1.
The Third Memory

2.
Memory Cognition

3.
Bionic Rule

4.
Unreliable Narrator

Extended Remembering: Georges Perec and Writing as Thinking

Mats Haraldsen

ABSTRACT
What are the relations among writing, thinking, and remembering? This article sets forth the epistemological claim that Georges Perec's book W, or the Memory of Childhood is an integrated part of Perec's cognitive process of remembering. By drawing on the extended mind thesis, as well as recent work on memory within cognitive science, it argues that Perec's cognitive processes are extended into his text and, furthermore, that they are partly accessible to his readers. In the conclusion, some of the implications of this view for the study of fictionalized accounts of the past are sketched out.

From Georges Perec's Book: W, or the Memory of Childhood to the Memory Cognition

In the book W, or the Memory of Childhood, Georges Perec tries to piece together his missing childhood memories. The book is made up of two sources: one is a made-up fictional story, and the other is a personal memoirs.

1. The story of the island "W": This is a fictional story Perec created when he was a child. He doesn't really remember the details anymore, but he rebuilds it using his childhood drawings. It's a very personal story, closely tied to his childhood.
2. His memoirs: In this part, he talks about the few memories from his early life that he still has.

These two different storylines intertwine and enrich each other's meaning, coming together to form a more complete understanding of his childhood memory.

Book's Feature:
He uses writing — a process that can change the way people think — to extend his memory process into the text. So in the book, through editing and writting pieces of his memories, he shows the full process of recalling, reflecting on, and rebuilding his childhood memories (the third kind of memory).

In writing, he develops his own memory, and at the same time, readers can understand this process as they read.

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What are the relations among writing, thinking, and remembering? This article sets forth the epistemological claim that Georges Perec's book W, or the Memory of Childhood is an integrated part of Perec's cognitive process of remembering. By drawing on the extended mind thesis, as well as recent work on memory within cognitive science, it argues that Perec's cognitive processes are extended into his text and, furthermore, that they are partly accessible to his readers. In the conclusion, some of the implications of this view for the study of fictionalized accounts of the past are sketched out.

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[1] *The Red Cross evacuates the wounded. I was not wounded. But I had to be evacuated. So we had to pretend I was wounded. That was why my arm was in a sling.* **[2]** *But my aunt is quite defi- nite: I did not have my arm in a sling; there was no reason at all for me to have my arm in a sling. It was as a 'son of father deceased', a 'war orphan', that I was being evacuated by the Red Cross, entirely within regulations.* **[3]** *On the other hand, perhaps I had a rupture and was wearing a truss, a suspensory bandage. I think that on my arrival in Grenoble I had an operation—***[4]** *for years I believed Professor Mondor had performed the operation, a detail I lifted from I don't know which other member of my adoptive family—for hernia and appendicitis at the same time (presumably they took advantage of the rupture to get rid of my appendix). It was defi- nitely not straight after my arrival in Grenoble.* **[5]** *According to Esther, it was later, and for appendicitis.* **[6]** *According to Ela, it was for a rupture, but much earlier, in Paris, when I still had my parents.*

The memory fragments marked as [1] to [6] explain in detail how memory is made up of many different sources — these pieces of information balance each other out (either support or contradict each other).

Over time, the conflicting memory fragments get corrected, and the ones that support each other are treated as facts. At the same time, the author's current understanding of past events is also included.

This process shows one thing: memory is not about preservation, but about generation. The original memory no longer exists. It relies on fragments from the past as elements, piecing together, inferring, and imagining the current memory and understanding.

Bonic Rule

We usually don’t consciously use calculation and reasoning to create meaning, but these processes have already been encoded into our genes through evolutionary selection (4e cognition).

Based on the cellular automata code which simulates biological evolution, I’ve previously created a system for the development of language. In further iterations, I started experimenting and showcasing the thought process of expanding one’s memory, like in the book W, or the Memory of Childhood. Using the development of memory fragments, letting the content evolve, supporting or contradicting each other.

Code Rule:
The code is based on a simple model of natural evolution proposed by a mathematician — over time, some cells "survive," while others are "eliminated" and die naturally.

trəˈdɪk təri

I label contradictory memory fragments as "mutually exclusive" and supportive memory fragments as "mutually reinforcing." When mutually exclusive fragments meet, the font size get bigger; and when mutually reinforcing fragments meet, font get smaller. At the same time, over time, new memory fragments are continuously popping up, and some old memory parts are gradually disappearing.

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Denarration in Fiction: Erasing the Story in Beckett and Others

Brian Richardson

Vol. 9, No. 2, Contemporary Narratology (May, 2001), pp. 168-175

Unreliable Narrator

The outcome from the code reminds me of a concept —— unreliable narrator in literature. By creating paradoxes in the narration, reversing or negating previously established content, it creates an unstable and shifting narrative.

If we take the text out of its narrative structure and reordering it in time, while the narration unfolds and is reconstructed, will it erase previously told events because of the paradoxes?

There is no recoverable memory, only an indiscriminate collection of past. The memory pieces is certain, but the story is uncertain.

In the Unreliable Narrator-style novel The Sense of an Ending by Kermode Frank (2000), there is a plot:

> Tony reflects on his divorce and realizes it wasn't his wife, but his own issue. He remembers that even his daughter thinks the divorce was all his fault, and maybe that's the truth? He starts to doubt himself and question what responsibility really means. He used to blame others, his family or ex, but now wonders if he's the only one at fault. His memories begin to crumble. He even can't find the places he visited in his ex's hometown on Google Maps; they don't exist at all.

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Unreliable Narrator

"Time ⋯ give us enough time and our best-supported decisions will seem wobbly, our certainties whimsical."

wɪm.zɪ.kəl/

Further

First bout the original material, I want to use diary pieces where people keep changing or fixing what they wrote. And thought the running of the code, I want memory not to follow the order of time, but the way it keep developing and changing.

Second, the reason I don't use novels (actually, I could find more of correcting content in it) ,the reason is an article i read, about unreliable narrators writting. the denial and confusion are often designed very carefully by the writer, they often put a lot of meaning and purpose compress into writting. But people don't talk or think in that way in normal life.

So, I think if I want to show about real memory, diaries maybe better. But, over a long time, the way people think in deeper mind is maybe closer to writing and compress. So novels also okay. I'm still thinking about it.

Position

At the same time, I've also been thinking about the question mentioned earlier — whether this project shows my interest in memory, and what my position is. I think in all my projects, I've been trying a certain kind of method. After many years of designing and controlling everything by myself, I want to stop making things subjective. Instead, to use an outside frame to let its content shows by itself.

Also, I want this frame to be strong — something natural and connected to the content. I believe the rules of nature and evolution are very powerful. This is the direction I want to explore more right now.