Projecting visuals of paranoia

Visual representations of paranoia in Black Mirror’s ‘The Entire History of You’

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Master’s Thesis
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Abstract

This thesis examines how the notion of paranoia is represented in terms of visual style in TV series Black Mirror’s third episode The Entire History of You. Using textual analysis as the primary research method, three key elements that make up the mise-en-scéné – the use of space, the use of reflective surface (glass and mirror), and cinematography – are put under focus of analysis in order to understand how they depict paranoia in the episode. Findings show that the three visual aspects cleverly creates the omnipresent surveillance gaze which serves as a condition to paranoia in Liam, the protagonist of the episode, as well as exquisitely visualizes Liam’s psychological manifestation of paranoia. This thesis provides a deeper understanding of the episode as well as contributes to the ever-growing knowledge of mise-en-scéné by being the first study to look at how paranoia is represented through visual elements comprising the mise-en-scéné.
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I don’t like to name names, but I have such great gratitude to those who have helped me, each in their own way, cross the finish line of this Master’s program that it has to be printed.

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And to my family, thank you for the support and the kickstart.

I am glad to have reached the end of my master’s journey.

I hereby acknowledge that I am, perhaps, paranoid.

Thank you and good-bye.
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1 INTRODUCTION

The paranoid is the person in possession of all the facts
(William S. Burroughs)

Holding a small thumb remote in his hand, Liam’s thumb surfs on the only button on the remote and scrolls around the rim to manipulate it. His pupils turn ‘milky’ - he is seeing an overlaid system projected in his head. The overlaid screen from his point of view shows a timeline consisting of thumbnails of all of his memories with the exact dates and times. Flipping through the menu, Liam can choose whichever memory he wants to see, again and again, with the ability to zoom in and enable lip reading function. These memories are perhaps from the day he was born until now.

Liam is the protagonist in the third episode called The Entire History of You, from the TV series Black Mirror. In the society being depicted in this episode, human beings possess technologically enhanced memory, which is constantly recorded through our eyes with the aid of a totem called the “Grain”. The grain allows an individual to record not only what they can see in their central vision but also everything that is happening within the peripheral vision. As a result, memories become tangible recordings referred to as re-dos, which can be assessed anytime, anywhere, and replayed them over and over again. With this capability, Liam becomes obsessed with watching the re-dos in order to examine his wife’s behaviors in order to find the evidence to her infidelity.

In watching the episode, the notion of paranoia came across to me strongly, which captures my interest to take close look at the episode in relation to paranoia. From my background research, there has been no study on the episode The Entire History of You, or the TV series Black Mirror in general, that revolves around paranoia. There have been several studies looking into paranoia in films. However, through my background research on the topic, the notion of paranoia is mainly analyzed and examined in relation to plot and narrative development; and there seems to be no dedicated research done on the visual style of paranoia represented on filmic texts, or very little is touched upon visual elements in order to support their analysis on paranoid narratives. Therefore, through a close reading of the
episode, I want to analyze paranoia in a different angle – the representations of paranoia in terms of visual style. Particularly, three elements comprising the mise-en-scène that are strongly foregrounded in the episode: the use of space, the use of reflective surfaces (glass and mirror), and camera style, are put under focus of examination to understand how paranoia is created visually. Through this thesis, not only do I hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of the episode *The Entire History of You* and the TV series *Black Mirror*, but also predominantly the learning of paranoid visual style through the episode.

### 1.1 Background research

In 2011, British broadcaster Channel 4 aired the first season of the critically acclaimed *Black Mirror*, an anthology series created by The Guardian’s satirist Charlie Brooker which depicts a dystopian civilization with advanced technology. The show started off with 2 seasons consisting of 6 episodes and 1 Christmas special episode. Although *Black Mirror* was not the most-watched show, it was definitely among the most talked-about series, which has now received mainstream attention being a Netflix original with its third season kicked off in October 2016. Each episode in *Black Mirror* has a different story, characters, setting, or reality to explore the morality and ethical issues regarding the relationship between new technologies and society and its dark effects on individuals and society.

*The Entire History of You* is the third episode of first season, directed by Brian Welsh and written by Jesse Armstrong. It is by far the only episode not written or co-written by the show runner Charlie Brooker. This episode depicts a utopia in which every person has a totem called ‘Grain’ which is implanted behind the ear and is wired to the eyes in order to record everything you see and store it for eternity so you can playback the memories, or referred to as ‘re-do’ in the episode, whenever you want to. The story revolves around three characters and an accusation of infidelity. Liam, the protagonist of the episode, notices his wife, Ffion’s, strange behaviors towards one of her male friends named Jonas at a dinner party. His suspicion causes him obsessively watching re-dos of what has happened and eventually discovers his wife’s affair, and that their baby might not be his.

While the episode is fictional, our current reality can be argued to be getting much closer to that futuristic society. There have been technologies that closely resemble the grain such as GoPro camera, or Google Glass. Furthermore, Sony has recently filed patent for high-tech
camera integrated into contact lenses, which allows recording video, zooming in, or storing videos (Starr, 2016). Of course, at this point in our reality, that technology is only theoretical and needs a lot of development before it can be embedded in contact lenses. However, there is a possibility that such ‘fictional’ depictions from the episode could become ‘real’; and through The Entire History of You, Armstrong gives us a glimpse into that ‘fictional reality’ and how technologically-enhanced memory could destroy an otherwise supposedly normal marriage within the course of only 24 hours, and the society by extension.

From my initial literature search to see what has been written about The Entire History of You, I found four published papers using the episode as a unit for their analysis. Boren (2015) used four episodes within the Black Mirror series for a rhetorical analysis in order to evaluate whether or not the episodes had effectively delivered the intended messages from the creators of the show. The other three papers were written in Spanish and Portuguese, which I had to use Google Translate in order to understand what the focus of those papers are through their abstracts. Pousa (2013) explored a typology of contemporary fiction and aesthetics of the show; Bergé (2014) discussed the relations between memory, history, image and the impact of new technologies in ways of seeing and reading; and Lima (2015) wrote a commentary about memory and subjectivity based on the episode.

1.2 Research Question

Throughout the episode The Entire History of You, we do not just follow Liam’s search for the truth behind his wife’s infidelity, but also how having such a perfect catalogue of memory of his entire life makes Liam become paranoid over his own social downfalls. Liam is seen constantly watching re-dos to look for slip-ups from the work appraisal, or previous gathering with Ffion’s friends to avoid social awkwardness, and monitors his wife’s behaviors around Jonas.

On the other hand, we can see the society being depicted in the episode is a paranoid one filled with surveillance on an individual and a societal level. For example, Liam has to pull an exhaustive number of re-dos at work to prove that he is well within “parameters” morally and ethnically in order to maintain his job; or he has to rewind memories at the airport security in order to prove he is not a threat. This is the society in which you are only innocent until proven through surveillance. Five years after the airing of The Entire History
of You, the UK is getting closer to such surveillance culture as it has recently passed a law to legalize the world’s most extreme surveillance program in November (Vincent, 2016).

As a result, I propose the follow research question for my thesis:

*RQ: How is paranoia represented in ‘The Entire History of You’?*

The term ‘paranoia’ was coined by the “Father of Modern Medicine”, Hippocrates, to describe the state of hallucination that one could have during high fever (Freeman & Freeman, 2008). From then, there were a lot of disagreements among psychiatrists to define the concept of ‘paranoia’ and a classification for paranoia as a mental illness. It is not until the late 19th century did Emil Kraepelin, a German psychiatrist, come up with a taxonomy for diagnosis which was continuously refined and published in his famous *Textbook* for nine editions (Lewis, 1970).

Kraepelin’s theories of paranoia have become the foundation for *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* published by American Psychiatric Association, a modern taxonomic and diagnostic tool for mental illnesses widely used today. The manual, which is now in its fifth edition (DSM-V), has classified ‘paranoia’ as a personality disorder in which an individual with paranoid personality disorder has excessive suspiciousness and mistrust of others, and a cynical view of others and the world (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013). This psychiatric syndrome has been historically defined in “categorical” terms with numerous subcategories characterizing the traits an individual has to possess in order to be diagnosed with paranoid personality disorder. In other words, paranoia as a mental illness is determined as present once the person in question ticks the boxes or categories assigned as symptomatic of the condition.

Freud’s infamous case study of Daniel Paul Schreber and his memoirs set forth his theory of paranoia delusion under psychoanalytical terms. According to Freud, Strachey, and Freud (1958, p. 60), it is common among males to develop paranoia caused by social humiliations and slights. The most striking features in the process of forming paranoia is projection and disavowal in which a paranoid attributes unwanted feelings and desires onto another (projection) and remains unaware or denies to have done so (disavowal). As seen in the episode, living in a hyper surveillance society causes Liam anxiety to constantly watch over
his own behaviors. He is humiliated at the work appraisal and later at the dinner, which plants the paranoid seed in him. He does not want to feel this shamefulness so he projects his unwanted feelings onto Ffion.

The notion of paranoia has also been a prevalent theme within the academic study of surveillance. In a theoretical discussion of surveillance and paranoia, Harper (2008) argues that “the increased surveillance of the population…has been one of the conditions of possibility for paranoia” (p. 4). Talking about surveillance, one cannot avoid touching upon Foucault’s work *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977) in which he interpreted Jeremy Bentham’s ‘Panopticon’ as a metaphor for disciplinary in modern societies where an individual is under constant scrutiny and their actions are regulated by the others. In other words, we are continuously being monitored and governed by a panoptical gaze, thus leading to the act of self-policing.

According to Holm (2009), paranoia under surveillance can be theorized as paranoia-of-the-watched and paranoia-of-the-watcher. The panopticon regime is supposed to make the subject under watch conform to a set of “normal” behaviors or disciplined manners. Nevertheless, the paranoid subject employ unusually abnormal actions in order to escape the surveillance gaze. On another hand, the paranoid subject who is being watched is just as concerned with looking after their own surroundings, and thus becoming watchful themselves. This leads to paranoia-of-the-watcher in which the paranoid subject believes monitoring is always essential at all time in order to prevent possible unwanted hostile situations. Even though there is no evidence of potential hazards, the subject would still keep a watchful eye to uncover the hidden threats.

Chapter 2 of this thesis will provide a more detailed account into the history and the development paranoia. While the definition of paranoia is heavily comprehended within the fields of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, its representation on filmic texts is understood as a social concept which changes accordingly to cultural and historical narratives (Polan, 1986). As demonstrated in chapter 2, the notion of paranoia receives a wide range of representations and treatments in filmic texts. However, the majority of works looking into paranoia is in relation to narrative treatments. For this thesis, the representation I want to examine is the visual style of paranoia.
1.3 Methodology

In order to see how paranoia is represented, I have chosen qualitative methodology, particularly textual analysis, to have an in-depth analysis of the episode. Employing textual analysis to a film requires repeated viewings and careful observations in order to deconstruct a shot to find the relationship between how the use of different elements such as camera angles, clothing, performance, etc., construct the meaning of a film. Such analysis allows scholars not only to inspect the film on its surface level but also to dissect the subtle manipulations and complexities, which went into the making of the film. The text being analyzed is the third episode of the TV series *Black Mirror* called *The Entire History of You*. Although *Black Mirror* is produced for television, it is an anthology series and each episode in the show can be considered, by itself, a film. In this thesis, I will refer to the text as ‘episode’.

The representation of paranoia is looked at predominantly in terms of its visual style by examining mise-en-scène. In this thesis, I understand mise-en-scène following John Gibb’s definition as the organization of everything within the frame, such as settings, costumes and props, lighting, camera angles, performance of the actors, etc., and how these elements work with each other to create meaning (Gibbs, 2002). According to Gibbs (2002), mise-en-scène is an extremely important aspect of cinema as it is “central to a developed understanding of film” (p.1). While a single frame contains a lot of elements that make up mise-en-scène, due to the scope of this thesis, I choose to focus my analysis on three aspects - space, props (here refers specifically to the use of reflective surfaces such as glass and mirror), and cinematography. The rationale behind this selection is that these are the three elements being foregrounded strongly in the episode.

Throughout the analysis, I will also touch upon the paranoid narrative structure in the episode in support for the analysis of mise-en-scene. According to Gibbs (2002), “we need to consider the significance acquired by the individual element by virtue of context: the narrative situation, the 'world' of the film, the accumulating strategies that the film maker adopts” (p. 26). Consequently, discussion on narrative structure of paranoia in this episode will form a guide for my in-depth analysis on how director Brian Welsh’s control over mise-en-scène creates meaning to paranoia visually.
1.4 Thesis overview

In the first chapter ‘Introduction’, I have laid out the purpose of this thesis and how I will conduct the research to answer the research question. To summarize, this thesis will examine the representation of paranoia in terms of visual style in the episode *The Entire History of You*. In order to do that, I will employ textual analysis method to examine three aspects of the mise-en-scène that I have chosen to focus on – space, reflective surfaces, and camera style – to find out how they contribute to the visualization of paranoia. The chapter followed this one gives an overview of the development of paranoia and how it is being represented in filmic texts. By reviewing a wide selection of literatures, I contextualize the notion of paranoia and the manner it will be treated for the analysis of visual style. The findings from literature review conclude the common tropes in paranoid narratives, which form the foundation for the analysis of visual style in chapter three.

The analysis in chapter three consists of three parts in which I analyze how the three elements - the use of space, the use of mirror/glass surfaces, and camera style - create paranoia in the episode. In part one, analysis of space, I look at the micro-space of the characters’ bodies (kinesics) and the organization of the space present among the characters within the frame (proxemics) to understand the nature of the characters’ behaviors and the dynamics of relationship among them. I argue that the manipulation of space underlies the distribution of power and the manifestation of masculinity crisis. In part two, inspection of the use of glass and mirror as the dominant visual motif of the episode, I discuss how they function both as medium and barrier. The reflections of Liam seen through glass and mirror represent his troubling state of mind and his loosing grip with current reality. Part three explores the work of cinematography and reviews some of the key techniques which exquisitely establishes the surveillance gaze that Liam is constantly exposed to and visualizes outwardly Liam’s psychological process of paranoia.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two questions I aim to answer in this chapter. First: what is paranoia? While the word ‘paranoia’ is defined by most of the major English dictionaries as a mental illness, the notion of paranoia has become more prevalent passing from the field of psychiatry into common everyday speech with a looser meaning, which Freeman and Freeman (2008) give a simpler definition, “Paranoia is the unrealistic belief that other people want to harm us” (p. 23). Although that simple definition of paranoia is how I, and arguably most of us, have been understanding and using it, the phenomenon ‘paranoia’ has a very complicated medical, psychiatric and psychoanalytic history in which several thinkers attempted to classify the symptoms of paranoia, which include more than just fear of persecution. It is, therefore, essential to explore the historical and theoretical development of paranoia to better acquaint readers with the needed theoretical understanding to follow the analysis of the episode. It is beyond the scope and purpose of this thesis to give a detailed history of paranoia, or argue the rights and wrongs of theories of paranoia. Instead, the intention is to give a brief historical account of the term and contextualize the concept of paranoia and the manner within which it will be treated in the analysis of this thesis.

The second question: what are the tropes constituting paranoid narrative in filmic texts? Paranoia has been a popular element in cinematic plots, which receives a lot of academic interest in the film study field to explore how paranoia is being treated on a wide range of movies across different genres. Those researches focus predominantly on analysis of paranoia in terms of narrative development. Through reviewing a selection of literatures on this topic, I come up with the common tropes being used in paranoid narrative that can also be seen in the episode. The findings from the literature review form a guideline for the analysis in the chapter following after.

2.1 A brief history of paranoia

The word paranoia is rooted from a Greek word meaning “madness”. It was first used by Hippocrates, who is considered as the “Father of Modern Medicine”, and he coined the word ‘paranoia’ by combining two Greek words: ‘para’ (meaning ‘beside’) and ‘nous’ (meaning
‘mind’), which literally meant ‘out of his mind’ to describe the state of delirium when people have high fever (Freeman & Freeman, 2008). Nevertheless, the term ‘paranoia’ was not limited to meaning ‘madness’ as how Hippocrates used it nor was it a technical term until the mid-18th century when there was a need for scientific classification of mental illnesses. In 1763, the French physician Boissier de Sauvages made the first attempt to revive and define the term ‘paranoia’ in *Nosologia Methododica*, which followed Hippocrates’ connotation as madness coming from high fever and also from dementia (Freeman & Freeman, 2008). It was not until 1818 when Johann Heinroth, a German physician, refined the term in his book *Störungen des Seelenlebens* did ‘paranoia’ emerge as a diagnostic concept in psychiatry (Lewis, 1970). Heinroth also looked at paranoia within the discourse of madness and delirium and associated paranoia with delusions; however, he defined paranoia as a disorder of intellect not as a result from a physical illness, meaning delusions could occur regardless of fever which differs from the original Greek conception of paranoia (Lewis, 1970).

Up until the late 19th century, the concept of paranoia went through a turbulent time of disagreements and there was not a coherent taxonomy for diagnosis. It was left to Emil Kraepelin, a German psychiatrist, to synthesize classification schemes for mental illnesses in his famous *Textbook*, which was first published in 1883 and ran on with nine editions of refining diagnosis entities for different disorders. Kraepelin’s method of classifications differs from his predecessors in that he looked at the illnesses based on their characteristics over a period of time instead of the symptoms at a given time (Lewis, 1970). In the 6th edition of his textbook (1899), Kraepelin introduced his diagnostic concept of dementia praecox (the term was later reintroduced as schizophrenia by Eugen Bleuler in 1911), including three different aspects of this illness, one of those was dementia paranoides which referred to the mental state that met the criteria of paranoia, except that it deteriorated into dementia rapidly thereafter.

Kraepelin held a consistent view of differentiating paranoia from dementia praecox and looked at it as a distinct illness on its own with four different types of delusions based on its delusional content (Munro, 1999, p. 12). The most common type is persecutory delusions in which one believes that other people are after them and have the intentions to harm them. Delusions of jealousy occur when one is engrossed with the suspicion that their spouse or
sexual partner is being unfaithful, and they have abnormal behaviors such as going through a partner’s belongings in order to find proof of infidelity. Delusions of grandeur are exaggerated belief that one is superior to the others and they possess greater qualities such as knowledge, wealth, fame, or power. Last is delusions of eroticism (erotomania) in which one believes that another person, either a normal person or somebody of prominent figure, is in love with them. Kraepelin’s theories of paranoia form the basis for important diagnosis and classification systems widely used today, especially the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by American Psychiatric Association, which is now in its 5th edition (DSM-5).

2.2 Paranoia – from psychosis to panoptic surveillance

Daniel Paul Schreber is perhaps immortalized as the most famous paranoiac in history thanks to Sigmund Freud’s interpretation of Schreber’s book Memoirs of My Nervous Illness published in 1903. While Freud’s interpretation of Schreber’s paranoid psychosis is argued to have its limitations, the case study still remains influential and invaluable in the psychiatric and psychoanalytic studies of paranoia. In giving an overview of this classic case study, I do not wish to deconstruct or criticize the framework of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of paranoia. On the contrary, the Schreber case functions as a foundation to identify the most overt attributes of paranoid mechanism, which serves my purpose of outlining the generic themes of paranoid narrative.

Schreber (1842 – 1911) was a German judge who was highly intelligent, successful and well respected in his work. Schreber was diagnosed with mental illness that led him to be institutionalized three times. During his second illness, he wrote his Memoirs to describe his experience. Although Freud’s published case stories were mostly based on his own clients whom he met during his practice, he never met or treated Schreber. Freud’s entire case story upon which he set forth his psychoanalytic theory of paranoia was derived from Schrebers’ Memoirs and the descriptions of Schreber’s delusions from the reports written by Dr. Weber, the director of Sonnenstein Asylum where Schreber was institutionalized. Freud published his analysis in the 1911 book called Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia.
Central to Schreber’s paranoid delusion was the belief that he was the only one to ‘redeem the world and to restore it to its lost state of bliss’ and this could only be done through transforming into a woman (Freud et al., 1958, p. 16). Schreber was convinced that Professor Paul Flechsig, who closely treated Schreber during both of his illnesses, tormented him and accused him as ‘soul murderer’ and attempted to change him into a woman. Later, as his delusion entered its final manifestation, Schreber believed that it was God and the Order of Things demanding him to become a woman so he could be impregnated by God and redeem the world. Schreber’s delusional state was described in details in Dr. Weber’s 1899 report:

He was called to this task, so he asserts, by direct inspiration from God … The most essential part of his mission of redemption is that it must be preceded by his transformation into a woman. It is not to be supposed that he wishes to be transformed into a woman; it is rather a question of a “must” based upon the Order of Things, which there is no possibility of his evading, much as he would personally prefer to remain in his own honorable and masculine station in his life. But neither he nor the rest of mankind can regain the life beyond except by his being transformed into a woman (a process which may occupy many years or even decades) by means of divine miracles. He himself, of this he is convinced, is the only object upon which divine miracles are worked, and he is thus the most remarkable human being who has ever lived upon earth … He had a feeling that enormous numbers of “female nerves” have already passed over into his body, and out of them a new race of men will proceed, through a process of direct impregnation by God. Not until then, it seems, will he be able to die a natural death, and, along with the rest of mankind, will he regain a state of bliss. (quoted by Freud et al., 1958, pp. 16-17)

In his letter to Wilhelm Fliess in 1895 discussing paranoia, Freud implied that the problem with self-esteem regulation had a striking role in causing paranoia in a way that a subject became paranoid as a defense against embarrassment and humiliation (Freud, Masson, & Fliess, 1985, pp. 108-110). However, with the case of Schreber, he asserted that if we look deeper into the matter, it was the repressed homosexual desire that was the operative factor in paranoia (Freud et al., 1958, p. 60). Freud identified the object of Schreber’s homosexual desire was Professor Flechsig, the doctor he greatly admired for having cured him of his first illness. Because of the increasing ‘feminine wishful phantasy’ (p. 47) towards Professor Flechsig, Schreber developed his ‘nervous illness’ as a defense against the desire for his
doctor, thus having a justified belief that Professor Flechsig was his persecutor trying to transform him into a woman for sexual abuse.

According to Freud et al. (1958), paranoia is associated with secondary narcissism in which an individual libidinal energy remains fixed at the stage of narcissism (p. 72). During a child’s development of the ego, the original libido directs its energy towards the ego to form ego-libido. Freud refers to this as primary, or normal, narcissism that never fully disappears. When this primary ego-libido becomes over stimulated and causes discomfort, the libidinal energy is then directed outwards to an external object or people forming object-libido to smooth out the tension. In a normal individual, the object-libido is constantly detached from object to object or from person to person. However, if an individual cannot find a substitute for the lost attachment, this object-libido is directed inwards to the ego forming secondary narcissism and thus exaggerating the importance of the ego. This is when megalomania appears in delusions of persecution as the paranoiac perceives himself to be of a very noble status and worthy of such persecution (p. 48).

Another prominent element in forming paranoia is the process of projection (Freud et al., 1958, p. 66). Projection is a defense mechanism that an individual employs to solve the conflicts and problems on an unconscious level by distorting the suppressed unwanted feelings and desires and attributing them onto others. Hence, the feeling of love in the unconscious level can enter consciousness and externalized to the outer worlds as hatred. This is the case for Schreber and his persecutory delusion. Schreber loves Professor Flechsig but his superego tells him that such homosexual desire is unacceptable and thus causing conflicts to the ego. His ego then has to solve the discomfort by altering his feeling of love into the belief that Professor Flechsig hates him and tries to harm him.

Shapiro (1965) notes that the process of paranoia involves not just projection but also disavowal, which has an essential role in Freud’s mechanism of paranoia in which an individual denies or contradicts the unconscious desires before attributing them to others as a form of justification. The process of paranoia according to Freud is explained by how the proposition ‘I (a man) love him (a man)’ transformed into projection (Freud et al., 1958, p. 63). In delusion of persecution, the paranoiac disavows the love feeling asserting that ‘I do not love him – I hate him’, and this denial when projected transforms into ‘He persecutes
me’ as a justification for the hatred to reduce conflicts in the ego. Paranoia in the case of delusions of jealousy in man can be understood as the paranoiac tries to contradict his homosexual love for another man (‘I love him’) by condemning the desire onto his wife (‘It is not I who love the man – she loves him’) and thus projecting as a belief that his wife is being unfaithful.

At the time of publishing his theory of paranoia based on the Schreber case, Freud’s interpretation was limited to his libido theory and many subsequent theorists rejected repressed homosexual desire as an adequate operating factor accounting for Schreber’s various symptoms (Lewis, 1970). Nevertheless, it explained some important aspects of paranoid mechanism that forms a guideline for my analysis of paranoid narrative. To recollect, the delusional narrative involves humiliations leading to the fragile ego and low self-esteem, emasculation, narcissism, disavowal, projection, and fragmentation of the self. This is the transformative process that the paranoiac goes through on the mission to restore ‘order’.

Although Freud’s retrospective psychoanalysis of Schreber’s nervous illness has gained prominent influence in the theory of paranoia, there are also other possible and remarkable interpretations of Schreber’s psychosis. One interpretation that is relevant to my thesis is by Louis Sass (1987) because his analysis of Schreber’s paranoid psychosis gives a common ground through which Foucault’s panoptic model becomes a key theoretical model to contextualize paranoia in relation to surveillance, which is the underlying theme in the episode The Entire History of You.

To quickly recap, the Panopticon is a prison concept designed by Jeremy Bentham in the 18th century which allows a single watchman standing in the central tower in the middle of the prison to observe all the inmates in their cells while the inmates cannot tell if they are being observed or not (Bentham, 2005). Although that single watchman cannot observe all inmates at the same time, the fact that the inmates not being able to detect if they are being watched makes them control and regulate their behaviors constantly. Based on this prison model, Foucault elaborates that the disciplinary mechanisms in the Panopticon creates a consciousness of perpetually being watched, which becomes an apparatus of internal power.
itself shaping an individual’s behaviors and putting this person in the position of a watcher over the self:

Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (Foucault, 1977, p. 201)

Drawing from Foucault’s interpretation of Panopticon, Sass (1987) argues that Schreber’s symptoms show certain features which are central to Foucault’s description of the modern mind and subjectivity being under constant scrutiny and regulation governed by panoptic disciplinary power. Based on Schreber’s Memoirs and Schatzman’s analysis published in Soul murder: persecution in the family (1973), Sass argues the cause of Schreber’s experiences is rooted from his abusive upbringing at the hands of his father. Moritz Schreber, Daniel Paul Schreber’s father, was a prominent physician who published several books about child-rearing in which he emphasized the importance of controlling the impulsive and the rebellious nature in children in order to turn them into productive citizens. Schatzman demonstrated that many of Moritz Schreber’s techniques bore great resemblances with Daniel Schreber’s psychotic symptoms. For example, Schreber described that he experienced compression of the chest which can be seen as similar to Moritz Schreber’s technique in using metal contraption around the body to force the children to sit up straight and have a correct posture (Sass, 1987, p. 114). Such various child-rearing techniques created a panoptic discipline in which Schreber experienced himself as both the watched and the watcher where he “watching himself watching himself watching himself watch” (p. 144), thus creating a crisis in the unconsciousness leading him to become alienated from himself and blurring the lines between reality and hallucinations.

Holm (2009) proposes in his paper Conspiracy Theorizing Surveillance a model based upon two modalities of paranoia to understand actions caused by being subjected to surveillance. The first modality is theorized as paranoia-of-the-watched, which corresponds to the
constant state of consciousness to watch over the self. In this modality, Holm suggests that paranoia can be apprehended as a response functioning beyond panoptic model of consciousness, which accounts for resistant behaviors against the constant social surveillance practices. This means that although the panoptic surveillance is perceived to foster the production of “normal” behaviors within the subjects being under the regime, in the case of a paranoid subject, such panoptic regime causes the paranoiac to “adopt extremely abnormal regimes of behavior in order to attempt to escape the surveilling gaze” (p. 42).

The definition of paranoia being used by Holm is conceptualized as “paranoia within reason”, a notion conceived by Marcus (1999, p. 7) which is understood as the most reasonable response possible under certain cultural and social conditions in which there is “a substantial paranoid potential in the most rational or commonsensical frames of thought that readily emerges at certain moments” (Marcus, 1999, p. 2). An example to illustrate the paranoia-inducing resistant behaviors within reason is the character Truman in *The Truman Show* where the protagonist suspects he is under a system of surveillance and tries to escape the regime with “abnormal” behavior with stunts and an impromptu road trip causing damages to the properties.

The state of being under surveillance induces not only the fear of being constantly observed but also the need to continuously look after their own surroundings to address potential threats, which is theorized as paranoia-of-the-watcher acting as counterpoint to paranoia-of-the-watched (Holm, 2009). In this modality of paranoia, the paranoid watcher possesses suspicions that there is somebody or something out there with the intentions to harm them, and thus believing in “a close and sustained observation of the everyday and the banal in order to uncover hidden threats, even in the absence of any evidence to indicate the presence of said threats in the first place” (Holm, 2009, p. 44). In this narrative of the watcher, the paranoiac constructs a world in which the subject lives with distrust for others and thus embarking on a never ending journey to find out what is actually happening and get stuck in a loop of reality in which everything is connected with each other in one reality only to lead to another reality. In this position, the watcher thus becomes paranoid due to a “surplus knowledge” in order to find out the truth (Žižek, 1992).
As in the episode *The Entire History of You*, Liam is paranoid in both the position of the watched and the watcher. Knowing that everything he does can be recorded, Liam regulates his behaviors to make sure that they are, as he puts it during the appraisal, “well within parameters”. In fact, Liam is seen drinking a lot of alcohol throughout the entire episode, which can be argued as his coping mechanism with the fear that he is being constantly monitored. At the same time, Liam spends most of his time going through re-dos in order to look for potential threats because he believes that he is being harmed. For example, when Liam plays the re-do of the appraisal to Ffion, he refers to the managers as phony and prick; or when Ffion suggests the Asian lady is writing a tick on her note, Liam thinks that it is the start of a swastika. Furthermore, when he becomes suspicious of Jonas and Ffion’s strange behaviors, he obsesses with watching the re-dos in order to find out cues and evidences to prove that his wife has cheated him with Jonas.

### 2.3 Paranoia representations in filmic texts

The definition of paranoia is loaded within the boundaries of psychiatry and psychoanalysis. However, the notion of paranoia being represented in media texts is more often ideological or culturally and historically specific rather than pathological in the clinical sense. The significance of paranoia should, thus, be understood as a social concept functioning as a defense strategy against a cultural and historical narrative (Polan, 1986). Considering the dominating ideology during the forties in relation to Foucault’s notion of social space and power, Polan (1986) looks at the ways “a dominant power and a disturbing paranoia interweave and find each to be a parodic mirror image of the other” (p.12) in his book *Power and Paranoia*. Polan (1986) explains power is understood as “the power that narrative structure specifically possesses to write an image of life as coherent, teleological, univocal” while paranoia is “the fear of narrative, and the particular social representations it works to uphold, against all that threatens the unity of its logical framework…a specifically social way of responding to new permutations in everyday perception and possibility” (p.12, 15).

Paranoia has long been a captivating element within popular culture and there is a wide range of representations and treatments of paranoia across media texts. Hollywood cinematic works during the 1940s represented paranoia as a social response to the cultural narratives and the ideology permeating the society of the USA in the 1940’s which saw a change from the end of war to the beginnings of consumerism (Polan, 1986). Reviewing approximately
700 feature films during the period from 1940 to 1950, Polan (1986) demonstrates the unstable narratives seen through a range of movies conveying conflicting and contradictory storylines within the same historical period. For example in wartime Hollywood, the death of the female characters in both Guest in The House (1944) and Meshes in The Afternoon (1943) implies the fight for stability within the ‘home’. But while Evelyn in Guest in The House dies to affirm home as a place for “happy heterosexual relationships in the service of the American way of life” (p.11), the death of the woman in Meshes in The Afternoon presents home as “a nightmarish place where women can only destroy or be destroyed and where men only come for short visits as virtual strangers” (p.11). Such stark contrasts are not only shown through the representations of ‘home’ in movies but also the juxtaposed narratives between the pages of Life magazine (published 13 August 1945) showing the historical change from wartime to the consumerism era in which one page promotes “War and Commitment” while the other promotes “Postwar possibilities” (Polan, 1986, pp. 1-4).

In the decades after the end of the Second World War, the American culture was permeated with the threats of nuclear war and the fear of the “Red menace” (or “Red scare”), a term used to describe the Soviet Union and a perception that the US government was ridden with communist spies. Filmic texts during the 1950s and 1960s expressed anxieties and ‘Cold War paranoia’ against the backdrop of atomic bombs and the threat of Communism into the genres of science fiction, film noir, crime movies, and melodrama with plots ranging from subversive to apocalyptic. Reading the three movies in the Cold War era: My Son John (1952), The Manchurian Candidate (1962), and Dr. Strangelove (1963), Higgins (2017) sheds light onto the understanding of paranoia during the Cold War era, in which paranoia became a “peculiarly bodily mental disturbance” (p. 2) – a perception that the (usually male) body is being under the constant threat of penetration or fragmentation by dangerous foreign forces. Such paranoid disturbance is a manifestation of the fear of the “breaching of boundaries, whether they be those of the human body, the national one, or both” (p. 2).

Using Freud’s psychoanalytic interpretation of Daniel Schreber’s memoirs as a theoretical framework to the understanding of bodily inscribed paranoia, Higgins (2017) argues that Schreber’s anxieties precisely frames a Cold War paranoiac’s fear of breaching of boundaries: Schreber’s main sources of distress are that his body was penetrated by external objects like the ‘ray’ of God or the ‘female nerves’, and his inevitable conversion into a woman.
According to Higgins (2017), Cold war-era films use body as a metaphor in which there is a continuous movement between the physically gendered body and the imagined one. However, the female body cannot exist in this movement as it is considered as the source of penetration and fragmentation, which breaches the male bodily boundary. Therefore, if the bodily movement is considered as contaminated by ‘female’, the body that is considered as ‘female’ (biological or imagined) is removed or does not exist in the movie. In Dr. Strangelove, the physical female body is close to non-existence in order to sharpen the bodily inscribed paranoia through an all-men testosterone-fuelled universe (Higgins, 2017). Instead, fluoridated water, empowered by Communism, is marked as ‘female’ which infiltrates both the physical and nation male body, and turn them into fragmented and feminized ones. Through the act of drinking, the fluoridated water weakens the male soldiers’ intellectuality and desire for freedom, and thus turning them into submissive subjects who would resign over Communists. On another hand, General Ripple notices the fluoride in water has diminished his manliness as he feels fatigue after ejaculation. Because a body deemed as ‘female’ has to be removed, General Ripple is seen committing suicide.

Both The Manchurian Candidate and My Son John also have the same tropes as Dr. Strangelove in which the national and physical male bodies are penetrated by a female body or a ‘female’ force, and thus both the biological female body and the feminized male body are eliminated in order to restore order. As pointed out by Higgins (2017), the two male subjects in the two respective movies, Raymond and John, both are feminized by their mothers’ oppressive and sexually inappropriateness which turn them into weak young men; both national bodies or minds are contaminated with Communist doctrines; the physical female bodies that are the moms are removed either through being sent away to sanitarium or killed; Raymond commits suicide while John is killed as an act of eliminating the feminized male bodies in order to eradicate the bodily chaos.

While Cold War paranoia is a reaction to the uncertainty of bodily boundaries, the manifestations of paranoia in contemporary US narrative revolve around a sense of uncertainty of identity construction and conspiracies (O'Donnell, 2000) which can be interpreted from a wide selection of cinematic examples from the 1970s, such as All the President’s Men (1976) and The Conversation (1973), to the more recent work like
According to Patzig (2007), the 1970s is widely remembered as the golden period of paranoia in cinema in the US in which the phenomenon was referred to as ‘political paranoia’ or ‘social paranoia’, and the movies articulated “a fear that the United States might be rotten from within, a fundamental distrust in the government and the country's major private corporations” (p. 33). In the wake of dramatic political events happened during that era – the Kennedy assassination, the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal, or the revelation of CIA crimes – paranoid films of the 1970s revolve around conspiracies plot and paranoia is treated as a crisis of identity and an uncertainty of what it means to be America, which is illuminated clearly through the notable examples from that era: Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation* (1974), Roman Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974) and Sydney Pollack's *Three Days of the Condor* (1975) (Patzig, 2007). The first two movies express the powerlessness of the protagonists in the face of the permeating evil conspiracies in the American society which leads to the deconstruction of Americaness; in the third movie, however, the hero is able to take immediate actions against the rotten American society and overcome his identity crisis (Patzig, 2007).

In the article *Crisis of Americanism in Hollywood's Paranoia Films of the 1970s*, Patzig (2007) provides some insights into the treatment of paranoia in Coppola’s *The Conversation* in terms of character depictions and visuals. *The Conversation* revolves around Harry Caul, a secretive surveillance expert whose job is to wiretap and record others’ private conversations. He is, at the same time, paranoid about the possibility that somebody could also intrude his own privacy or learn about his life. Thus, he distrusts everybody, even his girlfriend Amy. The protagonist Harry is portrayed as “the archetypal loner” and his isolated and alienated state of mind is signified by the transparent plastic raincoat that he wears (Patzig, 2007). As Harry is a professional wire tapper who is able to monitor others’ private lives, cinematography in this movie also highlights the underlying surveillance theme. For example in the first scene, the camera is positioned high above Union Square with extremely slow zoom which resembles surveillance camera; or at the end of the film when Harry sits and plays his saxophone, the camera pans back and forth in a slow movement which also hints at a surveillance camera on the ceiling (Patzig, 2007).
Besides the camera technique which suggests a secret camera spy, Harry’s state of mind and the depth of his paranoid psyche are expressed vividly through the surrealistic and nightmarish scenes in the hotel towards the end of the movie (Patzig, 2007). Patzig (2007, p. 41) argues that Harry’s alienation and paranoia is rooted from his inability to reconcile himself with the conundrum of the world he lives in and the righteousness of his work. As a professional bugger, he is able to see into a corrupted society in which privacy is intruded and crimes are secretly committed; on the other hand, he is guilty of those crimes as his recordings enable it – such as an earlier work he did in San Francisco leading to the murder of three people. When he suspects that his current assignment of recording a couple could lead to them being murdered, he embarks on a quest for redemption trying to save the couple by hiding the tape from the client who contracts him the work. However, Harry has misinterpreted the tape and the situation. When he finds out it is actually the couple who is plotting a murder against his client, Harry suffers from crisis of consciousness which sends him to paralysis and madness at the end of the movie (Patzig, 2007). Harry’s tormented consciousness is visualized in the toilet scene where the toilet overflows and floods the entire bathroom with red blood water, which signifies his repressed feelings of guilt and his mental destruction caused by his the inability to redeem himself; at the end of the movie, Harry’s disintegrated mind and the state of paralysis are expressed through his torn-down empty apartment (Patzig, 2007, p. 45).

Paranoia depicted as crisis of identity is also seen in the TV series *The X-Files* in which a paranoiac requires a persecutor to ensure their own existence through the exploration of their own borders (Burns, 2001). According to Roustang:

> I would say that the paranoiac is someone who, paradoxically, is threatened with losing his own limits. That is why he needs to provoke the other into becoming his persecutor. The other will thus protect him from the threat of dissipating like a liquid; he will set a border which the paranoiac must constantly confront in order to re-establish the certainty of his existence in a circumscribed physical or psychic space.

(quoted by Burns, 2001, p. 195)

America, first having a status of a colony, became a colonizer of the Native Americans, adopted African slavery, Mexican and Chinese labor (Burns, 2001). America was always a
melting pot for the nations. Having no strictly defined ethnic identity, the citizens are prone to developing paranoia. In *The X-Files*, the fear of the breaching of the boundaries is shaped by the threat of the alien invasion which is clearly a metaphor: “Aliens may tacitly be those frightening beings who drop from outer space, but this cultural phantasm operates as a thinly disguised anxiety about illegal aliens who cross national borders, allegedly abduct jobs, and create “mutant” children through miscegenation” (Burns, 2001, p. 197).

Similar to paranoia in Cold War movies, paranoia as a social reaction to the uncertain borders of identity in contemporary cinema is metaphorized not only by the national body, which is the case in the four contemporary examples above, but also the gendered one. Analyzing *Basic Instinct* (1992) and the central female protagonist that is considered to be ‘monstrous’, Deleyto (1997) argues that such representation of monstrosity embodied in the female character is “the product of paranoia related to gender relationships in contemporary society” (p. 21). The “monstrous” female character is often portrayed along the line of “dualistic sensibility”, in which a female character is perceived both as traditional female role being pure and innocent and a femme fatale who is castrating and dangerous (Deleyto, 1997). There is attraction and repulsion at the same time that shape the relationships between the protagonist and femme fatale who is a regular character of the film noir genre. Male paranoia in such movies is connected with the deep distrust in male-female relationships, filled with seduction and destruction (Fluck, 2001); and the male character is erotically victimized: his life is in safety as long as his sexual performance is satisfactory (Deleyto, 1997). The paranoid male fear of the murderous feminine sexuality – vagina dentata – is embodied in Nick’s perception of Catherine (Deleyto, 1997). Female is considered not only as “castrated” but “castrating.” Traditional patriarchal position is threatened by the strong independent woman who may be considered as castrating. Such paranoia lies in male fear of the sexual intercourse with a woman due to a subconscious belief that vagina is a lethal organ (Deleyto, 1997).

The fear of a woman as the one who challenges the patriarchal order is expressed in a way that such ‘new women’ are being punished or eliminated (Jones, 1991). This is connected with the masochistic male paranoia that women obtain too much power in the society (Lindop, 2015). Such women are being excluded from the traditional family structures (Jones, 1991). In *Presumed Innocent* (1990), such character is Carolyn – a new lover of the
protagonist who is murdered by his wife. The splitting boundaries of the new female gender role implying a combination of both masculine and feminine roles lie at the core of male paranoia; there is a challenge – “phallically empowered yet sexually feminized new woman” (Jones, 1991, p. 297). Carolyn is obsessed with reaching success in her job – yet she does it through seduction. Moreover, her tubes are tied, which allows her to rely not on her reproductive capabilities but on her sexual freedom (Jones, 1991). Not only her sex appears to be compromising, but also her deviant role confronts the ‘natural’ female role.

Reviewing the literatures on paranoia representations on filmic texts thus far, there is a common pattern showing that paranoia is primarily a white male business: it is mainly connected with the male psyche and is represented through the male hero. In these paranoid films, order is restored by eliminating the female characters or anything that is marked ‘female’. To recollect, it is seen that in the films Guest in The House and Meshes in The Afternoon, the death of the femaleness implies stability within the home (Polan, 1986). In Cold War movie examples, the mothers and the ‘feminized’ male characters contaminated by Communism are removed to restore purity of the maleness (Higgins, 2017). In Presumed Innocent, the ‘new woman’ holding both the traditional feminine role and the modern masculine one is murdered in order to reestablish the patriarchal order. Considering the episode The Entire History of You, Liam’s paranoia is depicted as a gendered reaction to a ‘new woman’ – his wife – who is independent with a job and “phallically empowered” with the capability to seduce men. At the end of the episode, not only Ffion but also her belongings and the memories of her are removed.

Such wide representations of white male crisis can be argued to be connected with social changes in which white masculinity is being suppressed and displaced by feminism and multiculturalism (Somerson, 2004). According to Somerson (2004), while in the past there was a peremptory dominance of a man, in the modern world filled with feminism and multiculturalism, this dominance is something to be gained by own actions. In this way, it is no longer enough to be born a white male to be superior: one has to establish own dominance. If in the past, a white male had to compete with only other white males, in the new mode of society perception, he has to compete also with women and males of color which imposes more pressure and leads to the crisis. Kennedy (1996) named the white male selfhood “a fragile and besieged identity” (p. 87). Male ego is a combination of desire and
fear (López, 2001). In this way, there is an inherent conflict that has to be resolved within a man: a conflict of power and fear, connected with the loss of own masculinity. Similarly, considering Freud’s theory of paranoia, such paranoid masochistic sufferings are deeply narcissistic. Men are proud of their scars; indirect sharing of own feeling of insecurity and victimization is usually depicted through the physical pain or tortures. It is shown, for instance, in Fight Club through the fights and blood, and in The Entire History of You episode through the scene of the bloody removal of the chip.

Fradley (2004) underlines that a paranoid crisis of masculinity is depicted widely in the male-oriented action genre. One of the bright examples of such films is Fight Club (1999). Unreliable narrative of the film enhances a sense of paranoia as there is no fully revealed “absolute truth” of the story, and the way the story is told is elaborated step by step to shed light on the case that the Narrator and Tyler Durden are the same split personality (Church, 2006). The spectator realizes that he or she was manipulated throughout the whole film to finally reveal the hidden information. The fragile ego undergoes severe pressure to resolve the inner conflict. First, male character suffers from unspecified suspicions reading the signs that grow paranoia. Then a kind of victimization occurs when a protagonist realizes that the signs really point to the problem.

Fight Club depicts the emasculation through a variety of aspects to show itself to be a film about male crisis and paranoia. First, the Narrator’s feminization is depicted in consumerism and collecting furniture (Church, 2006). His id part, hypermasculine Tyler Durden, denies all his values to liberate his masculine power. The phenomenon of castration is depicted vividly in the support group for testicular cancer survivors “Remaining Men Together” where emasculation is then explicitly imposed. Nevertheless, even Bob with his “bitch-tits” may reinforce his own masculinity in the Fight Club and Project Mayhem (Church, 2006). Paranoia of losing masculinity is shaped through the case that masculinity is reaffirmed by the violence in the Fight Club to defeat own emasculating role in the society.

What notable about films with unreliable narratives such as Fight Club is that the element of paranoia is masochistic not only for the character but for a spectator as well. Church (2006) argues that being a spectator to gradually discover the cues is a tribute to the oral stage when a child has not yet defined its own borders; it is totally submissive to the female figure of the
mother while the father acts as super ego. As a child cannot differentiate from their own powerful mother and her breast, similarly, the spectator cannot differentiate from the screen. It is true for both men and women. Church states that there is a masochist pleasure in submission. He asserts that unreliable narratives establish a particular pervert pleasure because of their “prolonging unpleasure through deferral of satisfaction” (Church, 2006). Moreover, this pleasure is determined accurately by the cues. They make the spectator be involved. However, if they are excessive, the spectator will discover how the syuzhet is unreliable and will feel their own superiority and satisfaction over the text of the film (Church, 2006). Otherwise, if the cues were too few, the spectator would feel discomfort and disengagement (Church, 2006). Paranoia syuzhet implies to have a perfect balance of the concealment and revelation to establish this intriguing sense of prolonged unpleasure to lead to the stronger gratification afterwards.

Going back to Freud’s theory of paranoia, he asserted that paranoia in male is a defense against latent homosexual desire (Freud et al., 1958). Such suppression of homosexuality can be seen in a number of paranoid movies. For example, in Strangers on a Train (1951), Guy and Bruno have a very strong bond with each other due to their secret double murder plan. The latent homosexual relationship is enhanced by “Guy’s “bigamy” joke, Bruno’s drink order (“scotch and plain water - a pair - doubles”)” (Barton, 1991, p. 77). Moreover, during their first meeting, Bruno exclaims: “I like you - I’d do anything for you!” (Barton, 1991, p. 77). In Basic Instinct, the film seems to be clearly heterosexual; there is a notion of repressed homosexual desire between the protagonist Nick and his friend Gus. As Nick admits, Gus is his only friend. Nick values him a lot and their bond is strong. Gus suspects Catherine and expresses his negative attitude to her. Gus himself says he does not love women (Deleyto, 1997). His negative attitude may be interpreted as jealousy. Gus’ aggressiveness towards Catherine may be interpreted as to suggest that he considers her a rival for Nick’s affection. According to Deleyto (1997), there is a latent homophobia which aims to undervalue woman as a threat to make bond, which is focal for patriarchal culture. In Fight Club, there is an implicit homosexuality in the fights between the men in which they embrace each other before and after the fight and may touch each other very intimately only with their fists (Church, 2006). Homoerotic desire is a challenge to the traditional masculinity and is, so far, another notion of white male masculinity in crisis.
Fradley (2004) in his article “Maximus Melodramaticus: Masculinity, Masochism and White Male Paranoia in Contemporary Hollywood Cinema” shares the tendency of the connectedness of paranoia with the lost sense of white heterosexual male supremacy. As social culture implies the wider variety of class, color and sexual orientation, middle-class white male appears to be only ‘one of the many’ (Fradley, 2004). Such state of affairs raises angst among white males being a determining factor of male paranoia traced vividly. Being a purely narcissistic issue, paranoia may be considered as a form of compensation for the disavowed feelings of worthlessness:

If we posit that power and paranoia are little more than noirish mirrorings of each other, delusions of persecution thus structure the identity of the male subject: paranoid counter-narratives make connections and (re-)order their universe, anxiously re-cohering the world, quite literally, around itself. As such, the grandiose narcissism of the paranoiac can be seen as a form of (over-) compensation for displaced feelings of (personal, cultural, and/or socio-economic) worthlessness and inadequacy. Paranoia thus works in a cyclical double-bind, staging various masochistic fantasies in order to master them. (Fradley, 2004, p. 238).

It is clear that paranoia is a result of a hysteric hypermasculine response to the feminization imposed by the social order (Fradley, 2004). Fradley underlined the specific erotization of the male body in connection with powerlessness and, in this way, feminization. It is represented in the images of punishment or destruction as injuries. However, the process of regeneration is connected with the dynamics of remasculinization (Fradley, 2004). So far, for the remasculinization, prior feminization is expected. Narcissistic tendency is depicted in a matter where the suffering white male hero requires the gaze of the audience to watch his sufferings (Fradley, 2004). Fradley expresses that the temporary relinquishing of a phallus allows the protagonist to become a sort of imitation of Christ and, in this way, through their sympathy win the hearts of the audience. Narcissistic tendency is shown through victimization like the depiction of the white males of own injuries; there is also a masochistic aspect as they found pleasure in the exploration of pain (Fradley, 2004). The physical wounds are the signs of their disempowerment.

Romney (1998) in his article Games Pixels Play depicts another type of paranoia – this one is connected with the predominant usage of digital technologies. In such a world, the surface
of reality is to be always questioned, as it may appear to be not real. The films *The Game* (1997), *Dark City* (1998) and *The Truman Show* (1998) all depict the issue that one day, life may turn out to be pure fabrication (Romney, 1998). The sense of lost certainty gives birth to paranoia. *The Game* seems to be a multi-layered movie. First, it shows explicitly it is a game – announcing it. However, with the development of the plot the sense that it appeared to be not a game grows. The protagonist and the spectator realize gradually that everything is serious. Paranoia is enhanced by the words of the protagonist’s brother Konrad that he is being pursued by the company that created the Game. As he reveals, the aim of the game was to take all his money – and it is confirmed. The hero feels real danger and becomes very decisive. Nevertheless, the absurdity is depicted as the end of the film shows that it was all just a game – after the complete persuasion of the hero that everything is real, serious and very dangerous. Erasing the borders of reality and loss of certainty make the protagonist experience the strongest emotions he had in his life, as he admits.

The paranoia of *The Truman Show* is less dangerous but is just as complex. The ‘reality’ the character lives in seems to be so real and ordinary that there is no sense of madness and angst of typical paranoia. However, Truman reads the signs, as the typical hero of the paranoia movies. The sense of incongruence grows as he notices the signs. Also, the female character reveals a piece of truth before being removed from the show. The plot develops as a kind of psychosis and has narcissistic aspects as Truman shares the mad thought that is actually not mad: that he has a feeling that the whole world swirls around him (Romney, 1998). It appears that Truman is the only ‘true man’ in the artificially created reality.

Similar to the protagonist of *The Game*, Truman manages to confront the godlike oppressive figure of the creator of his own reality to become the ruler of own reality – which is an appeal to the Oedipal complex which is a characteristic of the paranoia movies of the period (Romney, 1998). Murdoch, the protagonist of *Dark City* does the same: he defeats the Strangers who are the oppressive figures who shape the memories of all the inhabitants of the city. He uses their powers – machines – to change the reality and to create the reality upon his own request. He creates the city in accordance with his childish memories – the city which existed only on the poster previously. Again, there is a narcissistic triumph considered: Murdoch establishes a supremacy and total authority in his own world, which is a powerful response to paranoia.
Peter Weir’s *The Truman Show* (1998) is among the most notable filmic texts containing the elements of paranoia and panopticon. The protagonist Truman Burbank is an unwanted baby who is adopted by a corporation and raised up within a dome making up the idyllic suburban town of Seahaven not knowing that his entire life is being broadcasted as a simulated TV show in which everything is scripted. He remains naïve until he notices technical glitches that cause him to be suspicious of the world around him and decides to escape. With thousands of cameras set up everywhere to capture Truman’s every single movement, Truman himself becomes a panoptic object, which is represented by Weir’s mise-en-scène techniques signifying surveillance such as the use of iris lens. The sense of paranoia engendered in Truman bears resemblance to Freud’s interpretation of Schreber’s paranoid personality as explained by O’Donnell (2000):

a son trapped in his father’s “womb”; a god-son on whom the world is entirely centered, convinced that he must destroy the world in order to gain ascendancy over it; a son (s-o-n) whose actions cause a change in the movements of the sun (s-u-n), and whose relation to the father is one of bondage and eventual release as he exits out the backdoor (the symbolic asshole) of the world whose purpose he has just sundered at film’s end. (p. 4)

Similar to *The Truman Show*, paranoia is seen clearly in *Groundhog Day*, in which the protagonist is trapped in some sort of externally imposed reality (O'Donnell, 2000). The two movies mirror each other. While Phil in *Groundhog Day* becomes aware that he is trapped in the time loop because of the external forces such as the song he wakes up to or the same announcement on the radio, Truman in *The Truman Show* realizes that he is trapped because of the suspicious behaviors of the people around him. Both male characters have to undergo some personal changes to escape from the imposed order under which they are victimized and, so far emasculated, as they have no real power over own lives. They both undergo the process of maturation in which they accept responsibility for their own lives.

To underline the findings of the literature review, male paranoia is shaped by the borders of uncertainty. The changes of the social order threaten the fragile ego and the empowering of women is a challenge to the patriarchal view where the white middle-class male was placed at the focus of attention. Modern society is tolerant to a diversity of the rights and sexual
orientation so there is a white male crisis. Women may be widely attributed to as ‘castrating women’ who possess male rights and have ‘symbolic phallus’, which means the power and independence they obtain. There is a narcissistic and masochistic pleasure in male paranoia. They enjoy exploration of their own pain. In a variety of movies, they are being victimized and, in this way, feminized to revive their own masculinity afterwards. Paranoia is the search of knowledge to re-establish the order within the uncertainty. Such an attempt to restore order is seen in *The Entire History of You.*
3 ANALYSIS

The Entire History of You depicts a kind of digitized society in which every person has an implanted chip called ‘Grain.’ It is located behind the ear and is wired to the eyes. Such chip is capable of recording everything a person sees and storing it forever, unless deleted. An individual with the grain implanted may playback the memories, or referred to as ‘re-dos’ in the episode, anytime and repeat them as many times as he or she wants to.

The episode is winded around the technology and numerous re-dos that the male protagonist obsessively watches. Liam is the protagonist of the episode. His paranoia is the focal object of analysis in this thesis. He accuses his wife’s, Ffion, of infidelity due to her strange behaviors towards Jonas – one of her male friends at a dinner party. Gradually, his suspicion rises as he finds the new cues that prove her infidelity. Eventually, Liam finds all the evidences to prove the betraying truth that his wife has an affair and that their baby might be Jonas’.

In order to answer the research question, “How is paranoia represented in The Entire History of You?” as posed in the beginning of this thesis, I will use textual analysis to examine how the three elements – the use of space, the use of reflective surfaces made by glass and mirror, and cinematography – visualize the psychological manifestation of paranoia that Liam goes through. In chapter two – Literature review – I have contextualized the notion of paranoia being treated in this thesis, which is predominantly based on Freud’s theory of paranoia and Foucault’s panoptic model of surveillance, as well as pointing out the common tropes used in paranoid narratives. The findings from chapter two act as the foundation for my analysis of paranoia in terms of its visual style.

This Analysis chapter is divided into three parts accordingly to the three elements I have chosen as focus of my analysis. Part one will look at the use of space in terms of kinesics and proxemics – the two concepts coined respectively by Ray Birdwhistell (1952) and Edward T. Hall (1969) – which examines how actors use the micro-space of their bodies and the positions of the characters in relation to each other within a frame in order to learn about the nature of their behaviors and the dynamic of the relationships among the characters. Part
two will examine how the dominant visual motif being used in this episode, which is the use of glass and mirror creating reflections of the characters, contributes to metaphorizing Liam’s vague state of mind. Part three will inspect how cinematography vividly sets the tone of the episode and visualizes Liam’s manifestation of paranoia.

### 3.1 The use of space

The use of space is “a vital expressive element at a film-maker’s disposal” (Gibbs, 2002, p. 17). The distribution of space determines the characteristic of the interaction between the characters on the screen. In examining the use of space, this analysis looks into the aspect of kinesics and proxemics. Kinesics is a concept that was first used and considered to be founded by Ray Birdwhistell in 1952. Kinesics analyses the ways in which the actors use their bodies to interact and express themselves through posture, facial expression, stance, and body motion (Birdwhistell, 1952). Proxemics was coined by Edward T. Hall, which considers human use of space in order to evaluate the way people interact with each other. According to Hall (1969), we study proxemics by looking at the interpersonal distance horizontally and vertically. The horizontal interpersonal distance between two people can be classified into four zones: intimate space, personal space, social space, and public space. On the other hand, the vertical distance can suggest who holds the dominance in a relationship, or the literal act of looking up or down on another person can assert social status. In film analysis, the study of proxemics considers the placement of the characters within the frame in order to understand the dynamics of the relationships between them.

#### 3.1.1 Distribution of power

The distribution of the space in the episode indicates the distribution of the power to show which character holds control or in dominant position. Freud et al. (1985) implied that paranoia could be understood as a defense against social slights and humiliations. On another hand, Harper (2008) also argues that those who are in powerless social positions by the threat of victimization, tend to adopt paranoid beliefs. As a result, the one who holds power is also in the position to humiliate and emasculate the other, thus causing paranoid tendencies in the victim. Through examining the space distribution between Liam and other characters, we can see the process of humiliation and emasculation Liam goes through which leads to his paranoid suspicions.
Considering the first scene of the episode where Liam is having an appraisal at work, Liam is sitting alone at one end of a very long table while the group of managers is sitting close to each other like a wolf pack at the opposite end as depicted in Figure 1. We can clearly see that Liam is being outnumbered and the space created by the managers collectively dominates the meeting room. The wolf pack is suppressing and humiliating Liam, putting him in the subordinate position and making him nervous. The large space created by the huge table they are sitting at emphasizes the pressure and the control they impose. Furthermore, the diagonal composition of space in this shot creates more tension.

We are introduced to the first man sitting at the other end of the table, a Caucasian man wearing a yellowish shirt. It can be taken out that this man is the leader of the wolf pack. His posture is very laid back and his body is widely spread out, giving the alpha male vibes in the room. He is very confident which is explicitly shown through his facial expressions and the way he tells the joke, “Shit sinks. But also cream floats”, as he winks at Liam to break the ice. He is the first character of the wolf pack to be shown and is always framed apart from the other two throughout the appraisal scene. The only times he is shown within the wolf pack is from the perspective seen from the back, looking towards Liam in Figure 1.
From this perspective, we can see that he and the other male member of the group, an African man, is sitting in almost the same postures crossing the same left legs on top; however, the man in the yellowish shirt is sitting higher than the other one. As compared to the Asian lady, they are at the same height but he is more relaxed and confident with his left arm dangling on the side, while the Asian lady’s sitting is more reserved with her arms held closed to the body and resting on her legs. The African man and the Asian lady appear as supportive characters to strengthen his leading position in the room.

The Caucasian man is not afraid to occupy and fill up the space in the room. In fact, he is the only one occupying the most space of all, not only through his sitting posture but also his walking to the fridge to grab two bottles of beer for him. Perhaps, it can be inferred from the two bottle caps in front of Liam that he was the one walking across the room offering Liam a beer. The Africa man sitting in the middle, although not shown moving around the room, also holds a very laid back and spread out posture. The third member of the group, the Asian lady, although shown in a reserved posture, appears to be occupying a higher position than Liam when she tries to explain one of the cases to Liam as if Liam is a student.

In contrast to the manager’s confident and relaxed pose, Liam is sitting alone and is framed in a way to show that he is being emasculated by the wolf pack (Figure 2.1 and 2.2). The posture of Liam is tense and he is restricted within his own personal space. He is sitting with his arms either resting close to his body or he is leaning nervously on the table, which also points to a kind of emasculation. This is additionally shaped by his tone of voice and the manner of speaking. His attempts to spread out his body space seem a little awkward. His lips are pursed; his eyebrows are tense; his fingers are crossed as if he is trying to hold

Figure 2.1 and 2.2: Liam's profile shots during appraisal
himself and stay calm in the situation of being under control. He swallows and licks his lips, trying to not to lose his cool as they are talking about pulling exhaustive re-dos to evaluate his work performance and morality. However, his eyes betray him as seen in Figure 2.2. He has a dramatic look into the empty space that takes up half of the frame, suggesting his state of despair and of being suppressed.

When the managers mention that Liam could be involved in “litigation in retrospective parenting cases” if he were to stay with the firm, we can see at this point that Liam has resigned to the dominating power. He questions the managers whether the firm accepts this new practice, the reactions of the managers hint that he is asking a dumb question and they have joking expressions on their faces as they answer “yes”. Liam realizes it is a dumb question so he awkwardly leans back to the chair and laughs. However, his awkwardness and his nervous chuckles give out that Liam does not think it is ethical and the managers could see it, especially the African man who even seems to be irritated by the question. He asks Liam, “Are you?” in a close-up shot. His tone of voice and expressions suggest his reconsidering at that moment whether Liam is the right candidate. He already possesses a superior position to Liam and this line of questioning puts more stress on Liam, making him answer frantically “Totally. Yeah.”, which is followed by a nervous “Yes”. The final smile of the leading manager seems insincere while Liam’s is a desperate one. These three people embody the system of power imposed through the surveillance. As they do their markings on the sheets of paper, they are being shown as the judges.

The power distribution signified by space is then again seen when Liam comes to Ffion’s friend reunion dinner at Paul and Lucy’s house. In this sequence, Jonas is the alpha male in the room. When Liam walks into the room, he sees his wife is talking very intimately with Jonas, whom he has never met before. Being married to each other, it is safe to say that Liam and Ffion share each other’s intimate space – the interpersonal space ranging from touching to about 46cm apart that is reserved for lovers, spouses, close family members, or very close friends (Hall, 1969). By extension, Ffion’s intimate space can also be considered as Liam’s intimate space, or in other words, his ‘territory’. Yet, Jonas is establishing his presence over this territory of Liam by standing within an intimate space with Ffion. When he and Ffion spot Liam, instead of becoming tense and acting awkward like Ffion, Jonas remains very calm. He is not even afraid to initiate announcing his presence to Liam with a very casual
“Hey”. He greets Liam with a firm handshake and a steady look directly to Liam’s eyes. It doesn’t stop there. Jonas quickly enters the intimate space of Liam, coming very closely into Liam’s personal bubble. He even gives Liam a hug, patting on his back as if they have met before. Liam seems confused as Jonas goes for the hug but he still tries to keep up with it. The look on Liam’s face gives away that he is not sure who Jonas is. In fact, just before entering the house, Liam has gone through a few re-dos to make sure he remembers all the names of Ffion’s old friends. Jonas immediately dominates the space: he takes over Ffion, leads the way for Liam and introduces him to Jeff, who is sitting at the sofa. When Liam jokes to Jeff that Ffion is always mean, Jonas agrees with, “Tell me about it.”, suggesting that Jonas knows Ffion rather very well which leaves Liam puzzled as Liam has met everybody from the old crowd but not this Jonas, who seems to be overfamiliar with both Liam and Ffion.

When Liam is being forced to re-do the appraisal and Jonas comes in to “rescue” him, Liam is again sort of being “emasculated” as his body space is small and reserved. He sits in a small armchair in a very relaxed manner in the beginning. Once he is asked to re-do the appraisal, he immediately leans forward and his posture becomes very tense while the other guests laugh and joke at the idea of “appraise the appraisal”. Here we see that all the friends, including Ffion, are holding glasses of wine. Liam, on the other hand, is holding a bottle of beer. Going back to the appraisal, Liam was the only one drinking beer and sitting alone on one end of the table while the managers did not drink at all and sat closely together. This is a trope signifying Liam being the other in their company and being humiliated by the gang. Liam does not want to re-do the appraisal but he is not firm in defending himself. The hesitation in his tone of voice allows the gang to make fun and push Liam further to re-do the scene. Liam is helpless and even Ffion cannot help, until Jonas comes over to “rescue” him.

Figure 3.1: Jonas alpha male to the “rescue”

Figure 3.2: Liam being emasculated
Jonas is not only “saving” Liam, but also showing dominance and his position of power over him. It is depicted in a way that Liam is sitting down while Jonas is standing up. Considering Hall’s (1969) vertical distance, Jonas asserts the higher status than all through his literally looking down on Liam, and everybody else. Jonas appears calm and chill with his hands inside his pockets. He is the coolest kid in the gang and everybody is listening to his orders. Similar to the leader of the wolf pack in the appraisal, Jonas also gives Liam a wink to which Liam reacts with a slight nod of acknowledgement. His shoulders are dropped and he looks down on the floor to hide his embarrassment from being defeated (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.1 also underlies Jonas’ alpha male-ness at the party. It can be inferred that Lucy has the intention to set up Colleen with Jeff. In this scene, Jonas is standing on the same side and close to Jeff while Colleen is sitting alone but still within Jeff and Jonas’ social distance, as if the masculinity of the two males is being put under comparison for Colleen. As Jonas comes and saves Liam, Jeff - the one who initiates the re-do “bullying” - becomes quiet and looks embarrassed for what he has done. At this moment, while everybody is looking down feeling ashamed, Colleen turns her head and looks up to Jonas, which subtly indicates that Jonas has won Colleen’s attention. Even though she is intended for Jeff, Colleen seems to be more attracted to Jonas and his coolness. At the dinner table, she is engaged with Jonas’ anecdote; the way she sits with her shoulders tensed up, looks at Jonas with admiration, and giggles at his story resembles the image of a shy high school having crush on the hottest boy in class and trying to win his attention.

From the appraisal until the dinner, it is demonstrated that the control of power has not been in Liam’s favor. We see that he has gone through a process of humiliation and emasculation by either another alpha male or a group of people, thus creating a crisis of masculinity within himself that leads to the growing paranoia. The distribution of space, up until this point, underlies the process of victimization and feminization. After that, it underlies Liam’s gaining back power in order to re-establish order. As pointed out in the literature review some of the key aspects in paranoid mechanisms, a paranoiac suffering from low self-esteem goes through a process of disavowal and projection through which they try to deny their feelings of worthlessness and attribute it onto others. Liam’s claiming back power seen through the distribution of space in relation to Jonas and Ffion asserts this process. Liam’s ego is fragile after being humiliated. However, he denies that he is in the position of a victim.
and projects his anxiety rooted from these social downfalls onto his wife by accusing Ffion having an affair with Jonas, and her co-worker Dan before that.

Liam’s first step towards gaining power as an act of disavowing his feeling of low self-esteem is to reclaim his domination and ownership over his wife. When Liam and Ffion are outside of Lucy and Paul’s house about to go home, there is nobody else there saying farewell to them except for Jonas. Here, Jonas is still establishing his presence within Liam and Ffion’s social space and such presence has a manipulative power over Ffion. Ffion gives a hint that she does not want to go home yet. As seen from a re-do from Liam’s perspective, the expressions on Ffion’s face says that she is keen on spending more time with Jonas. Jonas suggests having a drink at a pub to which Liam declines. He wants to go home. After saying no to Jonas, Liam looks at Ffion and lingers, as seen from a re-do from Ffion’s perspective. Perhaps at this point, Liam notices the disappointment on Ffion’s face and how Jonas is still in the position of power. He then reluctantly invites Jonas over to his house for a nightcap as an act to show that he is not intimidated or unnerved by Jonas.

When the three of them arrive at Liam and Ffion’s place standing in front, Liam makes excuse to call it off with the nightcap invitation saying that they have a babysitter inside. It is not a new info as Jonas has also pointed out. Liam wants to humiliate Jonas using outnumber tactic. It is only Liam who wants to get rid of Jonas, but he pulls Ffion to his team by using the inclusive pronoun ‘we’ to indicate that it is mutually agreed upon by both of them. When Liam turns to Ffion as an indication asking for backup from Ffion on the vague excuse, Ffion is anxious. Her hands give it away. Ffion cannot keep her hands still as she keeps use her left hand to slightly scratch her right. Sometimes, she cheats looking down on the ground to avoid eye contact with Jonas.

Figure 4: Liam kissing Ffion’s head
The scene in Figure 4 is also the only scene throughout the episode in which Liam and Ffion standing together within an intimate space under the presence of somebody else. Liam wants to gain back the control of power of his ‘property’ – his wife. He switches his briefcase from the left hand to the right hand so that he could use his left hand to wrap around Ffion intimately. Liam pulls Ffion closer to his body and kisses her head loudly. Although this act of Liam seems very insincere, this is the most intimate thing he does with Ffion while being within someone else’s social space. This is Liam’s way to make a statement to Jonas that Ffion is his wife. Ffion, however, does not reciprocate the intimacy. She crosses her arms in front of her body and leans awkwardly against Liam as he pulls her closer.

One of the common patterns of the films on white male paranoia as pointed out in the literature review chapter is the appearance of a femme fatale character who threatens the protagonist’s masculinity, such as the appearance of the ‘monstrous’ Catherine in Basic Instinct (Deleyto, 1997) or the “phallically empowered” Carolyn in Presumed Innocent (Jones, 1991). In the episode, however, Ffion does not seem to be a typical femme fatale like Catherine or Carolyn. She cannot be evaluated as a woman of outstanding appearance with eccentric manners. Her first appearance is not shaped by the thrilling music or silence, or special effects. Rather than that, she looks like a normal woman, caring and nice. Her clothes are never sexual. Nevertheless as it is observed from the literature review, while a male reflects order, a woman reflects chaos and acts as a disturbance in the ordered male world. The masculinity is challenged in a way that a male protagonist is victimized and feminized. Here in this episode, Ffion’s infidelity and her attempts to hide the truth pose a threat to Liam’s masculinity and his patriarchal order. This leads to the paranoid protagonist’s quest to regain power and search for evidence to confirm his suspicions.
In Figure 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, we see Liam in relation to Ffion when they are together alone. These three scenes depict Liam questioning Ffion to dig into the history and find out the truth about Jonas as an act of projecting his anxiety onto Ffion through suspecting her peculiar behaviors towards Jonas. Except for the scene in the bedroom when Liam says sorry to Ffion and then they have emotionless robot-like sex, he is depicted in these shots as the one holding the power. Looking at the two scenes in Figure 5.1 and 5.2 in terms of kinesics – the micro-space formed by body movement - we see Liam in a different manner than from before. Although sitting on an armchair with his left leg crossing on the right, Liam’s upper body space is more spread out as he sits leaning back to the chair with his hands resting on the two sides, in contrast to his leaning forward with arms holding close to the body when he was at the appraisal or at the reunion dinner. Liam is more expressive with his body language, supporting his speech with the movements of both hands. His words are full of mockery; his tone of voice is loud; and his speech is more coherent. Ffion, on the other hand, is in the subordinate position. She speaks quietly and answers with fewer words. She either leans forward or cross her arms in front as a subconscious reaction to defend herself. As she
confesses to Liam about Jonas, she uses her free hand to touch her nose and then her neck – a sign showing that she is anxious. Although Liam is in power, he still cannot establish control over Ffion as she would find a way to avoid the interrogation by increasing the distance or setting a barrier with Liam.

Nevertheless, Liam eventually claims control after he has drunkenly gone to Jonas’ place and started a fight just to finally find proof for his wife’s infidelity. Figure 5.3 shows Liam in total domination over Ffion as he tries to restore order. Liam grabs a chair in the room and sits down with his back against Ffion. In contrast to the other two scenes, Liam starts talking in a very low tone of voice; he sits rather still on the chair in a calm manner and does not use body movement as he shows Ffion the evidence he has just found. He is in full control. Ffion, on the other hand, composes a closed posture as she kneels on the bed leaning forward. She begs Liam for mercy as there is no way to hide the truth anymore. She is vulnerable. Her voice is broken as she confesses. She tries to destroy the re-do of the night she had sex with Jonas, which would give away the ultimate truth about whether or not Jodie really is Liam’s child. This provokes Liam to stand up and get violence towards Ffion in demand to watch the re-do, to which Ffion has to give in. While Liam watches the re-do, Ffion is completely defeated and powerless as she sits bowing close the bed surface and cries.

In all those three scenes when Liam is searching for the truth, we see that Liam is always sitting alone on the exactly same armchair in the living room or on a chair in the bedroom. Even when he is sitting in a big sofa in the beginning, he later moves to the armchair as Ffion sits on the other (Figure 5.2). He is in control of the situation. Interestingly enough, Liam himself is a lawyer. Such arrangement puts him in the position of a judge interrogating the defendant in seek for justice. And a paranoid male protagonist will not stop being suspicious and looking for more knowledge until he finds out the real truth.

3.1.2 Crisis of masculinity and the quest to restore order

Paranoia and crisis of masculinity are considered as the essential aspects of this episode, which is depicted vividly through the use of space between the characters. As it was discovered through an extensive literature review, paranoia is a male issue. The typical concept of male paranoia is depicted: Liam is a normal middle-class white male. He has a
wife and a child. Another pattern of paranoia films is that they start from the seemingly perfect or usual condition: normal life, normal family, normal (or absent) personal life. Furthermore, according to the pattern, a male protagonist starts to notice and read the signs. He follows them to reconstruct the truth. In *The Entire History of You* episode, it starts from the scene of the meeting with Jonas, who is talking to Liam’s wife in quite an intimate manner. It is shown through the distribution of the space, the positions of their bodies in relation to each other and the perspective from Liam’s point of view as he enters the room. The scene is not shown as if to simply depict the current situation in the room. The perspective in this scene is shaped in a way that the view merges with what Liam is actually seeing through his eyes. And through Liam’s lens, he notices his wife is talking to a strange man; and he is confronted with a feeling of jealousy and is suspicious from what he is seeing. This is also the point where the protagonist’s male order is being challenged.

![Figure 6: Ffion and Jonas' intimate moment](image)

The crisis of masculinity manifests itself gradually as Liam witnesses his wife talking to a man he has never met before – Jonas. Sweeping through the situation of the living room, they are not the only ones there. There is also Jeff who is sitting at the sofa by himself. However, Ffion and Jonas, whom previously were joining Jeff, have now resorted to a corner of the room just the two of them and created a private space around them as seen in Figure 6. The distance between Ffion and Jonas is very intimate to the point that they almost touch in other. They talk rather quietly, smile and laugh. In a study of body orientation by Hall (1963), he classified the relation between two bodies into nine distinct spatial arrangements to determine the level of interaction between two people, ranging from position 0 (direct face-to-face) to position 8 (standing with their backs on each other). Following to Hall’s classification, Ffion and Jonas are depicted in the position 1. It means
facing each other at an acute angle which is considered as engagement (Hall, 1963). They are actually flirting with each other and Liam can also understand that. Their bodies are placed diagonally. Ffion is standing and Jonas is sitting on a corner of the table. Jonas’ position is relaxed. His legs are spread apart and the direction of his attention shows that his phallus is symbolically open and directed towards Ffion. When Ffion notices Liam’s presence in the room, she immediately leaves Jonas and her position changes to 6 according to Hall’s classification. It means that she turns away trying to disengage herself from Jonas, and readies herself to greet Liam. Jonas himself decides to follow Ffion and greet Liam as well. Ffion introduces the two of them to each other. As they shake hands to greet, she turns away again (position 6) and clamps her lips, which is an evident non-verbal sign that she is near to be caught. Additionally, she takes several steps away from them indicating that she is trying to hide her secrets. As the three of them are walking towards Jeff to introduce Liam, Ffion is walking behind with one hand inside the pocket and her head is tilted down, showing her nervousness of being the guilty one. This is the breach of the contact between Ffion and Liam. She keeps holding her head down and sits down at the sofa by herself as Liam is being introduced to Colleen. Ffion covers her mouth with her hand – a common non-verbal sign of the subconscious desire to hide one’s own words. It is connected with lies. She sits alone which perfectly shapes her character in this mise-en-scene. Ffion’s posture is closed and reserved which is seen through her crossed arms and legs. She sits quite far away from Liam creating a cold distance, which is rather unusual for a married couple. This social distance is also in contrast with the intimate and private space that she was in with Jonas moments earlier.

Liam has already been humiliated and emasculated during the appraisal, which leads him to have low self-esteem. And now, his masculinity is again being threatened by the appearance of the other man who is establishing his presence and spreading his space over Liam’s “territory” – his wife. He becomes increasingly suspicious over Ffion’s acting differently with him as compared to with Jonas. Ffion’s indifference towards Liam is seen through her kinesics. We can see that Ffion is being very sincere and open with Jonas. She is smiling, laughing, and having a good time with Jonas. She stands very close to Jonas; the distance is very intimate and rather unusual for two people who are supposedly just friends. Right after that, we see a stark contrast when Ffion sees Liam and gives him a hello kiss on the cheek.
The kiss seems cold and insincere and Liam’s expressions on his face say that he is uncomfortable with it.

When Liam is forced to re-do the appraisal in front of everybody, he goes through yet another process of emasculation and humiliation. As analyzed earlier in Figure 3.2, the distribution of space in this scene underlies Liam being in a powerless and defeated position as the gang teases Liam until Jonas “saves” him. Ffion does not even bother to console him afterwards. When everybody moves to the dinner table, she and Lucy goes together, arms hugging each other’s back, leaving Liam to be the last to go. While everybody brings their glasses of wine with them, Liam leaves his bottle behind on the table, which again underlines their differences.

Liam’s crisis is established. He quickly grabs Ffion out of Lucy’s arm to ask about whether or not he has met Jonas before. Ffion says Jonas is part of the old crowd and that she has told before – which is not true evidently. She compensates her lack of sincerity with a lingering kiss on the lips for reassurance. From here, instead of continuing to the eating area with Liam, she turns away and walks alone. This space that Ffion is trying to create with Liam can be interpreted as her trying to hide her lack of confidence and insincerity, and a sort of alienation and protection from Liam’s probable questions and concerns. Liam, however, is not assured. The moment Ffion turns away to continue to the eating area, Liam immediately re-does the moment he sees Ffion having a good time with a happy smile on her face when she was talking to Jonas privately – a very relaxed Ffion whom quickly became tense with a look of disorientation on her face as soon as she saw Liam.
The tension and distance between Liam and Ffion is increasing. It is also signified through their sitting positions at the dinner table where they are not sitting right next to each other or directly opposite one another, but on the two sides of the table and creating a big space between them. Liam’s suspicion is further heightened considering how Ffion reacts to Liam’s joke as compared to Jonas’ (Figure 7.1 and 7.2). In the beginning when he greets Colleen, he introduces himself as ‘soon to be unemployed slash unemployable lawyer’ which is meant to be a joke, though a very lame one. While Lucy laughs at it, we see Ffion is frowning upon it in a close-up shot. During the dinner, Ffion comments on Hallam’s “one man at a time” that Hallam is “a serial monogamist”, to which Jonas follows up with a joke, “I’m a cereal monogamist. I’m staying faithful to my cornflakes right now”. Jonas’ joke causes an awkward silence and nobody laughs. Except for Ffion, who finds the joke so hilarious that she cannot hold herself laughing out loud with her head tilting down. And of course, Liam sees that. Perhaps, this is also the moment that pushes Liam over the edge of suspicion to the point of obsession over re-dos of what has just happened the entire night when he is at home.

When Liam, Ffion and Jonas are standing outside of Liam and Ffion’s place, as mentioned above, Liam tries to re-affirm his dominance over his wife and gain control of power from Jonas. While he seems to have reclaimed his wife territory, he fails at humiliating and gaining power from Jonas, which is seen through the way Liam and Ffion say farewell to Jonas. Understanding Liam’s intention, Jonas maintains a distance against Ffion and only raises his hand to say goodbye to her. To Liam, on the other hand, Jonas gives an overly friendly farewell just like when he greets Liam – another subtle attempt to emasculate Liam. Jonas reaches out his right hand to Liam as he says “Good to see you, man”. Liam, whose both hands are busy holding Ffion on one side and holding his briefcase on the other, interprets Jonas’ reaching out as a handshake. He has to drop his briefcase on the ground so to have a free hand for the handshake. This moment looks as if he is bowing down to the (still) alpha male being Jonas. Just as when Liam gives out his hand for a handshake, Jonas drops his and turns it into a hug and once again, invading Liam’s personal space. Liam, feeling humiliated, tries to save the control of power by initiate the missed handshake after the hug. He cannot hide his anxiety of being emasculated. When he initiates the handshake, his five fingers are quite spread out and he awkwardly grabs the shake with his other hand. His body is leaning forward in a lower position than Jonas’ cool posture. Liam’s attempt results in his remaining powerless, putting his masculinity in crisis.
Liam’s suspicion about Jonas increases. He wants to know more about this guy but faces Ffion’s efforts to avoid the interrogation. Considering the scene when Liam and Ffion come home and have their first quarrel, we can see Ffion’s attempts to disengage with Liam in order to conceal the truth are further underlined by her constructions of micro-space in relations to Liam and within the house. When they have just arrived home from the dinner and then sit down in the living room to watch the re-do from their child, once again we see Ffion chooses to sit alone on the sofa while Liam sits by himself on the armchair, same as at the reunion. The space between Ffion and Liam is noticeable. When Ffion sits on the sofa, she turns her full body completely away and devotes all her attention on the re-do. She is trying to shield herself from Liam but it does not stop Liam from bringing Jonas into the conversation. He is on the quest for knowledge that is the truth behind Jonas.

As mentioned above, we see Liam here in a very expressive manner with excessive body language and loud voice as if he is attacking Ffion. After all the humiliation and emasculation he has gone through during the day, he is trying to project all his suppressed anxiety and vulnerability onto Ffion. Ffion is stunned with Liam’s digging into the history between her and Jonas. She tries to gain back the trust from Liam by switching from her usual disengaging position (Hall’s position 4) to a more involved orientation in regards to Liam (position 2) when she confesses having a thing with Jonas way back. She opens her body posture and lowers her voice in attempts to be sincere as she shares an intimate detail about her life to her husband. As it turns out, Jonas was Mr. Marrakesh, whom she has told Liam on their first night together. Nevertheless, her confession does not add up as she said Mr. Marrakesh was just “a weird week”, but now she is saying that her fling with Jonas was a month. Realizing her mistake, she turns defensive and immediately stands up and turns her back to walk away. She switches back to the disengage position and enlarges the space against Liam to evade from directly answering Liam’s questions. She goes to stand quite a distance behind the sofa. In this way, she is kind of hiding from Liam, setting another barrier and layer of protection from his digging.

After a session of routine robotic sex with Ffion, Liam goes downstairs to re-do the moment when Jonas says he would rather masturbate to his re-dos of the hot times with some hot girls than having sex with a real woman waiting for him upstairs. This makes Liam jealous
as he, perhaps, thinks to himself that Jonas masturbates to re-dos of sex with his wife. He starts drinking. During the episode, Liam drinks a lot of alcohol – which is perceived as a typical response and a male’s coping mechanism to deal with stress and reduce emotional pain (Freud et al., 1958). Repetition in drinking also enhances the sense of paranoia. Leaving his wife sleeping and moving to the other space can also be considered as a change of the distance and escape from reality – to dig into own paranoid thoughts and disturbances.

As discussed above, although Ffion does not constitute a typical femme fatale character, she is a conspirator trying to bury the truth and challenges the male protagonist’s order. Therefore, the task of a male hero is to re-establish order. Liam spends the entire night drinking and obsessing over the re-do of the reunion to analyze Ffion’s behavior himself. As morning comes, he confronts Ffion about it. He is in the position of power, which is underlined by the distribution of space as he interrogates Ffion. But Liam fails to establish control over Ffion as she walks away in the middle of the quarrel to break contact with Liam.

Being drunk, he visits Jonas at his place to have a rude quarrel with him, which ends up with a fight. The tone and the manners of the two male characters establish a strong sense of contrast. Liam is drunk and loud; he does not really control himself. Jonas, on the other hand, is calm; his posture is closed and his phrases are weighted and restrained. He tries to avoid getting into the conflict with Liam. Nevertheless, as Liam refuses to go away, Jonas has to shorten the distance and invade Liam’s personal space in order to grab him and get him to leave. This provokes Liam and he starts beating Jonas. He forces Jonas to delete all the memories of his wife from the grain. His jealous aggressive behavior towards Jonas does not stop him to continue getting deeper into his void of suspicions and mistrust. He finds a new cue that confirms the legitimacy of Liam’s paranoia. Liam sees Jonas’ memory about Ffion lying seductively and half naked in Liam’s bedroom. The special painting that Liam bought to Ffion gives away that Ffion has indeed slept with Jonas while being married to Liam. Furthermore, the memory dates back to 18 months ago, which coincides with the period when Liam and Ffion were trying to conceive a baby. This leads to the question who the father of their kid is.
With the truth being revealed, he becomes the victim of his wife’s conspiracy. Back to their bedroom, Liam sits on a chair with his back against Ffion and starts his last interrogation. Meanwhile, Ffion is lying on the bed and then switches to kneeling position. They are separated by an empty static space that is the wall, which describes both their present and permanent detachment from each other. Ffion claims the baby is Liam’s as she used a condom when having sex with Jonas. However, distrusted Liam has to go to the bottom of the truth to seek justice for the child. He forces Ffion to play the re-do from that night she had sex with Jonas to see for himself whether or not they used a condom. He sits on the chair with his back against Ffion and watches the re-do attentively. In this paranoid trope of victimization, there is a narcissistic and masochistic tendency as the white male protagonist finds pleasure in pain in order to establish order. Indeed, the look on Liam’s face shows that he is in a lot of pain as he watches his wife having sex with somebody else; still, he does not look away from it.

This leads to the last sequence of the episode where Liam is watching one re-do after another of the good times with Ffion at different corners and places within their home. As Liam walks along the house watching the re-dos, we see a comparison of Liam’s home that is now compared to his happy home with Ffion and Jodie through re-dos. While it is unspoken, it can be understood that Ffion has gone and the baby is not Liam. This is seen through the empty space that is presented in the house. We see Liam first time in the ‘now’ in the bedroom as he is lying on the bed. There is almost nothing left in the room except for the bed and the pillows. Obviously, the painting that is the evidence of Ffion’s infidelity is gone; also the bedside lamp on Ffion’s side and even the bed sheets. Together with her belongings, all the furniture that Ffion used, such as the armchair she has sat on or the sofa she has lied on, are gone with her. These are the objects that remind Liam of Ffion. The empty space left by the removal of the furniture signifies the emptiness in Liam’s soul after what has happened to him. The once happy home is now filled with all the mess from empty alcohol bottles and dirty dishes.

The empty space in the house which is depicted through the complete elimination of the female character (Ffion) and the lingering presence attached to the furniture also signifies the stability of the home same as the death of the femaleness in Guest in the House and Meshes. While home’s stability in the two movies either implies a happy place for heterosexual
relationships or a nightmarish place (Polan, 1986), stability in Liam’s home affirms the traditional patriarchal order. Being a lawyer living in a hyper-surveillance society, Liam has to carefully consider the moral and ethical boundaries to make sure that ‘everything is well within parameters’ in all his re-dos. The character Liam embodies the Law and the social codes and rules which need to be enforced. On the other hand, the Ffion character resembles a ‘new woman’ (Jones, 1991) – a phallically empowered woman who is independent and capable of provoking sexual desire in other men. Such phallic woman poses a threat to a male’s patriarchal order and thus has to be eliminated.

3.2 Reflective surfaces as a dominant visual motif

Among the most notable peculiarities in this episode is the use of reflective surfaces formed by glass, windows, or mirror, as a prominent visual motif. Armstrong (2008) explicates, glass’s see-through property makes it an antithetical material of mediation: it represents both “medium and barrier” (p.7); “it interposed an almost invisible layer of matter between the seer and the seen – the sheen of a window, the silver glaze of the mirror, the convexity or concavity of the lens” (p. 3). Glass reflects and refracts: it either replicates reality or distorts it to create deceptive reflections. The line between truths and deceptions is a crucial aspect of paranoia as lies will feed into a paranoiac’s persecutory delusions, which drive them to always be on the quest of uncovering the ultimate truth.

Liam is frequently seen as reflections or refractions from these surfaces throughout the episode. The very first shot the episode starts off with an introduction of the protagonist. The camera tilting up shows Liam in two distinct framings: he is first seen as an upside down reflection on the glass table, and then in the flesh (Figure 8.1). The use of glass reflecting
Liam in this shot hints at the screen culture formed by the grain in which Liam is living, as it mimics how re-dos are watched – through projection onto glass surfaces. In this culture, glass becomes a medium through which one’s experience of the current reality is mediated retrospectively by living through the images of one’s past self. As it reveals during the appraisal, the grain is installed into one’s body already since a baby. Things happening around the baby are constantly recorded even before the child starts developing awareness and comprehension. And the child can later use those re-dos to sue their parents for bad parenting. As viewers, our understanding of the episode is, in a way, also mediated by this shot. Like watching a re-do, the glass surface indicates that this episode not only tells the story of Liam but also shapes the perspective as seen from his. The inverted reflection also works to overshadow Liam’s life is about to turn upside down.

Liam finishes the meeting and runs to catch a cab. As he gets on, he is seen through the glass shield that is inside the car (Figure 8.2). However, we cannot see the full image of Liam as the vision of him is blurry and limited by the advertisement that is played on the glass screen. Framing Liam seen as a distorted vision through glass may be attributed to a metaphor of Liam’s unsettling state of mind which is growing in anxiety and insecurity as the appraisal does not seem to go well. Liam takes out the control and watches the re-dos of the meeting again and again to look for slipups. Such depiction is the first notion that Liam has paranoid tendencies as Freud et al. (1958) asserts that low self-esteem originates paranoia in an individual.

In the episode, the glass surface is used dominantly and functions as screens. With technological advance of the grain, the glass screens reflect the reality as if they were mirrors. Not only the current reality can be reflected onto these screens, but also the moments happening in the past, reflected as many times as one wants. The transparent property of windows and glass surface allows us to see the world beyond the dimensions. However in this episode, the transparency turns into reflections, which entrap people digging deeper into their memories rather than living the current moment. Organic memories will fade away to some extent and become a fragmented sequence of experience or narrative of an event. Nonetheless, in the technological-enhanced-memory society as depicted in this episode, every event and experience is captured in a much more elaborate and exhaustive manner – or in other word, ‘real’. As a result, the obsession over these ‘real’ memories
creates a paradox of reality. And glass surfaces serve as a space of mediation between different realities, the real and the unreal.

Reflective surface in the first four minutes of the episode is used not only to frame the protagonist and the perspective through which the story will be told, but also to establish the nature of society Liam is living in – a surveillance society – which is depicted in the airport sequence as seen in Figure 9. Liam appears running through the crowd in a rush to get to the security checkpoint. When Liam enters the airport, he is shown as a reflection on the ceiling glass. However, the reflection here appears to be a deceptive one. It is not really clear whether this vision of Liam is seen from the perspective that is through the transparent glass, or as a reflection from a mirror inside the airport. Only when the camera perspective changes, we see that it was a reflection on the ceiling glass. Similar use of deceptive reflection is repeated as Liam is seen, on the glass wall, approaching the security officer. As he comes closer, he goes through a security scan which is made of transparent glass before standing in front of the officer, separated by a glass screen. The use of different layers of glasses here underlies the feeling of surveillance. It seems that wherever you go, you cannot stay unnoticed. The image of Liam is being manipulated and shaped with the reflective surfaces to give viewers a sense that all his actions are being monitored and presented on the surveillance screens. Indeed at that moment, Liam has to rewind his memories within the past week in order to verify his identity and whether or not he is a threat, or associated with somebody who poses a threat. As he fast-forwards his memory for security check, close-up shots of Liam show him grinding his teeth or pursing his lips, which are signs of anxiety. He passes the control with flying colors and enters the departure hall which, again, is seen through a glass layer. Here we see the glass surface used as a device that both sets and
eliminates borders at the same time, which adds a solid value of its usage in establishing the scene and in the development of the plot. While people tend to ensure their security and protect their privacy, nothing in this surveillance society is hidden - memories have become a tangible commodity that can prove your innocence.

Glass surfaces act as a metaphor for an invisible barrier that keeps Liam in the unknown. In part two, glass motif is first used upon Jonas and Ffion (Figure 10.1 and 10.2) signifying deception and manipulation. At the party, Liam saw his Ffion in an intimate manner with a stranger who apparently was part of Ffion’s gang back in the day but Liam had never met before. During the dinner, Liam noticed Ffion’s weird behaviors towards Jonas and he became suspicious. When the three of them on the way back to Liam and Ffion’s place for a nightcap, Liam starts asking about Jonas. As he turns back to look at Jonas, who is driving his own car following behind, we can see the vision of Jonas being framed tightly within the windshield (Figure 10.1). We do not see very clearly every detail of Jonas. Only part of his face is lit up with a blue-ish tone while the rest of the frame is darkness. This shot perfectly frames Jonas to be a suspicious character and not much is known about him, which is represented by the dark negative space surrounding his face. As Ffion plays the re-do to show that, from her perspective, it was Liam who wanted to invite Jonas over, Liam keeps turning his head to look at Ffion as seen in Figure 10.2. But in this shot, it is not the real Ffion that Liam is looking at; it is Ffion’s reflection from the glass shield. However, the vision of Ffion in this reflection is not clear as it is intercepted by the sight of the taxi driver’s head sitting in the front. The glass shield producing a deceptive palimpsest of Ffion’s images hints at her deception trying to cover and manipulate the truth. Furthermore, the glass shield is both a medium for screening the re-dos and a barrier indicating the
distance between Liam and Ffion. This two-shot composes of the real image of Liam looking at the deceptive reflections of Ffion, which suggests Liam’s distrust in Ffion – the paranoid state of the watcher who always have suspicions that there is somebody out there who is trying to harm him, and this somebody to Liam is Ffion.

Later when Liam and Ffion has their first quarrel at home after getting back from the party, Liam says to his wife that, “Sometimes, you’re a bitch”. In this scene, Ffion is standing behind the glass surface which, again, functions as a separation showing the distance between the two characters. This surface also acts as a reflecting screen for Liam as Ffion replays “You’re a bitch” so that he could see his rudeness and disrespect towards his wife. The transparent barrier just earlier has turned into a “solid” one-way mirror for Liam to reflect upon his behaviors as well as strengthening the sense of separateness between the two. While the reflection of an object from a plane mirror appears identical, this screen reflection for Liam is manipulative one as Ffion deliberately opts out the word “sometimes”. The use of glass on Ffion represents a barrier to keep Liam away from the truth.

![Figure 11.1 and 11.2: Liam's distorted reflections](image)

After the quarrel, Liam is seen again as reflections (Figure 11.1). Looking closer to this scene, it is not mirror reflection of Liam that we are seeing. Instead, it is refraction of him as seen through a glass door, and the image of Liam is split in two. The blurry contour of the induction stove and the orange mat on the table gives away that he is standing in the kitchen. Liam is seen not only through a layer of glass but his split refraction is also framed tightly within the borders of the door and the lamp. The unusual camera angle in this scene creates a sense of omnipresent surveillance peeping through the transparent glass into his private life even at home. This frame is such a strong and vibrant metaphor for Liam’s state of mind – he is trapped in a cage of his own thoughts and suspicions. The fragmented vision of Liam
signifies his fragmented self – an aspect of paranoid mechanisms as pointed out in literature review. The vertical border of the doorframe is also a divider of reflections between Liam and the outside. Liam looks outside to the dark negative space as if he is trying to search for something. Perhaps, he is trying to search for his true reflection that can be vaguely seen on the glass door, but it is not available. From the beginning of the show, Liam only looks at reflective surfaces like glass when he needs to watch re-dos into the past. But now, it seems like he is unsure whether he is looking at his current self or his past. He has spent more time on the screen in front of his eyes watching the past rather than on what is happening at the moment. He cannot separate himself from the past and the current reality, which is represented by the blurriness of his image. The scene is short and has no diegetic sound. There is only a thrilling melody to shape the suppressed anxiety of the protagonist. This scene is placed in the middle of the episode, also the only scene unique in its visual with its darkness accompanied with the underlying blue-ish tone coming from the light and Liam’s blue shirt. The scene does not seem to indicate a positive outcome as the story develops. The fate of Liam seems rather gloomy.

Liam’s subconscious is then again represented through the use of reflective surface in the beginning of part three of the episode (Figure 11.2). Part Three begins with Liam being seen through the glass of the window and is framed within the blurred wooden borders. Half of Liam is seen as identical as he is while the other half is blurry and looks like an illusion of him. The way Liam being depicted here is the same as when he is in the taxi going to the airport (Figure 8.2). In hindsight, the blurriness of Liam’s reflection signifies his delusional and unsettling state of mind Liam is in. Now that Liam knows that Jonas was the Mr. Marrakesh whom left a strong impression on Ffion, Jonas’ anecdote about how he masturbates to re-dos of hot times with somebody else makes Liam jealous because that somebody else can be his wife. This makes Liam even more paranoid about his wife’s infidelity. Actually, this is not the first time Liam questioning this. It is revealed briefly in their quarrel that there was also another guy named Dan whom made Liam so jealous that he left Ffion for five days. Liam wants to find the truth, but all he has now is just suspicions based on his wife’s behavior and Jonas’ anecdote. He does not have the concrete evidence proving Ffion’s affair with Jonas, and the glass window acts as a metaphoric barrier separating suspicions and the truths. The way Liam’s body is seen half clear half blurry in this scene also indicates his loosing grip on the current reality and questioning the ‘realness’
of the past reality seen through re-dos. This is also the last time we see Liam through a pane of glass window in a blurry vision of himself. From this point onward, Liam continues his mission to find out the evidence and he succeeds, thus breaking the invisible glass barrier that has been keeping him away from the truth.

The last time we see Liam’s reflection is at the end when Liam reviews his memories about the happy times with Ffion. This is also the only time where we see a fully identical reflection of Liam from a plane mirror. However, without cues such as Liam is brushing his teeth and looks at his wife through reflection or the reflection of the pulling light switch, we would not have been able to know that it was Liam’s mirror image that we were looking at. In his happy memory with Ffion, Liam is looking at his reflection while brushing his teeth, and then his wife comes to him from his back asking which dress she should wear that day (Figure 12.1). Then it cuts to the current reality where Liam, while we see him as a mirror image, is not looking at his own reflection (Figure 12.2). He is looking at the screen within his eyes that is the re-do of the good old time, perhaps indicating that Liam accepts the past as more real than the present. Cutting back and forth between the past and present, the use of mirror here is a perfect metaphor for blurred line between the unreal and the real. Once the re-do is finished, Liam finally looks at his own identical reflection on the mirror. Throughout
the entire episode, Liam spends all his time watching the re-do screen to reflect his past/unreal self. But now for the first time, he is reflecting his current/real identity through his identical mirrored image. If the shots above in Figure 11.1 and 11.2 show broken images of Liam to signify his fragmented self. The act of gazing into mirrors showing Liam’s identical image creates moments of self-realization and self-reconstruction. And in this moment as he looks deeply into himself and touches the grain (Figure 12.3), he realizes his crisis of identity and his deceptive perception of the realness of reality.

Liam’s perception of reality is distorted, just as how Liam’s mirror image in this scene. While it is a truthful reflection of him, it is not the real Liam or his real body we are looking at. When he cuts his grain out from under his skin, he looks in the mirror and sees himself as he is. Nevertheless, this view is mixed with his memories. Perhaps he is not really looking at his own reflection, but rather his past. At the end of *The Truman Show*, Truman questions Christof the realness of the reality in the fake world he has lived his entire life in. To which, Christof tells him that it is as real as the world out there with the same lies and same deceits, but in this fake world, he is the star and he will always be safe. However, Truman, in a dramatic exit saying his catch phrase for the last time followed by a bow, decides to escape that unreal reality and go to the unknown, yet ‘real’ world. Truman’s heading for the real world is similar to how Liam pulls off his grain while looking at mirror. After Ffion has left, Liam has been living in the re-do reality, which can be seen from his timeline that he has watched all the memories related to Ffion for hundreds of times. In that reality, he is happy with Ffion and there is still his kid. But he realizes that the grain has consumed all his personality and his perception of the realness of reality. As mentioned before, throughout the entire episode, we see Liam spending quite an amount of time watching re-dos than seeing what is happening in front of his own eyes. He constantly examines people’s slipups or reactions to him like the case of the appraisal, or monitors his wife’s behaviors. Perhaps, he has had this grain since the day he was born just how the baby has hers. Liam has lived his life in the re-do reality same as how Truman in that fake world. Consequently, Liam decides to enter the ‘real’ world and reconstruct his self by pulling off the grain in a very horrifying and bloody act (Figure 12.4).

This scene appeals to the traditional victimization of the male protagonist. Discovering the truth is a masochist pleasure in such paranoia films. He feels pain as he removes the chip:
both physical and emotional. This final scene when Liam pulls of the grain is a typical pattern of the paranoia movies – the depiction of the sufferings of a male protagonist. Emotional pain is translated by the physical pain, which is another pattern traced through the paranoia films. His suffering is framed by the sad music and flashbacks from his memory about Ffion – which is colorful and happy, and is now lost forever. These are the typical reflection of a white male in crisis who is oppressed by the female who literally castrates him with her affair with another man. Moreover, his life order is ruined due to his uncertainty of who the father of the child is. Jonas may probably be the father of presumably their child. Perhaps this is his last removal of his wife’s presence in his life, just as how all the furniture which Ffion has sat or lied on are gone.

Another interesting use of reflective surface in the episode is that a large part of Liam’s house is made of big glass windows and it does not look like window curtains are often used in this episode. Such transparent glass windows allow us to see through what is happening inside the house. As a matter of fact, Paul and Lucy’s house also has a lot of glass windows and when Liam stands outside to see re-dos in order to remind himself of the names, we have a brief glimpse into the house and see that there is a group of people standing in the hallway. Such use of transparent glass windows suggest a complete surveillance society where nothing is private anymore and you can see into other people’s lives just as house we can see through the window glasses into the house to see what the people living there are doing. In this surveillance society, not only the airport officer with clear authority to demand re-dos for security check, anybody can act as agent of surveillance system. For example, employers can request re-dos to evaluate their employees’ work and performance; parents monitor babysitters’ behaviors; or even babies themselves can (involuntarily) monitor their parents. Such state of affairs makes a brilliant background for planting the seeds of paranoia in the individual living in that society. During the friends’ dinner, it is revealed that going ‘grainless’ could be a political decision. Removing the grain can also be interpreted as Liam’s rebellion against the system of surveillance, though this is quite an act of helplessness and despair.

3.3 Cinematography of surveillance-inducing paranoia

In controlling mise-en-scéné, a filmmaker determines not only what would be included in a shot but also how the shot is done, which is of equally importance (Bordwell & Thompson,
2008). The cinematography in the episode plays a significant role in capturing the essence of the thematic elements of the episode and guiding the viewers through the development of Liam’s consciousness. This part explores some of the key aspects that contribute to the constructions of the shots such as shot size, camera movement, camera angles, framing, lighting and color.

The analysis of cinematography begins with a close examination of the opening sequence of the episode. The opening of a film, or the way we enter a story, is arguably one of the most important elements of a movie. As Thomas Elsaesser and Warren Buckland write:

The opening of a film could be regarded as a special case of a meta-text. It is separate from and yet part of the narrative, in that it usually establishes setting, place, and time, as well as introducing the main protagonist(s). But it is also a kind of meta-text in the sense that by introducing us to the rules of the game, it shows us how a film wants to be read and how it needs to be understood. (2002, p. 47)

The opening of The Entire History of You lasts approximately two minutes in total, which serves to introduce Liam, the protagonist of the episode, and set the context of the society he is living in. Liam is a lawyer who appears to be a law-abiding citizen living his life well within “parameters”. This foreshadows his persistent quest to find out the real truth and get the ultimate justice he thinks he deserves. He lives in a society of surveillance in which he can records everything other people do through his eyes, with the aid of the Grain, and vice versa. In this society, there is no such thing as privacy because those with authority can request an individual to show recordings of their private life in order to prove their innocence.

In this opening sequence, not only the narrative but also the “tone” of the episode is suggested. According to Pye (2007, p. 7), tone is “the way in which the film addresses the spectator and implicitly invites us to understand its attitude to its material and the stylistic registered it employs”. There are many key cinematography techniques being used to set up the scene, which are also applied throughout the episode and play a crucial role in constructing meaning in the episode as a whole. Within two minutes, we as viewers get a taste of the tone that dominates the entire episode: the sense of uncertainty, isolation,
entrapment, and the anxiety that something is going to happen, which also mimic Liam’s perpetual state of consciousness.

From the beginning, a sense of uncertainty is presented as we enter the episode not knowing exactly where we are; and yet we are being introduced to an ambiguous medium close-up shot of an inverted image of Liam, which we quickly understand that it is his reflection against the table glass as the camera tilt up to reveal the real Liam. It is then cut to a medium shot introducing a Caucasian man, whom we learn later is the head of the managers. Not until the third shot, which is a wide shot, do we know of the context of this scene, which takes place in a meeting room. The delayed of establishing shot introducing the context causes spatial disorientation in the audience. It then goes to the medium shot of Caucasian man and quickly cuts back to medium close-up of Liam. As Liam casts a look to the right, the cut follows Liam’s view direction introducing an African man and an Asian lady in a medium two-shot. From here, the shot reverse shot technique continues as Liam and the managers talk about Liam’s work appraisal; and all the shots, from one shot cut to the other, are never in the same shot size, and they are short in duration. Such fast cut to different shot sizes together with the handheld shaky camera further enhances the sense of unsettling and uncertainty, as we do not know what would happen next. Besides, the shots include a lot of diagonal lines within the frame, or are composed diagonally such as the wide shot of the meeting room, which adds more tension to the scene.

The way Liam is being framed sets him apart from the managers, which indicates Liam’s emotional isolation and loneliness as he appears to be the only one in his own company. Throughout the appraisal, the managers appear consistently in medium size shot while Liam always appears in smaller short size from medium to close-up shots. This makes Liam appear closer to us than other characters as a way to highlight that he is the protagonist of the show. As discussed in the analysis of the use of space above (Figure 2.1 and 2.2), Liam is being humiliated and emasculated by the managers. The close up shots of Liam not only allows us to see clearly Liam’s facial expressions, which suggest his anxiety of being suppressed, but also heightens the tensions by giving very little space around his face. His unsettling state of mind is increasing as the managers questioning whether or not Liam is OK with the idea of “litigation in retrospective parenting cases”. He is not. But he does not want to admit and tries to hide his uneasiness with a nervous laugh. Figure 2.2 shows Liam being
captured in close up shot and his head is framed within yet another frame that is made by the painting on the wall. Such use of tight framing represents his attempt to isolate his anxiety of being emasculated. The claustrophobic framing device also signifies his being entrapped in the powerless position. The grey tone of the painting suggests his troubling state of mind while the empty space implies the unknown. Furthermore, the use of color on Liam is different from the others. The opening sequence is depicted in the brown palette that is created by the wooden walls, the table, the beer label, or the color of the clothes worn by the managers. Liam, on the other hand, is the only blue spot in the scene. He is wearing a light blue dress shirt, a dark blue tie, and even his suit has a hint of blue tone. Such use of contrasting color on Liam clearly makes him stand out from the rest of the scene, which works not only to emphasize him as the main character, but also as a metaphor for his loneliness and isolation from others.

According to Harper (2008), surveillance leads to suspicion in the observed, thus becomes one of the conditions which could possibly cause paranoia. It is established previously that surveillance is the underlying theme of the episode; and the choice of camera angle depicts perfectly the surveillance society that Liam lives in, which is the condition provoking Liam’s state of paranoia. As discussed in literature review chapter, there are two modalities of surveillance-inducing paranoia: paranoia-of-the-watched and paranoia-of-the-watcher (Holm, 2009). Liam being presented as the watched is best seen through the airport sequence where he rushes to the security control in order to catch the plane on time. Figure 13.1 13.2 and 13.3 show three different wide shots of the airport hall. As we can see in these shots, the camera is positioned at a high angle, which resembles the position of a CCTV camera. In the shot seen in Figure 13.2, the panning movement of the camera showing Liam from his reflections to the real him mimics the way a CCTV camera would move to surveil the scene in order to locate the position of Liam. Furthermore, the reflection of Liam is captured within one glass window frame to another, which hints at the act of monitoring the surveillance screen.
The use of high angle shot mimicking surveillance camera is seen mainly in the airport sequence. Indeed it makes sense that such a public place like an airport would have a dense network of CCTV cameras as this is a ubiquitous method to ensure high security, which also imposes the presence of an authoritative power. Interestingly enough, the high angle technique is also used inside Liam’s home as shown in Figure 13.4, which is also the only shot throughout the entire episode using this technique that is not at the airport. In this shot, while the high angle, perhaps, might not indicate the presence of a CCTV camera, the voyeuristic view from the surveillance angle indicates Liam’s perpetual anxiety that he is constantly being watched by the state, even at a place considered as safe like home. The indication that everybody in this society is being watched is represented not only through the surveillance-like camera angle and movement but also through the uncanny and obscure angles that are positioned from a corner of a piece of furniture or hidden behind an object. This technique is used predominantly to frame Liam while he is at his own home. These ambiguous angles imply an omniscient and omnipresent camera, or a spectator, which is always there to observe everything that is happening. The use of shaky handheld camera also
goes to amplify the presence of a hidden observer whom Liam is constantly exposed to. Such use of obscure camera angles allows us to intrude his privacy and see him at his weakest moments.

As Foucault has argued, a person being subjected under observation internalizes the surveillance gaze to become a watcher over the self, who constantly assesses and regulates their own actions (Foucault, 1977). Such relentless observation causes the mistrust of the self, in which an individual would scrutinize their own behaviors more critically than other people would. This causes paranoia-of-the-watched in the individual, whom would adopt abnormal behaviors within reason in order to resist the panoptical model of consciousness (Holm, 2009). In the case of Liam, for example, he watches the re-dos of previously meeting Ffion’s friends in order to recall their names and who they are so that he could avoid any social embarrassment, which would be recorded immediately by the grain had it happened.

The other modality of surveillance – the watcher – is illustrated cleverly through the use of point-of-view shot taken over the shoulder of a character, which is seen predominantly in the dinner table scene. The sitting arrangement at the dinner table in this scene is actually an interesting one. Looking at the sitting arrangement as I have illustrated in Figure 14, we see that Liam and Ffion, although a married couple with a one-year-old child, are not sitting right next to each other or directly opposite as it is the common sense for a couple to do so. As in the case of Lucy and Paul, they are married and sitting opposite each other. And in the case of Jeff and Colleen, Colleen’s sitting arrangement right next to Jeff falls in place with the indication that Colleen is a set-up date for Jeff. Hallem is set up for Jonas but she is the
last one coming so naturally enough she is placed to whichever the spot is still available. Liam, being placed in a sitting position that is not directly opposite Ffion or Jonas, puts him in the position of the watcher on the tower in the panopticon design.

In this scene, the point-of-view camera angle is taken from the shoulders as we can tell by the silhouette of the shoulders in the frame. This allows the audience to see the happenings of the dinner through the character's personal perspectives. It looks as if this is a surveillance perspective. As said above, Liam sits in the position of the watcher on the panoptic tower. Thus, this allows Liam to observe what Ffion and Jonas are doing without them really noticing him unless they make the efforts to. Their every subconscious behavior, especially Ffion’s, is being noticed by Liam. Figure 15.1 15.2 15.3 and 15.4 show a series of medium close-up shots of Ffion at the dinner table. The point-of-view short reverse shot technique gives away that Liam is looking at Ffion and we, as viewers, are aligned with Liam’s perspective seeing what he sees. And what we see is the way that Ffion’s unusually admiring
look at Jonas as he telling his story (Figure 15.1) and her being the only one laughing out loud at Jonas’ “cereal monogamous” joke (Figure 15.4). When Hallem reveals that her grain was gouged which left a scar on her neck, Jonas asks for permission to take a look and he walks over to Hallem and touches her scar in a flirtatious way. Figure 15.2 suggests Liam is observing Ffion’s looking at Jonas while Figure 15.3 from a different angle reveals that Ffion is slightly jealous at Jonas as he flirts with Hallem. Hallem’s blurred head and the direction of Ffion’s point of view suggests that all her focus is put towards observing Jonas himself instead of on Hallem, her scar or the action of Jonas touching it.

The use of lighting on Ffion in relation to Liam also subtly suggests the notion that Ffion is being observed. Throughout the episode, Ffion is often seen with a light on her side. For example, in the shot where she stands and talks to Jonas in an intimate way and Liam walks in (Figure 6), there is a floor light on her side shining at her. When Ffion and Jonas sit on the sofa to watch the re-do from their child, again, there is a floor light (Figure 5.1). The same can be seen when the two of them lie on the bed after sex; the bed lamp on Ffion’s side is lit up while there is no light on Liam’s side. When Liam and Ffion talk to each other, Ffion’s face is lit up brighter than Liam’s; and at the dinner table, Liam sits against the light source, which makes his face darker, while Ffion’s face is bright as she sits facing the light source. This creates the impression that there is a spotlight of observation and investigation upon Ffion and that there is an omnipresent person keeping a close watch on her.

Being in the position of an observer induces paranoia-of-the-watcher in Liam. In this modality of paranoia, an individual is constantly assess their surroundings and other people’s behaviors in order to discover hidden threats despite the lack of evidence indicating the presence of such threats (Holm, 2009). This makes the individual distrust other people and believe that they have the intentions to harm them. As a result, they are always on the never-ending journey to find evidence proving their suspicions. Liam is obviously seen as having great distrust towards Ffion’s faithfulness for him. During their first quarrel at home after getting back from the dinner, it is revealed that Liam once accused Ffion of having affair with her co-worked named Dan. He was so jealous that he left the house and disappeared for five days. Now that he notices Ffion’s strange behaviors towards Jonas, Liam becomes suspicious that she might be cheating on him, which drives him to being obsessed over the re-dos and he does not stop until he finds out the ultimate truth.
To the society at large, Liam is a prisoner of an omnipresent panoptic gaze while in his private life, he is imprisoned and trapped in his own marriage, which is foreshadowed by the use of frame within a frame and close-up shots as seen in Figure 16.1, 16.2, 17.1 and 17.2. Figure 16.1 and 16.2 show Liam and Ffion together in the same shot. They are not only being framed by the rectangle of the film but also again by a secondary framing device that is made of either the shadows of other characters or the edges of the furniture. Such framing technique shadows a sense of entrapment over their marriage. The entrapment is further intensified by the space present between the two characters, signifying their separation. Figure 17.1 and 17.2 expose Liam being mentally imprisoned in his own marriage. While Figure 17.1 uses frame within a frame made by the semi-silhouette of Ffion’s head to imply his feeling claustrophobic against his wife, Figure 17.2 puts him in a tense close-up shot. As Jonas tells his anecdote about how he and his ex-fiancée were “two tools in the toolshed who just fitted together really well”, Liam turns and looks at his wife. However, his face is very
close to the edge of the frame, leaving him little room to breath, which overshadows his suffocation being in the same “toolshed” as Ffion.

Besides establishing Liam’s imprisonment under a surveillance gaze and his marriage, which serves as a condition causing paranoia, the use of camera in this episode plays a crucial role in making Liam’s psychological process of paranoia palpable to the viewers. If the use of space indicating the distribution of power as analyzed above works to describe Liam going through the process of humiliation and emasculation, cinematography impeccably expresses Liam’s paranoia in its peak manifestation: narcissism and fragmentation of the self.

As discussed in literature review chapter, paranoid delusion is associated with narcissism in which the paranoiac perceives himself to be the hero, the one with privileged status that is worthy of persecution (Freud et al., 1958). Consequently, he lives in great distrust for everybody, thinking that they are all after him and try to harm him. Liam’s narcissism is vividly captured by the frame-within-a-frame technique as seen the Figure 18 above. In these shots, Liam is totally alone and he is framed by the edges that are made by furniture, instead

Figure 18: Framing Liam's narcissism
of silhouettes of other characters. Unlike the frame-within-a-frame shot of Liam in the appraisal scene (Figure 2.2) in which Liam is in the foreground of the secondary frame that is made by the painting on the wall, the objects are placed in the foreground of the frame, assuming more power than Liam. This foreground/background technique pushing Liam to the back creates a space of confinement in which Liam is being entrapped. Here, he is not trapped by his marriage as discussed earlier. He is trapped in his own narcissistic cocoon that is filled up with his own thoughts and suspicions that there is something wrong between Ffion and Jonas. In these scenes, camera is placed at obscure angles indicating an omnipresent surveillance gaze, which Liam is constantly being exposed to. It is the perception that home is a place of peacefulness and happiness but now it is a place of danger where there is always a hidden observer intruding Liam’s privacy, enhances the disturbing sense of paranoia in the episode.

According to Fradley (2004), narcissism in white male paranoia is also connected to masochism as they enjoy pleasure through the exploration of pain. Masochistic notion is seen through the use of close-up shots upon Liam as seen in Figure 19. If frame-within-a-frame technique in Figure 18 creates a space of confinement for Liam to isolate himself and
dwell in a his world of suspicions, the claustrophobic close-up shots in Figure 19 show Liam’s indulging in the pain that is inflicted by his suspicions and the truth. In the first two shots, Liam sits by himself playing the re-dos of the dinner from the evening before while in the other two, Liam listens to Ffion’s confessing that she slept with Jonas and watches her re-do of that night. His facial expressions – eyes closed or slightly squeeze, brow bulge, mouth either closed tight or open – reveal that he is in pain. However, he does not stop doing the things that cause him pain. Instead, he continues playing the re-dos over and over again listening to Jonas’ voice echoing how he masturbates to re-dos of sexual encounters with other girls or watching attentively to Ffion’s re-do of her affair with Jonas.

This leads to the final sequence of the episode lasting approximately 4 minutes in which cinematography exquisitely visualizes Liam in his utmost state of disintegration and isolation due to living in a paradox of reality. As argued earlier, Liam’s paranoia is rooted from living under panoptic surveillance in which he constantly assesses and regulates his own behaviors and conducts a close observation upon other people in order to uncover unhidden threats. As a result, Liam spends the majority of his time looking back on his recent memories to judge his and others’ actions instead of examining the world that is currently happening around him that. Liam retreats in a paranoid world of his own design, obsessing over memories; and with the aid of the grain, the memories become more true to Liam than the current reality. Consequently, Liam’s perception of reality is distorted and deceptive which leads to his inability to differentiate his re-do self and his current self, causing a fragmentation of the self in Liam.

Liam’s deceptive perception of reality is depicted by the use of first-person point-of-view camera and color. After the bedroom scene where Liam confronts Ffion with the truth and watches re-do of her affair, it is cut to black. Then the final sequence fades in with an establish shot of a house in which the composition is based along a diagonal line to overshadow tension and turbulence in that home. We do not know yet whose house that is. It is then cut to a first-person point of view of somebody looking out at the garden. The shot here also has a diagonal composition to indicate again some kind of uneasiness. We do not know yet whose point of view that is until that person walks into the room, which appears to be Liam and Ffion’s bedroom as we can make out from the painting hanging above the bed. We see a woman standing and folding clothes with her back against us. She turns around to
show that this is Ffion. And we can make out from the voice saying “I love you” that we are aligning with Liam’s point of view. It appears that Liam and Ffion are (still?) happy with each other and there is still baby Jody playing in the crib. Liam walks to the crib to play with Jody. As soon as the baby turns her face, the image flickers and together with that is a scratching sound – it’s a rewind. We are in Liam’s re-do reality. It is then cut to an extreme close-up of Liam’s face. His eyes are milky indicating him watching the re-do in his eyes. After this is a diagonal wide shot of him lying on the bed. The room is completely empty. We are now in the “real” reality; and in this reality, Ffion and the baby are gone.

Following the progression of the story until the point where Liam forces Ffion to play the re-do of her affair with Jonas, the way that this final sequence starts with a re-do of Liam and Ffion being happy with each other before showing the current reality deceives the viewers. As a viewer, our understanding of the fate of Liam and Ffion is mediated by a deceptive plot progression, just same as how Liam’s perception of current reality is mediated by re-dos. As we continue with Liam’s point-of-view, we see the contrast of the two realities. The use of color for the two realities as seen in Figure 19 gives us clue which reality it is we are following. The current reality is depicted with dark lighting, and the color is dull and cold with tones of blue, green, and grey. The re-do reality has a stark contrast: brighter lighting and warmer palette with tones of orange, yellow, and brown.
In this final sequence, the camera comes at play to express Liam in his utmost state of disintegration and isolation. As we follow Liam’s point of view, we see the house in the current reality is empty and messy. All the sofas and the chairs that Ffion used to sit in are gone, and the tables are full of alcohol bottles. The emptiness of the house is Liam’s disintegrated mind same as how Coppola documents Harry’s mind by putting him sitting in his empty apartment in *The Conversation* (Patzig, 2007). Liam’s disintegration is further enhanced by the use of canted framing throughout the sequence, but especially in the shots as seen in Figure 21. In these two shots, camera is tilted to one side to create dutch angle in order to reflect Liam’s fragile mental state, disorientation, and drunkenness. Yet again, Liam is depicted retreating to his cocoon that is the frame-within-a-frame, although this time is cocoon of isolation from reality rather than narcissism. The unnerving off-angle compositional balance and the irregular placement of figures in the frame constructs a sense of instability and that things will change unpredictably and radically.

![Figure 21: Liam's in his utmost state of disintegration](image)

In the second shot in Figure 21, the focus is placed at the pole of the staircase in the beginning then it changes to focus on Liam with a racking focus, which emphasizes how out of reality Liam is in now. Throughout this final sequence, or even throughout the entire episode, Liam is predominantly framed in close-up shots or extreme close-up shots of his milky eyes with shallow depth of field. As our view is directed to the focal point in the frame that is Liam’s face or his milky and drunk eyes, all other details in the frame are blurry. The limited visual information caused by shallow depth of field denotes Liam’s limited perspective of the current reality. Not only Liam, but also everybody living in this utopian grain society is stuck in the chamber of re-dos, obsessing over details and become oblivious
with the world around them. Jeff, for example, exclaims “I’ve got that shitty carpet for the rest of my life” while showing to Jonas and Ffion the re-do of a slightly worn patch of carpet in the five-star hotel room he once stayed.
 Parasomnia has long been a popular theme in arts, literatures, and cinema; and there have been several researches looking into the treatment of paranoia in a wide selection of films. Nevertheless, from my literature review, I found out that those studies mainly examined paranoia in terms of narratives or analyzed the psychology process of paranoia of the characters in the movies. There was no research dedicated to analyzing visual elements of paranoia, or very little is touched upon visual cues in support for analysis of paranoid narrative. As a result, this thesis aimed to fill this gap by conducting a textual analysis on the third episode of the TV series Black Mirror called The Entire History of You in order to understand how paranoia is visually represented. The findings from this thesis provided a more in-depth reading of the episode The Entire History of You by itself and the understanding of the series Black Mirror as a whole, as well as contributing to the learning of cinematic treatment of paranoia in terms of the visual components that make up a film. In order to do that, three key elements that create the mise-en-scène of the episode – space, glass surface, and cinematography – were put under focus of examination to see how they create paranoia.

The notion of paranoia has a complication history of definitions and classification in the field of medicines, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis (Lewis, 1970). The most common type of paranoia is persecutory delusions – the beliefs that there are people out there who intend to harm the paranoiac (Munro, 1999). The concept of paranoia being treated in this thesis was based predominantly upon Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of paranoia (Freud et al., 1958) and Foucault’s panoptic disciplinary (Foucault, 1977). Reviewing the infamous paranoid case of Daniel Schreber brings out the key aspects of the paranoid mechanism a paranoiac goes through in order to restore order, which includes fragile ego, emasculation, narcissism, disavowal, projection, and fragmentation of the self. Based on Foucault’s panoptic disciplinary, paranoia in relation to surveillance is theorized into two modalities: paranoia-of-the-watched and paranoia-of-the-watcher (Holm, 2009). These two aspects co-exist with each other which causes a paranoiac being subjected under surveillance gaze to not only constantly adjust their own behaviors accordingly to the ruling power, but also keep a close
look-out on other people’s actions and the surrounding environment in order to reveal hidden threats (Holm, 2009).

Reviewing a selection of literatures on the cinematic treatment of paranoia brings out the common tropes in paranoid narratives, which can be found in the narrative structure of the episode The Entire History of You. Liam, the protagonist of the episode, is a typical white male whose bodily and patriarchal order is threatened by a female character or anything that is considered ‘femaleness’. The female character is Ffion, Liam’s wife, and the thing being marked as ‘femaleness’ is the grain. Liam suffers from low self-esteem due to being humiliated and emasculated by his managers, Ffion’s friends, and a guy named Jonas whom Liam has never met before. He projects his fragile ego rooted from these social downfalls onto Ffion by suspecting her fidelity to him. When Liam notices Ffion’s strange behaviors towards Jonas, one of her old friends, his mistrust for her grows immensely which leads to his obsession over the re-dos in order to find out evidence for her affair with Jonas. He succeeds. In order to restore patriarchal order, anything ‘female’ has to be removed. As in the episode, Ffion and all the furniture that has a lingering presence of her are gone. Additionally, Liam pulls out the grain in a terrifying act of redemption in order to remove Ffion, and the memories of her, completely from his life.

Liam’s paranoia is rooted from living in a hyper-surveillance society in which his every movement is recorded through the aid of an implanted chip called ‘Grain’. Being under constant watch, he has to regulate his own behaviors in order to avoid social slights and humiliations. However, with the ability to watch the re-dos over and over again, he keeps a close watch on others’ movements in order to uncover hidden threats. Liam mistrusts not only himself but also others. He relentlessly spend more time living in one re-do reality after another rather than examining the world that is happening in the current reality. The grain has consumed his life and as a result, his perception of reality and his self becomes distorted and fragmented.

In the episode The Entire History of You, director Brian Welsh’s control over mise-en-scene cleverly depicts the surveillance state, and remarkably visualizes Liam’s state of mind and the psychological process of paranoia that is induced by living in constant surveillance. Three key visual elements – the use of space, the use of reflective surface as dominant visual
motif, and cinematography – were put under close examination to find out how paranoia was visually represented in the episode.

The use of space was looked at in terms of kinesics and proxemics. Kinesics examines the micro-space on the characters’ bodies that form their postures, facial expressions, or body motions in order to understand the nature of their behaviors (Birdwhistell, 1952). Proxemics considers the space between the characters within a frame to determine the dynamics of the relationships among the characters (Hall, 1969). The organization of space in the episode has two roles. First is to indicate the distribution of power. In the beginning of the episode, Liam, in relation to the managers and Ffion’s friends at the dinner, is in the position of powerlessness, which implies him being humiliated and emasculated. After the dinner, Liam is seen as the one who holds power in relation to Ffion and Jonas as he tries to disavow his fragile ego and projects it onto his wife. Secondly, the use of space implies Liam’s crisis of masculinity and quest to restore order. His masculinity is challenged by the presence of Jonas, who appears to be more desirable and superior to him, and his “phallically empowered” wife Ffion. In order to restore his male order, he forces Jonas with violence to delete all the memories involving Ffion, and eliminate the presence of Ffion out of his life by removing all the furniture and leaving an empty space in the house.

Reflective surface is used predominantly throughout the episode with three functions. First, it functions as a medium, which is a screen to project the re-dos and also a metaphor for monitor screen used for surveillance. As a medium, it also works a metaphor to imply how Liam’s perception of current reality is mediated by the re-dos. Second, the glass surface being used upon Jonas and Ffion signifies an invisible barrier that keeps Liam away from the truth. Lastly, Liam seen through a pane of glass and his reflections act as a metaphor for his anxiety and self. While the broken images of Liam as seen through glass represents his fragmented self as he loses grip with the current reality, Liam’s identical reflection on a mirror denotes his self-reconstruction.

Cinematography comes into play to set the tone of the episode, depict the hyper surveillance society, and visualize Liam’s manifestation of paranoia. First, the opening sequence of the episode shows that cinematography works to mimic the state of mind that Liam constantly lives in – uncertainty, isolation, entrapment, and the anxiety that something is going to
happen – which is also the tone dominating the entire episode. Second, the use of camera angle depicts an omnipresent surveillance gaze from the perspective of both the watched and the watcher. Lastly, cinematography documents outwardly Liam’s psychological process of paranoia. Frame-within-a-frame technique with objects consuming the foreground and Liam at the background creates a narcissistic cocoon for Liam to indulge in suspicions. The use of first-person point-of-view camera and color to create a deceptive narrative progression represents Liam’s fragmented experience and perception with reality. Canted framing and racking focus are used to emphasize Liam’s fragile and disoriented state of mind and his being out of reality.

To my knowledge, this thesis is the first study looking at the treatment of paranoia in terms of visual representations, which makes this a contribution to the ever-growing knowledge of mise-en-scene and making meaning in films. Nevertheless, my study is not without limitations. Due to the scope of this thesis, I could only choose to focus on one text, which is the episode, for my analysis of visual representation of paranoia. Therefore, while the findings from this research can be the foundation to look at paranoia in other movies, they are not representative for all films in other genres. Furthermore, different directors have different artistic style and direction, which directly influences the mise-en-scene of paranoia. As a result, it would be interesting to see how visual treatment of paranoia in a movie of a completely different genre, such as drama, could differ from what being presented in this episode, which can be considered as a sci-fi thriller.
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