories. The website presents photographs of fictional satisfied Lacuna customers, testimonials, sound-bites ("I got my confidence back!" [Edward from New York]), several polls, an online contact page, a commercial, cut-out coupons, register-for-updates links, and a "friendly postcard" one can send to friends and family to advertise the company. Mimicking (or mocking) other websites such as Weight WatchersTM and

Slimfast.com, which in turn sell personal "narratives" to consumers, promising the close of one life chapter and the beginning of "a new slimmer you", the Lacuna website posits memory as by no means a personal experience, but as a site of interactivity that, in the dawn of new technologies and virtual subjectivities, is a collective hypertextual narrative -- or "interactive narrative" -- that can be commodified and sold to consumers as a way of making meaning and re-experiencing the past (Manovich, 2002: 227).

The hypertextual framework of the Lacuna website continues within the film. Joel's interaction with his memories -- evidenced by his direction and disturbance of the memory *mise-en-scène*, re-casting the characters of his imagination, re-performing his roles and actions of the past, and running from Lacuna's "editing" process -- suggests memory as a malleable narrative that can be retold, remade, and re-edited over and over again. To this extent, Joel's memories of Clementine can be seen as memory narratives. The difference between memory narratives and mediated memory is largely in terms of their interaction within public and private spheres, yet a similar process of narrativization inhabits each. Interactive by nature, and organized into a montage of selected highlights, memory narratives can be seen as a departure from Freud's discussion of "screen memories" (Freud, 1995: 303). Screen memories involve the projection of "two phantasies on to one another" to make "a childhood memory": they are a conflation of desire and memory, described by Freud as "screen" recollection insofar as they simultaneously project the subject's desire and "screen", or mask, the "real" event (Freud, 1995: 315). Memory narratives often juxtapose and conflate memory and desire to register the psychic forces behind mnemonic revision.

This combination of desire and memory is evident in Joel's possessions that remind him of Clementine. At the beginning of the film Dr. Mierzwiak instructs his clients to bring in all objects that remind them of the person whom they are trying to erase from their memories. In one scene Joel sits in the Lacuna lab "reacting" to various objects that are reminiscent of Clementine (such as a mug with a photo of her on the front and a Boston snow globe) whilst a technician charts a "map" of Joel's memories. The map is co-ordinated by Joel's "emotional response" to these objects. Faced with the snow globe and with echoes of Clementine's laughter on the soundtrack, Joel tells the technician "there's a good story behind this". It would appear that these objects not only conjure the past but articulate narratives of the remembered past: they are memory narratives in the sense that they contain traces of the past that have, perhaps over and over, been invested with a narrative potency, or a narrativized desire. Joel is instructed by Dr. Mierzwiak to "empty your life of Clementine" by removing these objects from his home precisely because they are signifiers of the memory of Clementine, and because they have been emotionally and mnemonically charged with a narrative of his traumatic past. The interpellative potency, or transferential agency, of these figures, spaces, and scenarios of the past may be identified as sense-based, or imbued with memory traces that both invoke emotional responses of desire, and are "moulded" by an emotionally-constructed narrative of the past. Memory narratives provide a framework within which the "emotional core" of memory can find an interpretive space.

The film presents the idea of a core memory as the "root" of trauma and, conversely, the root of trauma as based in inexpressible emotion. This "emotional core" is iterated throughout a number of related memories, and situated within narratives of those memories. The suggestion, therefore, is that an originary memory -- or experience -- exists from which many subsequent memories and their traumatic effects derive. The film's originary memory is Joel's mother. [2] Figured as a kind of metanarrative -- or a narrative about a narrative -- from which the scope of linearities and memory traces derive, Joel's mother is representative of a

psychic emotion that is narrativized by memories of her. In other words, this "original" memory is a referent for a specific aspect of the remembering process.

Each of Joel's memories appear to operate in this manner, continually narrativizing or referring to a memory contained within a deeper layer of Joel's subconscious. Joel's memories of Clementine -- and the way in which this "remembered" Clementine guides Joel through the process of re-remembering -- ultimately narrativize other memories and emotions. During an interview on *Eternal Sunshine's* DVD Bonus Features, Jim Carrey alludes to Clementine both as the "outward manifestation" of Joel, the "wild thing inside of him". On the DVD's commentary, scriptwriter Charlie Kaufman suggests that "Clementine is Joel talking to himself in his memories". According to these interpretations, Clementine exists not as a character in her own right, but as Joel's secondary subjectivity. Although the primary narrative depicts Clementine as a "real" person, there is much to suggest that we have not left the territory of Joel's memory, that the primary narrative is in fact a mimetic continuation of the secondary narrative.

The memory of Clementine is a referent -- or a "screen" -- for the memory of Joel's mother. Clementine's recorded voice on the Lacuna tape detailing her relationship with Joel and her desire to erase him from her memory is counterpointed with her present voice in a scene towards the end of the film. Throughout the primary narrative, Clementine's laughter from the secondary narrative is occasionally audible, appearing as a spectral voice that resides -- or echoes -- in the chambers of Joel's subconscious. Conceptually, both Clementine's recorded voice and ghostly voiceover evoke Michel Chion's thoughts on the disembodied voice (or voice over) as "acousmatic" which relates to sound without discernable origins (Chion, 1999: 27). Noted as the "voice without a place", the film's mnemonic voiceover transcends the culturally or nationally specific location of memory in order to consider its evocations of deeper memories "of the first months of life or even before birth" (Chion, 1999: 27). Moreover, in Francesco Casetti's opinion, "the acousmatic [sic] voice serves as a kind of umbilical cord: it ties us to something we have lost, it puts us on the trail of a presence that has been taken away" (Casetti, 1999: 238). And Mary Ann Doane connects the voice in cinema to primary experiences of the maternal voice, the voice of "the irretrievably lost object of desire" (Doane, 1999: 371). In this context, Clementine's voiceover invokes Joel's maternal origins, in the same moment as it points to Joel's "lost object of desire" as his mother.

Another voiceover enforces this notion. Sung first by Clementine and later by Joel's mother, the lyrics of "My Darling Clementine" associate Clementine with the pain of a memory "lost and gone forever". The song is the first marker of a connection between Clementine and Joel's mother. What is "lost" to Joel is not, in fact, his relationship with Clementine, but his relationship with his mother, or his unconscious memories of a maternal bond that has been signified and narrativized by his relationship with Clementine. Clementine is the referential "embodiment" of an "original" memory that dictates the interpretive framework of subsequent memories. When Joel and Clementine meet at the beginning, Joel asks: "Why do I fall in love with every woman I see who shows me the least bit of attention?" A later memory of Joel aged four shows him upset by his mother's lack of attention: "she's not looking at me, she's busy. She's not looking at me. No one ever looks at me". In this memory Clementine performs as Joel's mother's friend, Pat, who is Joel's rival for his mother's affections. The suggestion is, of course, that Joel's desire for Clementine is rooted in an "original" desire for his mother's attention. To this extent, the film's secondary narrative -- or

the narrative of Joel's relationship with Clementine -- is played out in continuity with repressed childhood memories and desire.

A parallel can also be found between Pat and the aptly-named Patrick, who is present at Joel's erasure procedure and who is also Clementine's new boyfriend. Like Pat, Patrick robs Joel of the object of his desire. More significant is the fact that Patrick later imitates Joel when he accompanies Clementine to the Charles River and reads aloud from Joel's diary the exact words spoken by Joel to Clementine at the Charles River two years previously, suggesting that Patrick is Joel's psychic replacement, as well as part of Clementine's narrativization of her relationship with Joel. This pattern of mimesis and copying throughout the film's narrative positions Joel's mother as the "original" signifier of loss, with each of the subsequent figures in his memory -- Clementine, Pat, and Patrick -- operating to signify revisions of that loss. Joel's loss of Clementine to the affections of Patrick signifies his repressed feelings of losing his mother's attention as a four-year-old to Pat. The moment of Joel's "original" loss created a memory lacuna within which similar experiences were interpreted as subconscious revisions and traces of that event. The film constructs the mother as a type of metanarrative to signify and capture a particular approach to the past that narrates the subject as part of the past. Likewise, by re-constructing a common point of origin, collective memories may be seen not only to proffer the experience of the past to those who have not lived that past -- like Landsberg's prosthetic memories -- but to offer specific ways of accessing, remembering, and re-telling that past (Landsberg, 2004: 23-24).

The pattern of mimesis and copying that underlines the construction of Joel's memory extends to Joel's "mediatization" as both a spectator of and object within his memories, or as a secondary subject. In his revisited memories Joel not only directs the *mise-en-scène* like a director, but rehearses lines and mimics his previous actions like an actor -- for example, crying as a four-year-old under the kitchen table, crooning in the sink whilst being bathed as a "baby". Occasionally, he appears as three figures in his memories, as a director, actor, and spectator. All of Joel's revisionary activities suggest memory narratives as reconnecting with the past self as an object. This reconnection is not totally premised upon visualizing the self as "other", but upon a re-engagement with a psychic "copy" of the past self in much the same manner as a spectator identifies with the mimetic reality of the cinema screen. This process can be argued as a bodily identification, or what Michael Taussig describes as "a palpable, sensuous connection between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived" (Taussig, 1993: 21). The importance of the senses in this reading suggests that representing, telling a story of or re-engaging with the past involves a synthesis of the senses. Joel's secondary subjectivity, in other words, is not simply a discrete mnemonic "copy", but a filmically constructed part of his narrativized past through which sense-based memories -- from childhood, for instance -- may be re-remembered and re-interpreted.

Re-experiencing the past therefore involves a narrative system that privileges not only the subjectivity but also the body of the spectator in order to re-narrativize the past. Proceeding from J. J. Gibson's theory of ecological perception, Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity* deconstructs the divide between subjectivity and otherness by suggesting that human behaviour adapts to and mimics its environment (see Gibson, 1979; Taussig, 1993). Gibson's theory posits seeing as an activity that prompted response, movement, and action on the part of the perceiver. To Taussig, this action is mimicry. The "sensuous connection between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived" observed by Taussig indicates, first of all, the mimetic properties of memory narratives, which invoke the emotional roots of memory. Memory narratives may therefore be perceived as affective, as not only "hacking into" the

body of the spectator but as entering the senses of the spectator, narrativizing, as it were, the unutterable emotional traces of our memories. This is perhaps the reason why Joel is asked to react to the objects that reminded him of Clementine in order to provide a map of his memories, and why memories of sounds, tastes, and physical sensations lead Joel to visit (other) memories -- such as the song "Row, row, row your boat", which Joel sings to remind him of a "deeper" childhood memory of drinking raindrops beneath a make-shift wooden garden shelter. The song -- like "My Darling Clementine" -- contains this memory, which also contains the remembered taste of the raindrops: it is a memory space. The fact that senses other than sight play a part in Joel's remembering suggest memory as less a cognitive activity than a sensuous one. Memory is not locked in the mind, nor is it specifically cognitive. It is located in the entire body.

This is reflected in the ways in which Joel re-experiences his past. Throughout the memory erasure procedure, Joel's process of narrativization, or re-remembering, is a kind of experiential spectatorship. This is the notion of experiencing by perceiving. Joel not only "spectates" his memories, but re-experiences their various sensual processes and emotional contexts. Like Taussig's suggestion of the flexibility of the self, floating easily between the environment and subjectivity, experiential spectatorship can be read as reconciling mutually affective embodiment and disembodiment at the level of mnemonic mimicry. Memory narratives are specifically point-of-view based, yet they may figure the subject as a third party, as present in their own memory (like Joel), as a mimetic double that guides the narrativizing process of the memory. The dialectic of absence-presence at the heart of memory in this context is an important component of narrative memory. The emotional core of a memory retains the "presence" of the subject, and it is essentially this bodily-stored emotional response that ruptures temporalities by re-situating the subject back into the remembered past via his or her senses.

This is exactly what happens to Clementine. In the primary narrative, Clementine suffers the emotional aftermath of her break-up with Joel without realizing or remembering why. The suggestion is that Lacuna has erased her psychic memories, not her bodily memories; the emotional, bodily responses to the break-up with Joel therefore do not connect with her psychic memories. She has no narrative framework to make sense of her feelings. Clementine automatically wants to repeat her forgotten experiences by replacing Joel with Patrick, returning to Montauk, and visiting the frozen Charles River. Most telling, however, is Clementine's dialogue with Patrick. During Joel's erasure procedure, Clementine tells Patrick: "I'm lost, I'm scared, I feel like I'm disappearing, my skin is coming off, I'm getting old, nothing makes any sense to me". Lacuna has erased Clementine's narrative memory which makes sense of her emotions. The memory of Joel is contained as a traumatic trace in Clementine's subconscious which manifests itself in various forms of grief and repetition. Clementine's feelings (of disappearing, for instance) correlate with the Clementine of Joel's memory, who continually "disappears" from Joel as he runs from memory to memory, indicating, perhaps, a psychic interactivity.

The film additionally raises the issue of mediatized memory as a disembodied spectatorial experience. Joel not only views himself as part of a mental projection, but experiences himself as doubled and virtually disembodied. Because his memories are reproducible and cybernetic, so too is his identity. The difficulty faced by both to distinguish between their corpo(real) selves and their subconscious selves seems to underline a primary spectatorial process. The disembodied effect of spectatorship arises in the event of all spectatorial activity taking place within the realms of the psyche. Yet as recent scholarship qualifies, the body

cannot be dismissed as irrelevant to spectatorship: on the contrary, the body -- replete with all five senses -- is a site of memory (see Rutherford 2002). To suggest spectatorship as an act that "sutures" the memories of the spectator with the events of screen, or using one's memories as interpretive frameworks by which the spectator makes sense of and fully engages with the events on screen, without taking into account the way in which memories are conjured by and contained within taste, touch, smell, and sound is to posit visuality inaccurately as the mechanism of remembrance, or memory as purely cognitive.

Nonetheless, the cognitive map created to locate Joel's memories would seem to offer visuality as an axiomatic and particularly vital component of mediatized memory. More specifically, however, the optical regime of memory, contrived as "filmic" in its ability to re-spool memories through the subject's mind, is clearly at the root of re-called experience. The film's depiction of memory as sensuously "filmic" -- creating a spectator/subject who stores memories in the body -- can be read in terms of Laura Marks' description of haptic visuality, or the eyes as "organs of touch", in her book *The Skin of the Film* (Marks, 1999: 162). Marks' haptic theory understands the "sensuous connection" between spectator and screen as more than semiotic de-codification. Whereas optical visuality establishes a space, or distance, between spectator and screen, haptic visuality underlines a closeness, allowing the subject "not to distinguish form so much as to discern texture" (Marks, 1999: 162). Mediatized memory may also be argued as haptic, rather than strictly mimetic, as the intersubjective space of experiential spectatorship accesses memories via this "closeness" and visual texture. This is not to dismiss the mimetic logic of mediatized memory as founded in the type of "doubling" that occurs in memory narratives. By re-occupying a memory, the subject constructs a narrative around that memory through which to enter its "emotional core", and this narrative involves processes of repetition and mimesis.

It can be said that memory narratives serve the same interpellative, experiential end. By heightening our senses, memory narratives invoke and mimic the indexical "textures" of remembering. Narrative memory involves a sensuous engagement with the past. This connection informs the narrative process by which the past is re-remembered. Yet despite this subjective, sensuous engagement, both memory narratives and narrative memory are collective by nature, insofar as the process of narrativization is specifically to pass on the past (see Schudson, 1997: 355). Narrativization is not just the practice of re-remembering the past, but a means of re-experiencing the past, of sensually re-remembering the past in keeping with the mimetic systems of spectatorship.

Conclusion

Eternal Sunshine demonstrates mediatized memory as an experiential form of collective memory, modulating events "into spectatorial 'experiences'" that shape and inform the subjectivity of the individual viewer" (Burgoyne, 2003: 225). The means by which memory "spectators" re-experience the past is, as I have shown, not simply a cognitive process but often a sensual one, much like Landsberg's notion of a kind of memory that is "worn on the body" (Landsberg, 2004: 20). Yet the memory narratives presented in *Eternal Sunshine* are worn in the body, within the senses. The parallel between the film's primary and secondary narratives, or between Joel's subconscious remembering and his conscious reactions to a supposedly "erased" past, indicate that the narrative framework assigned to sense-based memories can be wiped out, but the "emotional core" cannot. What these dual narratives indicate, then, is the difference and similarities between mediatized memory and memory narratives. What we understand as "memory" is always already mediated; the idea of an

"original" memory is the sense-based trace of original experience. As LaCapra observes, "memory is always secondary since what occurs is not integrated into experience or directly remembered, and the event must be reconstructed from its effects and traces" (LaCapra, 1998: 21). The juxtaposition and conflation of primary and secondary memory narratives in *Eternal Sunshine*, as well as the suggestion that the primary memory exists deep inside the body of the subject, demonstrates that memory as a cultural object is always secondary, and is accessible solely "through the reliving or acting-out be supplemented by secondary memory and related processes (for example, narration, analysis, bodily gesture, or song)" (LaCapra, 1998: 21).

In terms of mediatised memory, however, memory as "always secondary" is dictated through processes which construct virtual, spectatorial experiences of the past -- which are often deeply engrained in emotion -- but which additionally create false memories that are far removed from the historical event. Methods of re-telling or narrativizing the past are an integral part of maintaining cultural stability, identity, and history, as evidenced by survivor testimonies (captured on film, for instance). Yet, as *Eternal Sunshine* warns, the impact of mediating technology on memory -- treating it as a public spectacle, available for editing, commodifying, and reproduction -- runs the risk of perpetuating absence and cultural scenarios of re-enactment for the foreseeable (or unforeseeable) future. As long as methods of narrativization function in support of the interactive spectator, it is social responsibility, as opposed to passivity, that will frame public understanding of and response to the past.

Notes

[1] For example, *Memento* (Dir. Christopher Nolan, 2000), *The Man without a Past* (Dir. Aki Kaurismäki, 2002), *50 First Dates* (Dir. Peter Segal, 2004), *Overboard* (Dir. Garry Marshall, 1987), *Men in Black* (Dir. Barry Sonnenfeld, 1997), *Men in Black II* (Dir. Barry Sonnenfeld, 2002), *The Bourne Identity* (Dir. Doug Liman, 2002), *Mulholland Drive* (Dir. David Lynch, 2001), *The Bourne Supremacy* (Dir. Paul Greengrass, 2004), *Dark City* (Dir. Alex Proyas, 1998), *Code 46* (Dir. Michael Winterbottom, 2003), *Vanilla Sky* (Dir. Cameron Crowe, 2001), *The Manchurian Candidate* (Dir. Jonathan Demme, 2004), *The Forgotten* (Dir. Joseph Ruben, 2004), *Finding Nemo* (Dir. Andrew Stanton, 2003), *Paycheck* (Dir. John Woo, 2003), *Gothika* (Dir. Mathieu Kassovitz and Thom Oliphant, 2003), *The Final Cut* (Dir. Omar Naim, 2004). Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days* (1995) also serves as a compelling example here.

[2] Another example of this is found in Steven Spielberg's film *Minority Report* (2002). Whereas *Eternal Sunshine* demonstrates revision in terms of Joel's individual memory, *Minority Report* constructs the mother, or the revised memory of the mother, as a metanarrative that signals social post-genocide trauma. *Minority Report* portrays a futuristic US federal institution called "Pre-Crime" that uses three human "pre-cognitives" -- Arthur, Dashiell, and Agatha to predict murders which Pre-Crime detectives attempt to prevent. The pre-cogs' psychic activities are recorded, erased, manipulated, and made available for public scrutiny by Pre-Crime. Each of the predicted murders in *Minority Report* are shown to reflect Agatha's memory of her mother's murder, which repeats at least four times during the film and is dismissed by Pre-Crime officers as "a pre-cog déjà-vu". The suggestion is that Agatha's "déjà-vu" is not a prediction of murder but the revised memory of her mother, meaning that Pre-Crime convicts innocent men and women on the basis of a false memory. That each of the murders "mimic" the murder of Agatha's mother at the same time as they operate as separate events indicates memory's referentiality, or hypernarrativity, constructing

memory as a narrative that operates within the framework of mutually influential cognitive processes.

References

Bal, Mieke (1999) Introduction, in Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, Leo Spitzer (eds.), *Acts of Memory : Cultural Recall in the Present*. Hanover: UP of New England, pp. vii-xvii.

Burgoyne, Robert (2003) Memory, History and Digital Imagery in Contemporary Film, in Paul Grainge (ed.), *Memory and Popular Film*. Manchester: Manchester UP, pp. 220-36.

Caruth, Cathy (1996) *Unclaimed Experience : Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.

Casetti, Francesco (1999) *Theories of Cinema 1945-1995*. Francesca Chiostrì and Elizabeth Gard Bartolini-Salimbeni with Thomas Kelso (trans.), Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Chion, Michel (1999) *The Voice In Cinema*. Claudia Gorbman (trans.), New York: Columbia University Press.

Doane, Mary Ann (1999) The Voice In The Cinema, in Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism : Introductory Readings*. Fifth edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Freud, Sigmund (1955) Screen Memories, in James Strachey (ed. and trans.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* . 24 vols. London: Hogarth, (3), pp. 301-322.

Genette, Gérard (1997) *Palimpsests : Literature in the Second Degree*. Lincoln, NB and London: University of Nebraska Press.

Gibson, J. J. (1979) *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* . Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hayward, Susan (2000) *Cinema Studies : The Key Concepts*. Second Edition. London and New York: Routledge.

Head, Steve (2000) Minority Report Script Review, in *Film Force* , February 10.
<<http://filmforce.ign.com/articles/035/035103p1.html?fromint=1>>.

Huyssen, Andreas (2003) *Present Pasts : Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Janet, Pierre (1925) *Psychological Healing* . 2 Vols. New York: Macmillan, 1925; Originally (1919) *Les Médications Psychologiques*. 3 Vols. Paris: Félix Alcan.

LaCapra, Dominick (1998) *History and Memory after Auschwitz*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell UP.

Landsberg, Alison (2004) *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*. New York: Columbia UP.

Laplanche, Jean and Jean-Baptiste Pontalis (1998) *The Language of Psycho-Analysis* . D. Nicholson-Smith (trans.), London: Karnac Books.

Luhmann, Niklas (2000) *The Reality of the Mass Media*. Stanford University Press.

Manovich, Lev (2002) *The Language of New Media* . Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Marks, Laura (1999) *The Skin of the Film : Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses*. Durham, NC: Duke UP.

Rutherford, Anne (2002) Cinema and Embodied Affect, *Senses of Cinema* 3 (25)
<http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/03/25/embodied_affect.html>.

Schudson, Michael (1997) Dynamics of Distortion in Collective Memory, in Daniel L. Schacter (ed.), *Memory Distortion : How Minds, Brains, and Societies Reconstruct the Past*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, pp. 346-64.

Sturken, Marita (1997) *Tangled Memories : The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Taussig, Michael (1993) *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. Routledge, New York.

van der Kolk, Bessel A. and O. van der Hart (1995) The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma, in Cathy Caruth (ed.), *Trauma : Explorations in Memory* . Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, pp. 158-82.

Žižek, Slavoj (2002) *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*. London and New York: Routledge.