

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Larbi Ben M'hidi University, Oum ElBouaghi
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English



The Psychological Implications of Time Travel in
***The Butterfly Effect* (2004)**

A Dissertation submitted to the faculty of letters and languages, Department of English in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master Degree in Literature and Civilization.

Supervisor:
Mrs.Zerrouki

Candidate:
Newfel Tria

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Candidates' Declaration Form

I Newfel Tria and.....

Candidates of master at the department of English, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **Exploring the Psychological Effects of Time travel In *The Butterfly Effect* (2004)** is our own work and it has not previously done at any university.

Date: 26/06/2024

ID number: 03034002490

ID number:

Signature of the candidates:



Dedication :

I dedicate my thesis to my beloved family for their endless love, support and encouragement, and to my true friends for their support

Acknowledgments :

All thanks and praise to Allah who helped me to accomplish this thesis.

I owe gratitude to my supervisor Mrs Zerrouki for her guidance.

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Abstract

The concept of time travel, while is often explored in science fiction, offers a unique opportunity to examine the psychological effects of changing past events. In the movie "The Butterfly Effect" 2004 which employs the technique of time travel, is well stocked in Trauma and psychological disorders which makes it the perfect choice for this research. The aim of this thesis is to unravel the psychological complexities within the movie especially in relation to the concepts of time travel, trauma and memory. In particular, this research seeks to identify the struggles that the protagonist Evan faces in altered realities when trying to rectify past traumatic events in search for redemption, salvation and healing. Our task then is to examine the concept of time travel in the movie and its psychological implications and how each modification in the past creates a different reality with different unexpected results. In order to explore the unique aspects of time travel and the psychological complexities of the movie, we decided to borrow the psychoanalytic ideas of Sigmund Freud. We do believe that drawing on Freud's ideas on time, memory, trauma and repressed memory would help understand the effects of trauma and also uncover the reasons behind Evan's manipulation of time. In order to examine the positive role of time travel, we attempted to analyse the main characters of the movie which reveals the uniqueness of time travel representing it as a healing tool.

Key words: *Time travel, memory, trauma, the Butterfly Effect, positive role.*

الملخص

إن مفهوم السفر عبر الزمن، رغم أنه غالبًا ما يتم استكشافه في الخيال العلمي، يقدم فرصة فريدة لدراسة التأثيرات النفسية لأحداث الماضي المتغيرة. في فيلم "تأثير الفراشة" (2004) الذي يستخدم تقنية السفر عبر الزمن، مليء بالصددمات. والاضطرابات النفسية مما يجعله الاختيار الأمثل لهذا البحث. تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى كشف التعقيدات النفسية داخل الفيلم خاصة فيما يتعلق بمفاهيم السفر عبر الزمن والصدمة والذاكرة. على وجه الخصوص، يسعى هذا البحث إلى التعرف على الصراعات التي يواجهها بطل الرواية إيفان في الحقائق المتغيرة عندما يحاول تصحيح الأحداث المؤلمة الماضية بحثًا عن الخلاص والشفاء. مهمتنا إذن هي دراسة مفهوم السفر عبر الزمن في الفيلم وتداعياته النفسية وكيف أن كل تعديل في الماضي يخلق واقعا مختلفا بنتائج مختلفة غير متوقعة. من أجل استكشاف الجوانب الفريدة للسفر عبر الزمن والتعقيدات النفسية للفيلم، قررنا استعارة أفكار التحليل النفسي لسيغموند فرويد. ونعتقد أن الاعتماد على أفكار فرويد حول الوقت والذاكرة والصددمات والذاكرة المكبوتة من شأنه أن يساعد في فهم التأثيرات. الصدمة وكذلك الكشف عن الأسباب الكامنة وراء تلاعب إيفان بالوقت. ومن أجل دراسة الدور الإيجابي للسفر عبر الزمن، حاولنا تحليل الشخصيات الرئيسية في الفيلم مما يكشف عن تفرد السفر عبر الزمن في تمثيله كأداة للشفاء.

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General Introduction:

"The Butterfly Effect" is a time-travel movie written and directed by Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber which follows Evan Treborn's suddenly discovered extraordinary power to travel to the past by reading his diaries while he was in his dorm with his new girlfriend. Evan doesn't hesitate to use his newfound ability to rectify traumatic events and mainly save his beloved Kayleigh. During his journey, Evan faces many difficulties such as his childhood trauma which was marked by severe violence, abuse, and tragedy which resulted in deep psychological wounds and a strong desire for a happier reality. He also confronts multiple realities, each providing its own set of challenges and tragedies which involve scenarios where his close friends end up in desperate situations and he becomes paralyzed, and even put in a psychiatric institution. Despite the unexpected consequences that Evan encountered, his persistence and determination are admirable as he remains concentrated on his goal and continues his path towards healing and redemption.

This research aims to explore the different altered realities in the movie where a tiny change in a past event can not only effect one's present but also alter his personality and predict a different future. It also attempt to unravel the psychological complexities within the movie by navigating through the labyrinth of Evan's mind, experiencing a tapestry of feelings through his lens during his long journey towards salvation and healing

Although there is a consensus that the Butterfly Effect deserves special attention for its theme of time travel and its psychological complexities, there exists few articles and research papers that discussed the movie. To start with, Sinitsyn who criticized the movie as it is based on a principle called the Butterfly Effect. According to him, the theory of chaos is based on that principle. The butterfly effect is a complex system, and a tiny, insignificant event that can have a tremendous impact on that complex system. That

is to say, a small change in initial conditions would result in unpredictable results. Also Foda Anggraeni Ardi, in a thesis entitled " anger expression in speeches of male and female characters in the film entitled the butterfly effect” tackled the movie by focusing on anger expression in male and female characters. Ardi used a pragmatic approach and qualitative methods in the thesis, categorizing anger expressions by type and examining character actions and reasons for choosing those expressions. Another research conducted by Nada Aoun analyzes the portrayal of psychological disorders using psychoanalytic and chaos theory. The researcher focuses mainly on Trauma and explores how character scope with their past traumas, emphasizing the uniqueness of each character's response.

The present study however differs from the existing literature on the movie through its attempt to answer the following question: How does "The Butterfly Effect" explore and depict time travel as a central theme? In what ways is time travel portrayed in the film? How does this temporal element contribute to the development of the personality of Evan? How can Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories, particularly those related to the Trauma, memory and unconscious be applied to interpret and analyze Evan's experience?

By answering these questions, this research aims to provide a comprehensive and exact understanding of the psychological significance of time travel in "The Butterfly Effect" by exploring the interplay between time travel and psychology; we seek to shed light on the psychological dimensions of the movie.

The butterfly effect introduces a set of characters that are created to allow giving the ability of raising the controversial subjects of memory, trauma and self-healing. To conduct our research, we will borrow from Sigmund Freud's theories of the unconscious and memory in addition to the psychological conceptions of Time travel. Second, we will rely on an analysis of the movie focusing on character development, and narrative

elements that contribute to the exploration of time travel and its psychological implications.

To conduct our research, the following outline will be followed. Our thesis will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter is theoretical as it serves to enhance our understanding of the concept of time Travel in literature and science fiction in particular. It also investigates the psychological implications of time travel trying to draw the link between time travel and the psychological issues of trauma and memory. The second chapter which is rather practical seeks to explore how time travel is employed in "The Butterfly Effect" focusing on Evan's need for time travel driven by his painful childhood experiences and controversial ethical issues which kept affecting his personality as he grows up. The last chapter presents time travel as an empowering tool, a therapeutic method towards a healthy mental state.

Chapter I : Theoretical Exploration of Time Travel

Introduction

Time travel in literature resembles a gateway to boundless imagination and creativity, a concept that surpasses the limitations of reality and pushes the readers into realms where the past, present, and future intertwine. The present chapter aims to offer a thorough apprehension of the concept of time travel. The first section of the chapter attempts to define Time Travel, tracing its origins and examining the different literary techniques employed to depict this phenomenon such as time slip, time machine, suspended animation and time dilation. The second section, on the other hand, explores the relationship between the technique of time travel and memory is linked with the issue of trauma. Thereby, It is our intention to cover some psychological perspectives on Time Travel and trauma.

1. The Phenomenon of Time Manipulation-

1.1. History :

The concept of time travel is widely discussed, in both philosophy and science, provoking debates due to its various paradoxes. Time travel is the movement of a person or object through time, either backward or forward without changing position in the surrounding area, typically using a special device known as the time machine. The most popular definition of the term was given by the American philosopher David Lewis in 1976 :

What is time travel? Inevitably, it involves a discrepancy between time and time. Any traveller departs and then arrives at his destination; the time elapsed from departure to arrival...is the duration of the journey. But if he is a time traveller, the separation in time between departure and arrival does not equal.

the duration of his journey....How can it be that the same two events, his departure and his arrival, are separated by two unequal amounts of time?...I reply by distinguishing time itself, external time as I shall also call it, from the personal time of a particular time traveller: roughly, that which is measured by his wristwatch. His journey takes an hour of his personal time, let us say...But the arrival is more than an hour after the departure in external time, if he travels toward the future; or the arrival is before the departure in external time..if he travels toward the past. (145,46)

According to Lewis, Time travel includes distinctiveness between time and time .if any traveller starts and then reaches his destination; the time ended from departure to an end, this is the duration of his trip.However,for a time traveller the separation of time made the departure and arrival not equal in the duration of his trip.Lewis asks how can the same two incidents, his departing and his arriving,be separated by two unequal amounts of time. He then answers by differentiating between two kinds of time : external time and personal time. Personal time of a time traveller is measured by his wristwatch. For example, if a time traveler takes an hour to travel through time, his personal time may only be an hour. But in external time, it will take more than an hour if he is travelling to the future. And less than an hour if he is travelling to the past.(Sfetcu 1-2).

The concept of time travel has captivated human imagination for a long time, sparking interest from scientists, writers, and artists alike. The appeal of time travel lies in the idea of exploring different periods, both past and future, providing an escape from the limitations of our present existence.It also reflects a subconscious desire for a form of immortality,where one's existence exceeds the typical biological constraints of time. (Rahman 1).

Time travel is the main concern of several significant fantasy and science fiction works involving *The Time Machine* (Wells, 2012), *Doctor Who*, (*Doctor Who*, 2005) and reaching back to the era before H.G. Wells literature like the novella *A Christmas Carol* 2012 by Charles Dickens. Author and science scholar Paul Nahin states that ‘time travel is the ultimate fantasy, the scientific addition to the human quest for immortality’. Nahin reveals that the plausibility of time travel; not only would it help us rescue our beloved ones from death, but it will give us the opportunity and power to see any moment in time. However, time travel in fantasy fiction remains just a fantasy, and ignoring its scientific feasibility. Time travel is apparent in genres beyond science fiction and fantasy, but it can be better identified through human memory.

("Redemptive Time Travel in Harold Ramis's *Groundhog Day* (1993)").

The earliest recorded instances depicting anomalies in time can be identified in historical texts such as Plato's work *"Timaeus"*, where he talks about the nature of time and its connection to the eternal and unchangeable world of forms. According to Plato, time was created by a divine craftsman called the Demiurge, representing a moving image of eternity. This creation of time enabled the world to have a starting point and to exist in a sequence of moments, distinct from the timeless nature of the perfect forms. Similarly, in the Koran, the Night Journey of The Prophet Muhammad (Isra and Mi'raj) describes a miraculous trip from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to the heaven in one night. Anomalies also exist in the Old Testament. In the Book of Isaiah, God responds to King Hezekiah's prayer by granting him the extraordinary ability to reverse the passage of time: "Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down." (*Isaiah 38,8*). These are considered to be the first recorded cases of manipulating time. The sundial of Ahaz or the sundial of Hezekiah could be

considered as an ancient form of a time machine, predating H.G. Wells by four millennia. (Ripley 4).

Moreover, several online forums characterise accounts of individuals sharing experiences of being transferred to diverse times or places, including parallel universes. Author Whitley Strieber documented such encounters in his nonfiction book "Breakthrough" (1995), where he portrays finding himself and a boy in an alternate universe during a jeep ride. Lacking scientific verification, these experiences had inspired novels and films that used waking up in parallel universes or different eras as a narrative device. The main question persists: Are these encounters symbolic visions or glimpses into equally real alternate worlds, or perhaps something else completely? (Micklethwait 73).

Throughout history, philosophers, theologians, scientists, and storytellers have delved into discussions about the manipulation of time, with many explanations attributing such phenomena to mystical or unexplained forces.

Philosophers like Clive Staples Lewis explored the notion of time travel and similar themes in his stories, such as in "The Chronicles of Narnia" series, "The Dark Tower", and "The Space Trilogy", where he conveyed his ideas in fictitious and allegorical ways rather than through philosophical discourse.

Some theologians, such as St. Augustine of Hippo who talked about the essence of time and its relationship to God's eternity especially in "The City of God," and "Confessions".

Meanwhile, St. Thomas Aquinas, in his work "Summa Theologica", delved into theological and philosophical questions concerning time, eternity, and God's relationship to them.

Another prominent figure, Kurt Gödel, was primarily a mathematician and logician who also engaged with theological and philosophical ideas. In 1949, he discovered a solution to Einstein's general relativity equations that allowed for closed timelike curves, enabling

time travel. Gödel's solution, known as the "Gödel metric," proposes the existence of time loops in certain curved spacetime setups.

Storytellers have also contributed to the discussion of time travel through novels or stories. The popular one is Isaac Asimov, who was a skillful writer of science fiction and science books. He explored the concept of time travel in many of his works such as, "Pebble in the Sky" (1950), "The End of Eternity" (1955) and "The Ugly Little Boy" (1958).

The notion of time travel remains a complex one, creating both fantasies of traveling past and future incidents that we were not or will not be able to experience, and invoking scientific questions about the possibility of time travel. Some scholars argue that time travel is possible according to scientific theories like quantum mechanics and general relativity, But most of them agree that the present technology does not permit for practical time travel. According to scientific theories, traveling faster than the speed of light could enable time travel. (Rahman 1-2).

Angels present in various religions and civilizations serve as intermediaries between the divine and human realms. Beliefs in angels extend beyond Christianity, appearing in Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and shamanistic practices. In the Book of Revelations, angels reveal to John symbolic representations of future events. According to Micklethwait, Angels are messengers symbolizing the self's attempts to deliver information to ego consciousness in order that they become comprehended. Their appearance as human beings permits a better relationship, as angels convey messages in a way that humans can understand. Angels are mediators between the divine and humans. Angels are efforts from the transpersonal unconscious to keep connection with human consciousness and ensure an effective participation in both the personal and temporal world.

Déjà vu, a French expression meaning 'already seen,' refers to the feeling that a new situation has been experienced before. It is the impression of having visited a place previously or relived a particular moment. For Micklethwait, approximately 70 per cent of the population shares having faced some sort of déjà vu, since this phenomenon happens with people whether with or without medical status, no one really knows how or why does it occur. Some Psychologists explain it as a wish fulfilment or imagination, while others attribute it to a discrepancy in the brain that leads the brain to confuse between the present and the past. However, for me, déjà vu is kind of vision that individuals experience. It is a stored memory that occurs without prior warning. For everyone, it is an evidence of the greatness of the Creator and urges humans to explore their capabilities and delve deeper into the power of God, in order to better worship him.

Precognition is the capacity of seeing a future event before it occurs, often during a subconscious state like dreaming or meditation. Premonition, otherwise, is a conscious feeling that something, probably unpleasant, is about to happen. Honorton and Ferrari (1989) view precognition as a stable and considerable effect, it remains a contentious perspective, akin to data arriving from the future, challenging the notion of backwards time travel. (Micklethwait 70-74).

Time travel has been a recurring theme in science fiction, notably in H.G. Wells' "The Time Machine" and the "Back to the Future" trilogy. Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" (1843), Irving's "Rip Van Winkle" (1819), and Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" (1889) exemplify this unfounded type of time manipulation in storytelling. (Ripley 4).

1. Time Travel in Science Fiction

A historical research notes that there have been around thirty countings of time travel in philosophical literature, contrasting with over fifteen hundred countings in

science fiction. While philosophical explorations are well thought out and convincing, some science fiction stories use time travel only as a narrative device, disregarding its implications. The emergence of time travel as a sub-genre of science fiction coincided with advancements in "new physics," revealing its peculiar nature and paradoxical implications. Over the last fifty years, time travel has become a significant theme not only in science fiction but also in physics and philosophy, with influential figures like Lewis, Gödel, and Asimov contributing to the discourse. (Ripley 5).

Science fiction, commonly known as "sci-fi," is a genre of fiction literature characterized by imaginative content grounded in scientific concepts. Unlike fantasy, it extremely depends on scientific facts, theories, and principles to back up its settings, characters, themes, and plot lines. The genre continues to evolve in tandem with ongoing developments in science and technology. Moreover, science fiction includes various grouping of subgenres, such as time travel, apocalyptic, utopian/dystopian, alternate history, space opera, and military science fiction. (Orange).

Many science fiction works have explored time travel in different ways. "The End of Eternity" by Isaac Asimov, a group of people known as the Eternals can change history. Philip K. Dick's "Time out of Joint" deals with time travel and its results. "Slaughterhouse-Five" by Kurt Vonnegut narrates the story of a man who becomes disconnected from time, encountering events in a non-linear manner. Douglas Adams' "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" series discusses time travel as well. Connie Willis' "The Doomsday Book" and "To Say Nothing of the Dog" investigates time travel's effect on history. "The Fifth Head of Cerberus" by Gene Wolfe and David Gerrold's "The Man Who Folded Himself" also explore time travel themes. Martin Amis' "Time's Arrow" tells a story where time runs in reverse. Johann Kepler's "Somnium" and Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" both manipulate concepts of time and logic. Finally, Audrey Niffenegger's

"The Time Traveler's Wife" and Grant Naylor's "Red Dwarf: Infinity Welcomes Careful Drivers" use time travel to delve into profound themes like consciousness and fate. Frederick Pohl's "Gateway" explores the concept of time dilation experienced by space travelers. (Schwitzgebel 4-41).

There are two possible directions of time travel in science fiction: forward into the future and backward into the past. These potentials of time travel are employed in three ways: a person from the present travels into the past or future, a person from the past or future travels to the present, or the story is set in a different time, with a character from the present interacting with that time. Time travel into the future is noticed as a strategy to displace the story's setting, permitting writers to speculate about the future based on present scientific knowledge. On the other hand, traveling back in time raises questions about causation, leading to the "Grandfather-paradox," where the actions of a time traveler in the past could negate his/her own existence.

The issue of time travel raises philosophical questions and literary aspects related to time travel in science fiction. It questions on whether the future is predetermined or open to self-determination, identifying the paradoxes that arise from the concept of time travel. The clash of two different temporal realities is presented as a means of contrast, exemplified by characters from various eras interacting in stories like Poul Anderson's "The Man Who Came Early." (David 7-9).

1.1.2 Literary techniques of Time Travel

Time travel in fiction typically happens through two primary methods: either a time slip or a time machine. Alternate approaches include suspended animation, time dilation, and time loops.

A very common narrative tool that enables writers to transport their characters through time without the need for a detailed explanation of the mechanism is Time Slip.

Normally, characters find themselves unintentionally caught in this temporal shift, struggling to return and often experiencing a second journey in a similarly unexpected manner. These stories lack scientific explanations for time travel, instead relying on events such as prolonged napping, a damage leading to unconsciousness, or confronts with paranormal forces.

A prominent example of a time slip is found in Mark Twain's 1889 novel "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court." The story tells about an engineer from Connecticut who, after being struck on the head during a fight, wakes up in Arthurian England. Eventually, he returns to his time with the aid of Merlin, who puts him in a mystic sleep.

The second technique of Time Travel in fiction is time machine which represents a scientific approach to time travel, highlighting the significance of its invention in the narrative. H. G. Wells' "The Time Machine" stands out as a pivotal work that introduced and influenced this concept in storytelling (Krchová 13). H.G. Wells is credited with inventing the concept of a time machine, which serves as a device for the protagonist to explore the future in his novel. (David 11-12).

The third technique is Suspended animation which is a provisional state where biological procedures in a human body slow down, pausing or significantly slowing the aging process while maintaining life functions.

Time dilation is another concept arising from Einstein's theory of relativity. Theoretical physics suggests that time dilation, a phenomenon described by Einstein's theory of relativity, could allow travel into the future. In fictional contexts, achieving time dilation often involves traveling at the speed of light or being in proximity to a powerful gravity object. (Rahman 4-5).

The last technique is Time loop which is prevalent in fantasy and science fiction, it involves a repetitive sequence of time, distinct from a causal loop. It manifests as an

endless recurrence, starting from a specific moment, often waking up, and concluding either at a particular time or following a triggering event like the protagonist's death. The loop resets, allowing the proponent to retain memories of previous cycles while others remain forgetful. (Krchová 13-14).

3. The Concept of Time Travel in the Visual Media

Although time travel in literature traditionally had particular audience, its accessibility blew when appeared on cinema and television screens. From the "Saturday Morning" shows of the fifties to high-budget films, the concept of time travel in visual media has widespread appeal. The likelihood on screen arises from the seamless portrayal of actions linked by plot connections rather than nomological causal connections. Analyzing actions through plot rather than causality makes time travel appear plausible to audiences. (Ripley 5).

In the movie "Looper"(2012), it portrays a scenario where time travel is exploited by a corporation to dispatch individuals from a harsh future to a more permissive past for discreet elimination. The film delves into the paradoxical consequences of altering the past, demonstrated when a time traveler's younger self is tortured by hired killers.

In "The Adam Project" (2022), fighter pilot Adam Reed joins forces with his younger self to confront Maya Sorian, a manipulative time-altering villain. Sorian's control over time stems from self-dealing in the past, but Adam and his family defeat her by respecting time travel rules. Despite facing personal sorrows, they find closure and appreciation for their present lives.

In the film "12 Monkeys" (1995), James travels to the past to prevent a global pandemic caused by eco-terrorists, encountering his younger self in the process. The focus is on stopping the catastrophe rather than adhering to time travel rules. James's childhood trauma shapes his actions, leading to unforeseen consequences for both his younger and

older selves. Despite attempts to change the past, both versions of James suffer the repercussions of self dealing in time travel.

Finally, "The Time Traveler's Wife" (2009) depicts Henry's genetically-inherited time-traveling ability, allowing him to visit his future wife in the past and encounter himself at various points, including a fatal incident during childhood. Through his journeys, Henry navigates different periods, intertwining with his own timeline and shaping his relationship with his wife. (Curry 7-18)

2. Philosophical and Psychological perspectives on Time Travel, memory and Trauma:

This section explores psychological aspects of time travel, particularly focusing on the human perception of time. The significance of memory in time perception is highlighted, suggesting that without it, the perception of time would be impossible.

2.1 Heidegger's Conceptualization of Time and Memory:

The German philosopher Martin Heidegger analyzes and explains the concept of time in two of his works "Being and Time" and "The Basic Problems of Phenomenology." He begins with the portrayal of our daily experience of time. Heidegger traces this experience in two contradictory views: a simple one where time is just a series of moments called vulgar time or leveled down, and a richer profound treatment and understanding of human temporality. Leveled down time decreases this into a straight line measured by clocks, a notion that Martin Heidegger considers it as over simplified. Instead, he suggests another direction labeled primordial temporality, where our past experiences and future expectations influence the present we live in. Heidegger names this dynamic interaction "ecstasy," displaying in how our present links with the past and future.

Martin Heidegger's perspective of time transcends clocks, concentrating on how we experience it. For him the development of humans is not a direct line but as interconnected phases.

Accordingly, He argues that Memory is feelings from the past erupting into the present and isn't just about remembering. According to Heidegger, conflicts persevere throughout life, forming our experiences. This means old conflicts are always being revisited and reworked. In his opinion, time is a complicated interplay of past, present, and future and isn't just a march forward. and memory is about interacting with past potentialities that form our present and future, always within a concept of forgetting. This view uncovers a complicated and profoundly human experience of temporality, moving beyond the simple chronology of events.

2.2. Freud's conceptualization of Time and Memory :

Sigmund Freud presents the term timelessness to the unconscious comparing it to conscious thought that imposes chronological order. Conscious thinking arranges experiences in time, helping communication between various ideas. According to Freud, time is similar to Heidegger's review of temporal intricacy. His investigation of the repetition compulsion and *Nachträglichkeit* (deferred action or afterwardness) reflects temporal complexities, repeating Heidegger's perspective of human temporality. Though originally different, Freudian thoughts correspond with Heidegger's existential view of time, demonstrating a subtle congruence. In Freud's conception, human experience surpasses linear sequence. Full emotional healing from past traumatic incidents may only occur later in life. This late emotional reaction disrupts sequential time, blurring past and present limits.

Freud discusses the compulsive repetition, where people repeat hateful experiences regardless of enjoyment. This interruption of linear time, indicating that human

development goes in circles, Both of Heidegger and Freud, recognize the deep impact of past experiences on present existence.

The notion of time travel manifested through the perspective of human memory. There are stunning connections between Freudian and Heidegger's thoughts on Memory. They investigate how past experiences remain in our minds, even if we are unaware of them. Both propose a form of "time travel," where the past influences our present. Freud's concept of the subconscious storing memories that affect our behavior, is similar to Heidegger's notion of memory retrieval, where we recall meaningful former events. Despite their controversies, combining their ideas gives us a profound view of how memory and time form who we are.

Freud talks about how past experiences can resurface to influence us in the future, even if their importance wasn't obvious to us at the beginning. This thought is named deferred action. It is similar to events from our youth that may only reveal their significance as we grow older. Freud also discusses how we sometimes reenact past experiences or behaviors without knowing it. This repetition occurs because we are attempting to deal with unsolved old issues and emotions. These thoughts indicate how our past can still influence us in the present, similar to traveling through time in a way, where experiences and old memories keep affecting our lives. (Phillips 1-13).-

2.3. Time Travel and Episodic Memory :

Episodic memory gives a way to mentally revisit the past. When replaying past experiences in our minds or looking at old photographs, we are engaged in a kind of time travel. The American psychologist Bruce Goldstein explains that episodic memory includes "mental time travel," allowing us to go back to personal past incidents. Though, these memories are not always exact. Nostalgia and emotional reactions can deform our recollections, making them romanticized versions of what really occurred. As Goldstein

proposes, we could idealize the past by creating memories that are not accurate interpretations of original events.

While physical time travel is a theoretical concept filled with paradoxes such as the Grandfather paradox discussed by David Lewis, the notion of time travel through memory enable us to reflect on our past. This mental trip can affect our present and future actions, indicating that while we are unable to change history, our understanding of it is continually developing. Therefore, episodic memory is a significant tool for delving into our personal histories, forming our view of who we are and how we connect to our past. ("Redemptive Time Travel in Harold Ramis's *Groundhog Day* (1993)").

The capacity of projecting one's mind into the past or future, is considered a primary aspect of the human mind crucial for the development of technology, language, morality, and religion. Time travel explored across various branches of psychology, it involves episodic memory, which enables individuals to remember past experiences and simulate future events. (Micklethwait 68-69).

2.3.2. Memory and Trauma

Time and memory are closely related to trauma. The term "trauma," originating from Greek, denotes harm or damage, often likened to a wound with a laceration. Initially used in medical-surgical contexts, it later found application in psychiatry and clinical psychology to describe the overwhelming impact of stimuli on an individual's coping abilities.

The widely accepted definition of "psychological trauma," as proposed by Janet's French psychodynamic school, describes it as one or more events that can disrupt the individual's psychic system, threatening their mental cohesion.

In simpler terms, psychological trauma refers to events perceived by the individual as critical, leading to feelings of helplessness and vulnerability, causing severe stress that

jeopardizes their psychophysical balance. These events can vary widely, from loss and mourning to experiences of violence or dramatic situations. However, they all share the common aspect of altering the individual's sense of well-being, rendering them more fragile and distorting their identity into that of a "victim.(Perrotta 2).

"Freud's understanding of trauma underwent a significant evolution over the course of his career, notably transitioning from what was initially termed the seduction theory to a greater emphasis on the role of the child's sexual fantasies. Analysts in the 1950s emphasized the importance of the mothering relationship in infantile development, considering both minor and major failures of the caregiver.(Curnow 1).

2.3.3.Traumatic Memory and the Self :

Ordinary and traumatic memories affect us differently. Ordinary or normal memories slowly disappear and become part of our past.They might make us feelregretful or nostalgic and often mix in with other memories.However,traumatic memories remain vivid, as if they have just ocured yesterday. They don't disappear or blend in, even after many years have passed.They's till exist, replaying the event they ocured, bringing back intensive sensations and emotions. After traumatic moment, it's normal to keep thinking about it. These ideas make us able to learn valuable lessons from the experience or reconcile ourselves with the results.

However, it is not the case with some individuals with Post Traumatic Disorder, these memories keep persisting and lead to a lot of sorrow.For them, the trauma is still continuing, though it's in the past.Traumatic memories have also the ability to evoke memories of other terrible experiences we have had. Sometimes, we try to hide or forget these memories, from ourselves or from others.This can cause a lot of inner conflict. How we handle these memories can have a great impacton how we see ourselves and how we manage with life. (Marna 43- 44).

The Australian clinician Rick Curnow in his public lecture explores the psychoanalytic perspectives of trauma, focusing on its deep effect on individuals.

If left unprocessed, trauma can lead to chronic conditions, rapidly evolving into disturbances like post-traumatic stress disorder, characterized by a range of symptoms including emotional dysregulation, irritability, and avoidance behaviors.(Perrotta2).

Post-traumatic stress disorder can be evolved after a traumatic event, and re-experiencing the trauma is a key symptom, manifesting as vivid flashbacks that seem real. In moments of psychosis, individuals may believe that altering their past could improve subsequent incidents, potentially leading to a different and better past and present.

(Micklethwait 71).Understanding the symptoms and nature of PTSD is very important for recognizing its effect on people.

People can develop post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) when they have been the victim of, or witness to, a traumatic event.... One of the main symptoms of PTSD is re-experiencing the trauma. People get vivid ‘flashbacks’ that can include seeing, smelling, hearing and feeling things that were part of the trauma. These intrusive memories feel real, as if they are happening now.

(Mental Health Care, 2011)

Curnow wonders why some people emerge unharmed from disasters while others are deeply disabled, then moving to the harsh impact of trauma on personality growth

The mental impact of trauma is defined by Freud (1920) and later on by (Garland 1998) as a disruption of the protective obstacle in the mind, primarily offered by the mother/caregiver in infancy. The result of a traumatic happening, such as the breakdown of this preventive shield, may cause an initial phase of confusion and shock, portrayed as dissociation. Later on, individuals may seek for reasonable interpretations, search for

meaning, or attribute blame, often by associating present trauma to past *manageable* occurrences.

Two additional results of trauma are examined: the obligation to repeat the incident, either symbolically or directly, and the inability to think about psychological conditions and emotional adventures post-event, leading to flashbacks. (Curnow 1-3)

3. The Self-Healing in Time Travel :

The Self-Healing Hypothesis in time travel presumes that when individuals journey back in time and attempt to change past events, the timeline itself has a mechanism to protect its stability. In essence, any alterations made by time travelers would lead to a chain reaction of incidents that ensures the preservation of the present timeline. This hypothesis proposes a form of temporal resilience, where the timeline resists drastic modifications imposed by time travelers.

The Self-Healing Hypothesis introduces a mechanism close to a feedback loop, where attempts to alter the past trigger corrective measures to reconcile any oppositions. (Krchová 19-20)

4- Conclusion:

The investigation of time travel as a motif in literature reveals not only the boundless creativity of human imagination but also the complex interaction between speculative fiction, scientific inquiry, and psychological understanding. Through a comprehensive analysis of definitions, literary techniques, scientific theories, and psychological perspectives, this dissertation illuminates the multifaceted nature of time travel and its profound impact on the human psyche. As we navigate the labyrinth of time, both in fiction and reality, we are reminded of the enduring search for knowledge and the timeless pursuit of resolving the mysteries of existence. In the realm of literature and beyond, time travel continues to seduce us with its tempting promise of adventure,

discovery, and the eternal quest for finding meaning within the continuously evolving continuum of time.

Chapter II: A Journey Through Mental Realms : Uncovering the Psychological Depths within *The Butterfly Effect*

Introduction :

The human mind is a complicated and fascinating labyrinth able of unbelievable deeds in memory, imagination, and emotional experiences. However, it is also vulnerable to trauma and dysfunction, leading to a set of psychological disorders. In the disturbing world of "The Butterfly Effect," we meet Evan Treborn, an apparently ordinary man struggling with a web of annoying memories and unsettling blackouts. This chapter delves into the psychological depths of the film exploring the complex tapestry of Evan's mental state. We will begin our journey with analyzing Evan's potential disorders investigating the causes and profound effects of trauma on his psyche. We believe that the examination of the Psychological complexities within "The Butterfly Effect" will be help to gain a deeper and better understanding of the devastating results of unresolved trauma.

1- Trauma in the Movie :

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defined truma into three key elements : Event, experience, effect. Trauma is not just about the event itself, but also about the individual's experience and its ongoing effects on his life. An evaluation of current discussions and definitions by the expert committee led to the following notion :

Individual trauma results from an **event**, series of events, or set of circumstances that is **experienced** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening and that has lasting adverse **effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

According to SAMHSA, Trauma is any disturbing incident or experience that generates intensive feelings such as despair, fear, anxiety, confusion, and dissociation. It also includes the enduring influence of these feelings on an individual's life, proposing that painful memories can overcome them and have long-standing effects. (SAMHSA 7).

In the Butterfly Effect, the protagonist, Evan experienced many disturbing incidents; beginning with his father's accidental death by the guards, his involvement in a pornographic shoot with Kayleigh, the brutal death of his dog Crockett by Tommy and the unintended consequences of altered realities. These events generate intense feelings of fear, anxiety, confusion, and dissociation for him. For example, the lasting impact of his dog's death is evident in Evan's persistent attempts to change this event.

Kayleigh suffers from early childhood trauma due to her father's sexual abuse, her participation in an accidental death of a mother and her baby, and witnessing the death of Evan's dog, which evoked intense emotions of despair, fear, anxiety, and confusion for her. The ongoing influence of these feelings on her life has long-standing effects on her personality. This can be illustrated when Evan visits her after many years to ask about her the pornographic shoot filmed by her father, she replied by telling him to shut up, returning home, crying for an hour before killing herself.

Evan's friend, Lenny endured two traumatic incidents. First, he placed a dynamite in a mailbox which blew up and caused the killing of a mother and her baby. Second, he witnessed the savage death of Evan's pet, which created feelings of despair, fear, anxiety, confusion, and dissociation in Lenny. The lasting effects of these painful memories led him to isolate himself in his room and build model planes. However, when he killed Tommy with a sharp tool in an alternative reality, he was put in a psychiatric facility.

Sigmund Freud explored trauma in two periods: first, analyzing the physical and psychological symptoms, particularly in women, of the hysterical attacks from 1892 to

1896, then exploring war neuroses post-World War I. He related all trauma to early sexual adventures, but later Freud understood the role of real-life incidents in the development of trauma, differentiating between traumatic and anxiety disorder. In Freud's book *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death*, he associated trauma with the violence imposed on others and in the fear for one's life. This can be illustrated in the *Butterfly Effect*, in the behavior of Both Kayleigh and her brother Tommy. Because of their father's violence, Kayleigh lived in a fear when she was working in the restaurant and an old man harassed her, she just looked at him then smiled fearfully. Then, when Evan confronted her with the sex video filmed by her father, she committed suicide. Tommy's aggression toward his surroundings, such as killing Evan's dog, hitting a young man in the cinema, and forcing Lenny to place the dynamite in the mailbox that accidentally kill a mother and her baby, can also be interpreted as a reaction to his father's abuse and fear of facing him. Tommy's aggression toward his surroundings, such as killing Evan's dog, hitting a man in the cinema, and forcing Lenny to place the dynamite in the mailbox that accidentally killed a mother and her baby can also be interpreted as a reaction to his father's abuse and fear of facing him. Lenny's fear of Tommy made him participate in the prank and put the dynamite in the mailbox. After it blew up and caused the death of a neighbour and her baby, he isolated himself in his room and started modelling planes. This act of modelling planes can be interpreted as a symbol of Lenny's desire to express himself freely from that fear and guilt. When Lenny was in his room, Evan and Kayleigh knocked on the window. Lenny didn't want to let them enter until he asked about Tommy and confirmed that he wasn't with them. Lenny's fear is also evident in an altered reality where he murdered Tommy, or when he aggressively threw Evan against the wall.

According to Freud, undischarged memories could penetrate a "second consciousness". This phenomenon is exemplified in *the Butterfly effect* in characters like Kayleigh, Lenny, and Tommy. Concerning Kayeily, being haunted by repressed and undischarged memories of her father's sexual abuse and violence subconsciously commits self-destructive acts tragically ending up in suicide committed. Lenny who isolates himself and avoids therapeutic intervention, dissociates from reality and finds relief in modeling planes, a hobby that shields him from confronting his traumatic past. In an altered reality during childhood, Lenny unconsciously kills Tommy due to suppressed pain, guilt, and anger that were never addressed in therapy. These examples demonstrate how unresolved traumas can deeply affect individuals.

Freud noticed that soldiers showed a compulsion to reexperience traumatic events during World War I resulting in worry or fear. This compulsion can be seen in Evan Treborn, who reexperiences past traumatic events such as the death of his dog or visiting his father in a psychiatric facility where he was strangled by him.

Freud's thoughts considerably affected psychoanalytic perception on trauma's effect particularly the notion of the "second consciousness". According to Freud, trauma is unavoidable in psychological development affected by three factors; time, kind, and severity. The timing of traumatic events during crucial developmental phases can deeply affect personality construction. This idea is apparent in the "Butterfly effect" in the characters of Kayleigh, Lenny and Tommy. Traumatic incidents during their early childhood and adolescence have deeply affected their personalities. Kayleigh has a low self-esteem for herself and committed suicide. Lenny remains isolated from the world due to feelings of fear, and guilt. Tommy became a violent person because of his father's violence and his inability to express his anger towards him. He ended up in a jail in alternative time even damaged Evan's car, leaving a dog collar as a message indicating

his involvement in the death of Evan's dog and threatening Evan. Tommy later severely beat Evan and tragically died during their confrontation with a baseball bat.

The nature or kind of trauma like physical, emotional or sexual abuse influences an individual's psyche. This is evident in the movie characters ; Evan, Kayleigh and Tommy. Evan was deeply affected by being strangled by his father, the brutal death of his dog, and the unintended consequences of the multiple realities he experienced. Also The violence and sexual abuse imposed by Mr .Miller on his daughter Kayleigh and his son Tommy had deeply affected them causing profound emotional scars and psychological disorders. Moreover, Freud highlighted that the severity of trauma defines its ongoing psychological results, affecting behaviors, feelings, and overall mental well being throughout life. This is exemplified in Evan Treborn's attempts to commit suicide in an alternate reality because of his disability and Kayleigh's love to Lenny. Kayleigh's suicide is a direct consequence of her father's violence and sexual abuse. Lenny's isolation and dissociation in his room originate from his feelings of fear, anger and guilt. These three factors of time, kind and severity emphasize Freud's belief in the crucial role trauma plays in forming human psychology and progress.

Sigmund Freud related regression to early trauma, especially the initial scene. Freud differentiated signal and automatic anxiety. Signal Anxiety is a kind of anxiety linked to specific incidents or situations that present a danger or a threat to the individual. It acts like a "signal" or warning sign that alerts the ego to potential danger. Automatic anxiety, on the other hand, is more widespread and generalized. It emerges from inner conflicts or unresolved psychological problems rather than specific external threats. Freud observed the ego's response to dangerous trauma and indicated the endurance of trauma in the subconscious mind, resulting to self-imposed trauma and repeated trauma. Trauma includes the loss of necessary elements of life, stimulating

devastating the self and dissolution anxiety. "*The Butterfly Effect*" reflects these Freudian concepts of trauma, anxiety and regression through Evan Treborn's journey. Evan faces early traumas of loss and abuse that form his choices and personality. His past experiences influence his lifetime progression. Evan's Treborn capacity to change the past symbolizes regression, as he revisits and tries to alter crucial moments in order to minimize their effect. Evan struggles with both automatic and signal anxiety as he faces unanticipated outcomes of his time-traveling deeds, illustrating Freud's differentiations. The persistent nature of trauma in Evan's psyche results in cycles of self-inflicted and repeated trauma, complicating his pursuit for identity and healing in a disordered reality. (Marna 33-36)

The *Butterfly Effect* depicts trauma as a central topic, as the main characters all go through distressing and disturbing incidents that have a lasting effect on their lives and progress. Evan suffers from trauma when his mother brings him to encounter his distant father for the very first time. The meeting suddenly becomes aggressive as Evan's father crazily attacks him, leading the guards to kill him in front of Evan. Evan's doctor believed that the traumatic event Evan experienced is the main cause of the blackouts he suffers from.

This traumatic event has an ongoing effect on Evan's mental well-being. He starts to have blackouts, which are a result of his brain's incapacity to handle the traumatic memory. Evan Treborn's doctor considers that the traumatic incident is the key reason of his blackouts, indicating the deep effect it has on his mental health.

Another traumatic event happened few days after the dynamite exploded in the mailbox and the killing of the mother and her baby. After Evan and Kayleigh visited Lenny at his house, they decided to go to the forest. There, they found out that Tommy is trying to burn Crockett, Evan's dog. Despite Evan's efforts and the beating he received, he

couldn't save the dog, which was burnt alive, contributing significantly to Evan's emotional distress and turmoil. (Aoun 20)

As Evan was driven by regret, guilt, and a longing for a better life for him and his surroundings, he thought that by changing his past, he could be able to create a happier future for himself and those around him especially his girlfriend. However, as he starts to alter and manipulate incidents in his timeline, he immediately finds out that each modification often has devastating results. His biggest trauma is the unexpected results and the failure to change the past and create a brighter future.

The notion of the butterfly effect, from which the movie derives its title, proposes that even small alterations in the past can cause significant changes in the present and future. Evan's efforts to modify past traumatic events accidentally set off a chain reaction of incidents, leading to new traumas and difficulties for himself and those he cares about. For instance, Evan tries to prevent his love, Kayleigh, from facing abuse by her father. However, this causes Kayleigh suffering from strict emotional instability, and Evan finds himself in a psychiatric institution. In another temporality, Evan attempts to ensure his friend Lenny's safety, but this ends up in Lenny becoming paralyzed. These unanticipated outcomes oblige Evan to face the ethical implications of his deeds and struggle with the limitations of his talent. Despite his best intentions, Evan discovers that some traumas may be inevitable, and trying to change the past only causes further tragedy and suffering.

Kayleigh, and her brother Tommy also suffer from Trauma. They are shocked after being obliged to engage in child pornography. The Miller brothers also experienced sexual abuse both physical and emotional from their father, which deeply influences them as they grow up. In "The Butterfly Effect," trauma reappears in the Miller household's basement when Kayleigh's brother Tommy proposes to Evan and Lenny using an

explosive device particularly a firecracker found in their basement to explode a mailbox. Unluckily, they fail to expect the results, causing the dying of the homeowner and her infant when she neared the mailbox. This event profoundly affected Kayleigh, shaped her personality development and contributed to her emotional scares. The terrible experiences of the main characters involving obligated involvement in child abuse, pornography and the aggressive death of a parent are central to the movie's exploration of how such distressing events can deeply form an individual's mental state and life path.

(Aoun 20-21)

Lenny also experienced a childhood event where he accidentally caused the death of a neighbor and her infant. This incident deeply affected him, leaving him emotionally and physically incapacitated. Lenny's raising distress, driven by his emotions of guilt regarding his involvement in the tragedy, ultimately becomes so severe that he needs to be hospitalized.

Lenny's responses to trauma in "The Butterfly Effect" demonstrate profound shock and fear. He avoids trauma triggers and chooses to build model airplanes as a defense mechanism. Lenny's behavior emphasises the relationship between trauma and dissociation. His disconnection from his psychological state is maintained through his hobby of building model planes. He isolated himself from the world, retreating into a dreamlike state, this pattern of dissociation highlights how trauma can result in seeking unchanging, safe surroundings to escape disturbing past accidents. (Aoun 27-28)

Evan's mother Andrea Treborn also suffers from trauma as she had a harsh and traumatic past herself. First, the mental state of her husband, Jason Treborn who was in a mental institution then accidentally killed had a deep impact on her as single mother struggling to raise Evan. Additionally, Evan's changed behaviour and his blackouts add to her more stress and trauma. Furthermore, she has lost two babies during her pregnancy,

and she is afraid of losing her beloved son, who appears to have a hereditary illness like his father.

2. Psychological Implications of Trauma in the Movie :

2.1 Depression :

Trauma plays a vital role in the protagonist's psychological state, worsening his psychological turmoil and contributing to his continuing struggles with mental health. *The Butterfly Effect* mainly focuses on Evan who undergoes blackouts during traumatic incidents in his childhood and adolescence. These traumatic events profoundly affect Evan Treborn's psychological health, causing different psychological disorders throughout the film.

Evan's horrific past starts with him repeatedly asking his mother Andrea to visit his absent father Jason. Despite Andrea's efforts to change the topic, she finally decided to take Evan to visit Jason on the advice of Evan's psychiatric doctor. Evan Treborn's first meeting with his father was shocking, as Jason attempts to kill Evan and is suddenly killed by the guards.

Six years later, while Evan was in the basement in Kayleigh's house with her Tommy finds where his father used to hide the dynamite and suggested they blow something up. Unfortunately, they blow up a mailbox, accidentally causing the death of a mother and her child. This traumatic experience leaves Evan with profound psychological wound, which later manifests in his mental health conflicts. The event has a deep impact on Evan Treborn, intensifying to his mental distress. Depression manifests through insomnia, despair and suicidal thoughts. His relationships with his beloved girlfriend Kayleigh across various timelines further aggravate these symptoms, emphasising the deep emotional effect of his traumatic experiences on his psychological health. In an

altered reality, Evan attempted to suicide but was luckily saved by Tommy. Evan says to Tommy " Lenny loves pop corn. You guys are better than me " (1:40:50-1:41:39). Evan's character exhibits a pessimistic way of thinking associated with depression. Due to his physical disability, Evan feels a profound sense of purposelessness and even sees the world as unfair. This negative view plays an important role in the appearance and worsening of his depressive signs. The movie's portrayal of Evan Treborn's character depicts how negative interpretations and perceptions of life incidents can contribute to the progression of depression.

The traumatic incidents in Evan's past, such as the death of a mother and her child, have an ongoing impact on his psychological health. His depression is distinguished by emotions of guilt, hopelessness and low self-esteem. These symptoms are worsened by his relationships with Kayleigh, which are characterized by suffering and pain. The movie effectively portrays how traumatic experiences can form a person's mental health, resulting in the emergence of psychological disturbances like depression. *The Butterfly Effect* underscores the significance of addressing traumatic events and their effect on mental health to promote recovery and healing.

Kayleigh, another important character in "The Butterfly Effect" struggles with depression throughout the narrative. She experiences a variety of depressive symptoms including profound sadness, disturbed sleep patterns, suicidal thoughts, and a deep sense of hopelessness. Her depressive symptoms are closely associated to the traumatic events she experienced, especially the violence and sexual abuse committed by her father.

Kayleigh's depression is profoundly rooted in her past traumatic experiences. Beginning with the violence and sexual abuse perpetrated by her father as well as the pornographic video shot with Evan which her father filmed leaves her with deep emotional wounds. Another painful experience was her engagement in the accidental

death of a mother and her baby. Depression can be seen in the scene where she, Tommy and Evan are in the cinema ; Evan asks her :(Are you Ok. and she doesn't say nothing (19 :19-19 :23).Depression worsened when she witnessed in the forest the brutal death of Evan's dog, followed by Evan leaving the town.

All these traumas contribute to her emotions of hopelessness, sadness, and low self-esteem. Her depression is further aggravated by her complex relationships with Evan in the multiple realities, which are defined by suffering and pain. Kayleigh's depression in "The Butterfly Effect" is portrayed through different symptoms. She shows deep sadness, apparently responding emotionally to Evan's actions with tears and anger, indicating her profound emotional pain. The film ends tragically with Kayleigh's suicide, emphasising the intensity of her psychological challenges. Her feeling tired and irregular sleep demonstrate physical symptoms of depression, apparent in her tired appearance and slow movements. Kayleigh's pessimistic view and sense of hopelessness is revealed through sentences like "nothing's ever going to get better," capturing a frequent symptom of depression.

The movie describes how Kayleigh's hostile environment and painful past she grew up in lead to her lasting psychological conflicts, highlighting the enduring effect of past traumas on psychological health. Furthermore, emotions of shame and guilt arising from her history of violence and sexual abuse by her father aggravate her depression, intensified by her stormy relationship with Evan. The story also investigates societal shame surrounding problems of abuse, emphasising the need for greater societal support and acceptance for survivors of trauma.

The movie does not highly delve into depression treatment, but it provides valuable perceptions into the complications of psychological struggles and the lasting impact of trauma on individuals' lives.

By exploring the character's experiences, the narration provides deep insights into the profound and ongoing impact of past traumas on individuals' mental health. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of compassion and understanding in supporting those struggling with depression and affirms the complexities of grappling with psychological well-being among societal pressures and personal traumas.

In *"The Butterfly Effect"*, Lenny's personality is profoundly impacted by traumatic incidents, which are apparent in the symptoms that reflect intensive depression. His retreat and isolation from social relations, spending broad time alone in his room modeling planes, demonstrate a defensive mechanism that shields him from facing his traumatic memories. Lenny's behavior indicates his inner disorder and difficulty in dealing with feelings, which are common symptoms of depressive disturbances.

Lenny's depression is further highlighted by deep emotions of self-blame and guilt arising from past deeds, particularly his participation in a prank that tragically concluded in deaths. This event haunts him, appearing in recurring thoughts of regret and contributing to a widespread sense of hopelessness and despair. His emotional condition is defined by mood variations, extending from periods of frustration and intense anger to moments of deep carelessness and sadness.

On the social level, Lenny grapples to maintain meaningful relations, especially with his friends Evan and Kayleigh, due to misunderstandings and unsettled conflicts rooted in their common past of trauma. These tense connections aggravate his emotions of alienation and loneliness, intensifying his isolation as he struggles with the emotional wounds of his past.

Generally, Lenny's portrayal in *"The Butterfly Effect"* is an impressive examination of the deep effect of unresolved trauma on mental well-being, describing the complexities of depression through subtle signs and their damaging impact on emotional health and

personal relationships. His journey emphasizes the struggles of navigating life with persistent emotional pain, providing a captivating depiction of the enduring results of past trauma on individual behavior and psyche.

2.2 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder :

Post traumatic stress disorder is a psychiatric condition that may happen in people who have witnessed or experienced a traumatic incident, series of incidents or set of circumstances. An individual may encounter this as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening and may influence physical, mental, social, and/or spiritual health. Examples involve natural disasters, terrorist acts, serious accidents war/combat, historical trauma, rape/sexual assault, bullying and intimate partner violence.

(American Psychiatric Association)

Post traumatic stress disorder is depicted by symptoms that can considerably weaken daily performance and quality of life, involving flashbacks, severe anxiety, distressing memories and uncontrollable ideas about the incident.

("Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)").

The psychodynamic view on PTSD proposes that traumatic events disrupt the individual's worldview and self-integration, resulting in symptoms such as avoidance, re-experiencing, increased excitement and negative mood changes. These signs arise from conflicts between conscious and unconscious mechanisms, where the trauma's unconscious meanings deeply influence social connections and self-perception. PTSD is seen as a complicated interplay between internal psychological processes and external stressors, highlighting the enduring effect of trauma on mental functioning and health. This view can be illustrated in the film through the character of Evan .because of the traumatic events he surfaced, he is isolated from the world and even avoiding social interaction. This is evident through his few childhood friends and only one college room

mate. As the protagonist reexperiences his past traumatic events, he is excited and even the negative mood changes. When Evan Treborn experiences trauma, a hidden conflict is created between the conscious and the subconscious, and thus, his relationship with his surroundings is changing for example: after leaving the town, he neither called nor visited his friends Kayleigh and Lenny. Internal psychological processes as in his ideas, emotions, memory and identity clash with external stressors like events, social situations, environmental conditions and people's actions. The interplay perpetuates the enduring effects of trauma on Evan, manifested in feelings of depression, regret, despair and hopelessness.

The psychodynamic view on PTSD emphasises that traumatic memories disturb the integration of one's sense of self and worldview, resulting in ongoing symptoms such as emotional detachment, hypervigilance, and recurrent memories. These signs arise from the struggle between conscious efforts to manage traumatic events and unconscious functions that oppose integration of the trauma into personal past. Traumatic memories remain as unassimilated penetrations, different from ordinary memories, and can provoke psychological suffering and extreme anxiety. The procedure of managing trauma includes efforts to either incorporate or avoid traumatic recalls, affecting how people perceive themselves and their surroundings, often weakening their sense of self-worth and security. This perspective can be depicted in *The Butterfly Effect* through Evan's painful memories which made him believe that the world is unfair due to his incapacity of remembering some events. This feeling affects his self-esteem in both his present reality and the altered realities he creates. This feeling leads to lasting effects such as Evan's emotional detachment from his surroundings and hypervigilance when interacting with them in the multiple realities depicted throughout the movie. These signs are the result of a conflict between the conscious, meaning traumatic events and the subconscious, ideas

opposing integrating them into one's past. The struggle between the penetration of painful memories and avoiding them can evoke intense feeling of anxiety causing feeling of self-worth and securing. However, this didn't prevent Evan from trying to alter and correct the past through his way of healing.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) includes a complex interaction of psychological reactions to trauma, where people often incorporate blame, specially children, prompting a sense of control during helplessness. The experience of trauma usually induces deep humiliation and shame, provoking defensive behaviors and weakening one's self-reliance. Pain and fear and linked with trauma can result in presistent psychological and physiological influences, involving retreat behaviors and increased excitement. Dissociation and avoidance serve as frequent defense mechanisms, allowing people to deal with overwhelming intrusive memories and feelings. The quest for meaning in trauma is vital, as it forms how people integrate and interpret their experiences, affecting their psychological health and recovery trajectories. In "The Butterfly Effect," Evan's childhood trauma deeply affected him, leaving him with a sense of humiliation and shame. This can be seen in his weak personality and dissociation from the world as a self mechanism, Evan's trauma are often linked with pain and fear, whether in his present reality or in the multiple realities he experienced. These feelings caused both retreat and excitement in Evan's behaviors. Evan's quest for meaning of trauma was crucial in interpreting and integrating painful experiences to find the truthfull path to healing (Marna 37-51)

2.3 Repressed Memory in The Butterfly Effect

Repressed memory, a precise form of dissociative memory, is clearly portrayed in the The Butterfly Effect. At the proposition of his psychologist, the protagonist starts journaling his daily life. As he grows older, Evan finds out that he is able to manipulate

his past by reexamining his journal writings, thereby changing his future. The actions taken by the hero eventually menaced his own existence although the strictness of the consequences differs between the director's cut and the theatrical release. In spite of some errors in how dissociative amnesia is depicted, the movie efficiently captures the nature of repressed memory as a mental phenomenon. Furthermore, The Butterfly effect gives insight into the cognitive systems, illustrating how our brainswork and the fragility of our feelings. It identifies both the advantages and disadvantages of repressing memories.

Repressed memory happens when the brain locks tragic events to guard the person from experiencing the linked pain and distress. In the movie, the hero's adventures, like attesting abuse and violence, are totally traumatic, creating a plausible scenario in which his mind would suppress these horrific memories.

The primary cause for the inaccuracies in The Butterfly Effect comes from its depiction of Evan's capacity to alter the past through his memories. While this narrative component raises excitement to the plot, it doesn't reflect how memory works in the real world. In reality, memories are not as adjustable as described in the movie, and the idea of changing the past through remembrance is more fiction than reality.

Watching the film provides valuable perspectives into both cognitive and emotional sides of forgetfulness. The butterfly effect is interesting to observe as it shows the brain's power to suppress memories without our conscious knowledge, focusing on the capacity of our unconscious mind over our conscious one. Emotionally, the movie demonstrates how our previous life experiences or events influence the formation of our identities. In spite of Evan's tough past, his efforts to enhance his life as well as his friends' lives frequently lead to unexpected results. It's totally normal for humans to seek happiness and perfection, even prioritizing them over reality, as noticed when the protagonist sacrifices his personal well-being for the purpose of his friends'

joy. Eventually, our subconscious mind protects us from the emotional effect of intense tragedies, allowing us to adapt and move forward.

Evan faces deep memory repression and reclamation, which works as the main side of his mental conflict. His episodes of unconsciousness, were provoked by traumatic incidents like assisting assault or engaging in dangerous actions, highlight the profundity of his psychological disturbance. These repressed memories reappear suddenly, creating Evan enormous pain as he grapples with the results of his behaviors.

The Butterfly Effect usually describes dissociative amnesia and repressed memory, The hero, Evan, blocks out distressing memories from his childhood and adolescence, solely recollecting them later in life through his journals. Yet, the concept that he can change the present by modifying past episodes and some of his unexplainable blackouts exceed the limits of plausibility. Despite these imaginary elements, the film offers an exciting perspective on memory and focuses on how our minds defend us from hurtful truths. The idea suggests that while memory loss, like dissociative amnesia, can be disturbing, it may also contribute to personal development and growth.

("Dissociative Amnesia in Butterfly Effect")

The blackouts of Evan are symptoms of dissociative amnesia, which is identified by an incapability to recollect personal information. Evan Treborn's blackouts first occurred when he drew a violent picture in his childhood, then held a knife to his mother. Kayleigh's father, Mr Miller, obliged them to appear in a porn video that he is filming with his *camera*. Evan's meeting with his father and the accidental deaths of some people in Evan's altered memories. In these cases the protagonist Evan always questions "What happens?", "where I am?" and so on. He was ignorant of his amnesia until reminded by one of his surroundings. Furthermore, Evan went through repetitive occurrences of amnesia, which were related to his dissociative identity condition. This disorder is

distinguished by the presence of numerous distinctive identities or emotions of possession, as well as recurring accidents of amnesia.

The key factor of Evan's mental disease is inheritance: his father Jason suffered from this mental illness. Evan's dissociative disorders was also triggered by the guilt of killing people and the stress from his family and social relationship .In the movie, when Evan went to a psychiatrist,he was diagnosed with a mental illness. Evan received a brain scan and psychoanalytic therapy. The psychiatrist used brain scan to check out if Evan have inherited the mental illness from his father. The psychiatrist utilized hypnosis to unravel why and what Evan forgot. Psychoanalysts believe that hypnosis will help people to repress troubling ideas. In the film, since all Evan's blackouts happened in horrible situations, In fact, hypnosis did not work for Evan. and his psychological disturbances became more serious (EduBirdie).

Overall,"The Butterfly Effect" focuses on the deepeffect of past traumas on psychiatric health and delves on the interconnectedness of trauma, depression, and therapy within the story.

Conclusion

The investigation of Evan's psychological disorder in "The Butterfly Effect" describes anemotionalportrayal of the enduring effects of trauma. The movie works as a harsh wake up callof the fragility of the human mind and the intenseeffect of unresolved sentimentale wounds. In the protagonist's journey, we witness the destructing resultes of childhood trauma and the hopeless struggle to regain a feeling of regularit or routine. Decipheringpsychologicalbasisof the film not only enhances our appreciation of its story but also sheds light on the difficulties of mental well-being and the importance of searching for help.As we close this chapter,we are encouraged to reflect on the eternal

power of the mind, its susceptibility to trauma, and the potential for recovery and redemption.

Chapter III: Seeking Redemption and Salvation Through Time

Travel in *The Butterfly Effect*

Introduction

Have you ever dreamt of going back in time, rectifying mistakes and creating a more pleasant present? The butterfly effect, a concept where a small change can have huge consequences, becomes a horrifying double-edged sword in the hands of the protagonist Evan Treborn. In this chapter, we delve into his labyrinth of time travel where he struggles with the pain and pleasure of revisiting old memories. We will examine how the act of revisiting past events, with all its sorrow and joy, becomes a vital step in Evan's path towards salvation. Through his renewed experiences, we will uncover the obscured potential of memory, not just as a shelter for regret or comfort, but as a key instrument for healing.

1. The Role of Time Travel in the Movie :

Most of the characters in the movie faced traumatic events with varying degrees however the protagonist Evan had most traumas which made him suffer from a lot of psychological disturbances: depression, post traumatic stress disorder and repressed memories. So, Evan Treborn was trapped in pain and his only solution to save himself from the emotional wounds was to time travel through his memory and changes his past mistakes in order to gain his stability of mind and to heal his heart. As time travel was an attractive theme for many scientists, psychologists, philosophers and even storytellers. In the film, the protagonist Evan Treborn used time travel as metaphorical tool when seeking for salvation by altering his past deeds and mistakes. Time travel plays a pivotal role in the movie as it shows us how Evan revisits his past experiences mentally through journaling and invites us to discover the different realities created by the protagonist

himself and feel compassion towards the unexpected results he faced. Evan's recollections were not always accurate because emotional responses and nostalgia can distort his memories and transform them into romanticized versions.

Alternatively, movie scholar André Bazin emphasises the importance of memory in time travel, suggesting that even if memories disappear, they still have an impact on our present, similar to Freud's "mystic writing pad.", which was a simple tool that permitted rapid erasing of any drafting on its surface. It contains a waxy, soft foundation layer with a skinny plastic sheet above. If you wrote on the plastic with a pen, there will be traces in the wax that showed up as dark stripes. But, if we lift the plastic sheet the traces will vanish. (Yale News, "Fresh Impression: Freud's 'Mystic Writing Pad'"). It was the case with the protagonist Evan, who, despite his missing memories, his unconscious mind still retain their deep effect in Evan's present such as the pronographic shot, Mr. Miller, made with Evan and his daughter, Kayleigh. Evan still feel shame and regret about that even he doesn't remember the incident, or when being part of the accidental killing of a mother and her infant, made him disconnected, having just one friend in the college named Thumper. Evan neglected his friends Lenny, and his beloved girl friend Kayleigh no call, and no visit for seven years. Evan Treborn remember them only when he wanted to refresh his memory and to find out if he had the power to go to the past or not. What really shows that even if the memories disappear they still have a lasting mark in one's heart are the attempts of the hero Evan to correct them during his journey of healing by creating different realities, but unlucky he found himself facing a hidden enemy, a curse, or dealing with a very powerful and unbeaten monster called destiny or fate. The Freud's "mystic writing pad", allows us to think in both our regrets and happy moments. This can be illustrated in the movie during Evan's flashbacks in the multiple realities, as he recollects both happy and regretful moments. If time travel was

possible, it would offer a chance to rewrite our past and find redemption. Freudian theories of memory and repression, especially the "mystic writing pad," can be applied to time travel stories. While physical time travel remains a fantasy, the desire to change the past and reshape our memories persists, as shown by Goldstein's idea that various factors shape our past recollections. (Redemptive Time Travel)

According to Sigmund Freud and Martin Heidegger our memories are a form of time travel, they transport us back to the past to form our present. (Phillips 12).

This idea can be seen with the main character Evan, who used his memory as a machine device to transport him back to the past in order to help his love Kayleigh, his dog Crockett, or the poor neighbor and her baby, or to correct his past mistakes and deeds in order to create a better present especially for himself and for those he care about. The same idea can also be applied on Evan's father, Jason, who seems to mentally time traveled though it is not demonstrated in the movie, However it can be understood through his words when he said to Evan in an altered reality " that he was praying to the heavens that this thing would end with me, refering to time travel, and that there is no right, you can't change people who they are, without destorying who they were, you can't play god, son." (1:26 :40-1:27:03) For Freud, memories are stored in the subconscious influencing our behavior, this idea can be illustrated with Evan Treborn presistence in changing past events through his power of time travel. However Heidegger emphasises on how remembering important past experiences affects our views of ourselves today. As Evan was driven by feelings of regret, fear, and shame of his past actions, his personality was fragile and weak as the audience can see it and feel it too, he was a shy person and afraid of facing the world or even asking about his old and beloved childhood friends. (Phillips 3-4).

Thus, experiences and memories will determine our identity. That's the case of time travel in the movie which shaped Evan's personality and understanding transforming him from a young selfish and childish guy into an altruistic, mature one.

1.1. Memory and Suffering in the Movie:

In *The Butterfly Effect*, the literary technique used is time loop, Evan finds himself in a repetitive cycle of events. His old conflicts resurface. Beginning with the incident of revisiting the forest and trying to prevent Kayleigh's brother, Tommy, from burning his dog Crockett alive, and despite his efforts, Evan fails to save him causing him more suffering as the pain is renewed and the wound is open again to the same distress over and over again. Or when Evan revisited his father, Jason, again in the psychiatric institution and strangled him. Each time the loop repeats, the protagonist Evan Treborn's remembers what occurred, meaning his memory restores the previous events.

(Krchová 14) So, the pain is always remembered during Evan's mental journey .As the protagonist Evan suffers from Post Stress Traumatic Disorder, his memories keeps continuing causing lot of sorrow and sadness especially as he continues severely to find solutions whether for his past by trying mentally to change his past events or when facing the same incidents again ,meaning for his case, trauma is still persisting even if it is the past Traumatic recollections have the capacity to evoke recollections of other painful experiences such as the case for Evan, who tried to return to the past to save his pet from the brutal death in the wood, find himself unintentionally facing the accidental death of a neighbor and her infant. Evan Treborn's flashbacks of traumatic events cause him pain too, as he suffers from harsh nosebleeds and blackouts when recollecting these memories. Evan's dissociation caused a lot of inner conflict, as he struggles to forget the traumatic memories and repress them but discover that he was obliged to face them and remember them if he wants to find redemption. (Marna 43-45) So, more pain for him and more

suffering. Old conflicts shape our experiences and that's why the main character Evan keeps revisiting them because he knew that if he corrects the past, he will have a better present and a brighter future. He was positively aware that he has to interact with past possibilities but the more interacting with the past when trying to solve problems, he discovers that the more pain he faces in his journey whether by experiencing the same pain or dealing with the unanticipated results which intensified his pain and weakened his memory. (Phillips 10). Evan was obliged to repeat these experiences and even this compulsion itself was another distress that he has to carry on his shoulder when moving toward the path of healing. It was not obvious for the beginning but Evan realizes the importance of every single event he experienced in the past as the past plays a major role in shaping our present and even our future. (Phillips 12). Suffering was present almost in the whole movie because the protagonist Evan was trying to deal with unsolved problems or issues like losing his father, Kayleigh or his dog, that's why he is still stuck in the past and has to go there fix all and move once and for all in his life with no regrets or being ashamed of himself. By doing that Evan gave himself an opportunity to act bravely towards his past mistakes even if he did that without being careful about the outcomes of changing the past and making a good plan when revisiting the past.

Freud's theory of *nachtraglichkeit*'s investigates the understanding of our childhood incidents as potentially traumatic later in our life. It means that repressed memories or discharged ones persist if we encounter the same traumatic incidents. In *the Butterfly Effect*, The main character Evan faced the same traumatic events as he traveled back mentally to alter the past which affected his present and caused him more pain than ever imagined, same traumatic events like witnessing the brutal death of his pet, Crockett,, losing Kayleigh accidentally when the dynamite exploded, or being strangled again by his father in the psychiatric institution and witnessing his accidental killing by the guards.

Eventually, it was not easy for him either to face or understand the essence of those traumatic events ,as he endures great suffering which intensifies his psychological wounds ,making him more depressed as he tried even to suicide in an altered reality when he find himself paralyzed and that his beloved girlfriend is in love with Lenny. So, when Evan faced the same repressed incidents, as they appear unexpectedly, his pain is renewed but becomes more hurtful and his wound becomes more exposed to trauma which resulted in the destruction of the mechanism of defense that Evan builds whether by escaping his pain, neglecting it, by repressing his own recollection or hiding them from others Evan Treborn deeply suffers during his journey. The unconscious is atemporal and thus undischarged memories, which persist unchanged permitting for the cause of the incident to occur after the effect. So, pain can be endless and it is revived.

(Redemptive Time Travel)

Memory of pain reflects past pain. According to Friedrich Nietzsche, past suffering can return as a ghost, haunts us and disturbs our peaceful moments. That was the case for the main character Evan Treborn, who tried to repress his traumatic memories and experiences because they were unbearable. He was trying to convince himself that he was living that way in a peace and that he is safe now from pain and distress. He persuaded himself that he can beat his pain if repressed, by neglecting or dissociating himself from his old childhood friends and even his only love Kayleigh. By dissociating himself from pain too. However, pain appears again as a ghost for the scared Evan when he suddenly finds out his power of changing the past. Then, he recognizes that he can no longer escape from his past mistakes and the traumatic experiences he endures because they will always resurface and disturb his happy moments as it happens when he used his newfound skill to time travel in some crucial past events. The altered realities caused him more pain and worsen his psychological state.

In the movie, Evan Treborn repressed memories and undischarged feelings can reappeared beyond his capacity to control in flash backs, when he recollected his past memories of the multiple realities he created, and then he experiences a renewed pain. So ,his psychological wounds are exposed to the same pains over and over again. Thus, the bigger the wound and the better is their remembrance, the more pain and distress and the more past and present interplaying together and transforming into one horrific past. (Volf 4). By remembering past experiences, Evan can predict future events. This is the role of episodic memory. And that's what Evan was trying to do, he wants to predict future events by going back to past events or experiences and changing them. But the results were unexpected because timeline has its own protective shield, preventing big changes to happen and protecting its stability. (Micklethwait 69).Evan Post-traumatic stress disorder developed after each re-experiencing traumatic event manifesting as vivid flashbacks that seem real. Creating for Evan a sort of illusion as he thinks that he can really change totally the past and playing god role.(Micklethwait 71).

Painful events are vivid memories, they stick strongly in our minds and last for a long time, more than peaceful or happy moments. It was obvious with Evan in *the butterfly effect*, as he moved on to another town and even continues his studies in the college and become a smart student but he was not happy, as his face and attitudes shows sadness.Evan blamed himself for the accidental death of his father and the brutal killing of his dog ,Evan prioritizes recollecting past pain and dangerous things such being engaged for the accidental killing of a neighbor and her baby, as a matter of protection and in order to stay safe by avoiding committing such silly but risky things in the future. His happy memories of joy have rapidly fade into obscure ,because he has more negative experiences than positives one.

(Odili, "The Memory of Pleasure vs. The Memory of Pain")

But can we recall past suffering without recalling the emotion that associated it? Depending on my mood, well for the protagonist Evan Treborn, he didn't show a particular mood when recalling the past events or when trying to change them, he was focused and determined, as he wanted to get rid of his pain and fix all in order to create a better present reality empty of painful memories and sorrow. If Evan's memories were not linked with painful emotions, he would forget them at the beginning. However, his memories of pain undergone were associated with emotions of suffering and of a profound impact. (Volf 5).

2.2 The quest for pleasure

Pleasure has a part too in the movie, as the protagonist Evan time traveled in the past, and manipulated the crucial events he wanted to change. It becomes a pleasure for him as now Evan knows the evil, knowledge is dissociated from emotions. Evan understands evil: through his direct experience, which makes it easier for him to know what incident to choose and what mistake to correct. In a way, Evan Treborn becomes the master of his fate and other people's fate too. (Volf 6). Memory of pleasure reflects past pleasure. That why Evan Treborn was so determined in changing his past because he knows that past pleasure means also a pleasant present and joyful future. (Volf 4). If past experiences are enjoyable, their revival in memory will be welcomed, of course. This is the reason behind Evan's persistence to change and overcome past mistakes by making them happy memories through journaling. Evan Treborn decided to fill his memory with happy moments, he wants to increase pleasure and even more transform the original experience into a happy experience. This can be illustrated in his attempts to change the painful experiences he had or those he was part of. Eventually, strong memories of pleasant experiences bring joy in the present by vividly recalling the original happiness, while weaker memories fade into obscurity, losing their power to bring back that joy.

. (Volf 3). Even among happy memories, we tend to remember specific events, like special trips or extraordinary meals, more than everyday joys such as calm moments or laughter. This means that our minds might prioritize recollections based on their emotional effect or their utility for survival and learning. In *The butterfly effect*, the main character Evan, used his memory as a tool to travel back in the past and change the events that had the bigger impact on his life and his present, he had selected the incidents that will make him happy. So, he used his talent to manipulate time and bring joy in his life. He wants to repress his emotions and turn them into positive moments.

(Odili, "The Memory of Pleasure vs. The Memory of Pain")

In *The Butterfly Effect*, the spectators too, respond to Evan's emotions of pleasure and decided to watch the movie and to identify themselves with his character, not because he is the protagonist of the story but because of the change that happened to him, he changes completely from a careless and a coward guy to a caring, brave and a very interesting young man. When Evan Treborn discovers his talent to time travel, the whole movie changes too, from an average movie to an exciting and interesting one. The movie becomes pleasurable as well, as it includes dreams of experiencing incidents on the screen that the spectators cannot in reality. Spectators find their pleasure, when they saw Evan manipulating past events and creating different realities. Evan's power made the spectators dream about it, dream about being him, change their past mistakes and to manipulate time too as he did. (Redemptive Time Travel)

Motivation, feelings and pleasure are fundamental to psychoanalytic theory because they help us to understand people's actions and thoughts. For more than a century, this has been discussed, beginning with Freud's thoughts about drives, which involve emotions and motivation. For Freud, people are seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, they are driven by pleasure. That's why, he introduced the concept "The pleasure principle". This concept

is apparant in the movie,as the protagonist Evan felt himself surrounded by pain,so when the opportunity came to him with his new incredible skill,he didn't hesitate twice to seek for his pleasure as it was the motive for his mental journey.Evan want to earase pain from his memory and life once and for all.One can presume that it was the main principle of pleasure that drove Evan's father,Jason, during his journey as well. Freud suggested that the mind functions as a reflex, if excitement is decreased,it will bring pleasure but if excitement is increased,it will cause discomfort . From these aletrations in excitement, the mind is driven by desire. This idea is obvious in *The Butterfly Effect*, as Evan's life was boring and the excitement was low,when he discovered his new power, pleasure was present,as he started to manipulate time and tried to change some crucial events ,Evan was driven by his desire of pleasure, whether the pleasure he felt when being able to go back in the past at any moment and do what he wants,or the pleasure that he seeks by creating an enjoyable present empty of pain and sadness and hoping for a happy future.

Freud introduced later another concept in psychoanalysis called "drive model of the mind" proposing that human beings have an intrinsic motivation, with triggers acting as innner drives influencing the mind. The aim of these triggers is satisfaction, which is attained by quieting or reducing the excitement at their origin. This idea is clear in the movie as Evan Treborn was driven by motivation to change his past mistakes,save those he love whether his girlfriend Kayleigh,his dog or the neighbor and her child, and most of all create a new environment.Evan was focused in his mental journey to achieve his goal though the unanticipated outcomes,the discomfort and even pain when facing the same traumatic events again. Evan's motivation was to reach satisfaction about himself because he was feeling regret and blame about some crucial traumatic events that happened in the past and want to alter them in the first place. According to Freud's drive model of the

mind, Evan's feelings are considered as basic expressions of his drives, whether discomfort or pleasure.

According to Sigmund Freud, feelings are conscious events linked to physical deeds and emotions of discomfort or pleasure. He suggested that, from babyhood, the mind seeks for pleasure through external things. Freud believed that pleasure is connected to the actions that relieve tension and objects, linking feelings to physical experiences and communication. That's exactly the case of Evan Treborn's pleasure that was attached to his past physical experiences that he was obliged to relive and feel again.

For Freud, motivation is more than sexual triggers. He observed that people tend to repeat disturbing experiences, which influences the Ego's progress. Researchers distinguished between two kinds of motivation: intrinsic motivation (internal curiosity and satisfaction) and extrinsic motivation (external rewards). Intrinsic motivation includes a sense of control and self-driven actions, urging people to manage and investigate their environment. This can be illustrated with the main character Evan as he was controlling people around him especially those he care about by changing their destiny. Evan was acting like god when he time travelled in the past. When he was manipulating time and events, Evan was exploring the new environments he created when altering the past.

(Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, "Intrusive Memories of Trauma: A Target for Research on Prevention and Treatment")

1.3. The Quest for Healing:

The movie shows how Evan's journey was full of painful experiences and challenges that he had succeeded to surpass through his memory as it was his only weapon through salvation and healing. As Augustine discussed, the erasure of the pain suffered is as important as the memory of the incident itself. That was the case of Evan who used his episodic memory to recall past pain. Or if salvation is tied to memory, it

must involve the type of memory that includes forgetting of pain. It means that we can reach a state of complete redemption if the pain is no longer felt. Thus, pain will be just an experience. It was the case with Evan, who through time was not feeling pain but pleasure when manipulating events or when trying to shape them according to his wishes and desires. Painful memories had transformed to experiences that Evan Treborn gradually began to enjoy through his spiritual journey of salvation. (Volf 6).

According to Freud, past experiences disrupt linear time. Human development often involves cyclical repetitions, rather than straightforward progression. (Phillips 8). This can be exemplified with the protagonist Evan, who experienced cyclical repetitions of crucial events during his mental journey when seeking for redemption and healing. Evan's past experiences disrupt linear sequence. Meaning that some incidents are still affecting his present especially when he uses his power to alter some traumatic events, the past and the present have intertwined. Full emotional healing from past traumatic events may only happen later in life. (Phillips 11). In *The Butterfly Effect*, we can see this with the main character, when Evan later as a young man decided to face his problems and focus on solutions rather than pain that reached. His late emotional response disrupts the timeline, and blurs past and present limits. (Phillips 12). It means that past experiences, shape present behavior and understanding. That's what actually happens with the protagonist Evan. He was living in the present but still affected by some crucial past traumatic events that determined his negative behavior at the beginning as a shy, coward and totally isolated having one college friend named Thumper. Evan Treborn was also affected by past realities that he created as they shaped his attitude and his understanding for self concept and world view.

According to the American writer Elie Wiesel salvation lies in memory. He argues that as long as it is remembered, the past is not just past; it becomes part of the present

and is renewed. Here, we find the role of Evan's episodic memory, as it helps him during his spiritual journey to remember past traumatic events when seeking for salvation and healing. For Evan Treborn, the multiple realities he created made him face the same old incidents, meaning that the past had become a part of his present but renewed.

Salvation can be found in memory, even if we keep reviving and repeating the initial suffering, because not all memories of pain are necessarily in themselves painful. The fortunate in the world to come, Augustine asserted, will recall their own past wrong deed as a doctor knows an illness he has never undergone. They will have "no sensible remembrance of past evils;" this kind of remembrance "will be fully erased from their emotions." (Volf 4). This can be better exemplified in Evan who transformed from an ill person to a doctor looking for the right cure or for healing, he is recalling and selecting specific past events and traveling back mentally to those experiences as a doctor who knows exactly where to find healing. Evan Treborn acted as a professional, he totally detached himself from emotions of blame, regret or pain in seeking for salvation.

Despite the fact that Augustine does not clarify how such an erasure will occur in the world to come, the fundamental belief which motivates him to talk of erasure of emotions of pain is credible enough. If we are re-experiencing pain in memory, we are not yet completely redeemed. (Volf 5). That's what we exactly can see in *The Butterfly Effect*, As the main character Evan, could reach redemption as he dissociated his memory from the emotion of pain, by concentrating mainly on how to fix up past mistakes and find the right path towards healing.

Evan Treborn didn't concentrate on the pain of recollection, that's why he could attain a state of blessedness, akin to what Augustine sought in rectifying memories of evil. (Volf 6).

Evan Treborn's can be considered as a survivor of hardships, a person who finds relief in salvation. Evan's feelings toward his past incidents can range from wrath to gratitude or a blend of both. Strong personalities determine how long recollections can be retained. Initially, Evan had a weak personality then his personality evolves as he was determined to reach redemption and beginning to gain confidence and gain pleasure when manipulating past events. Redemption is not in the recalls themselves, but in how we interact with them, shaped by our present perspectives and future endeavors.

Wiesel's affirmations are interpreted to mean that salvation lies in the memory of wrong deeds, suggesting that memory is a pivotal element of salvation itself. This idea is obvious as in the movie; Evan's memory is an powering tool of salvation itself. Evan Treborn focuses only on returning back to the past and correcting the wrong actions, meaning that salvation lies in the memory of wrong deeds or sins. However, it may also suggest that memory is important for attaining salvation beyond memory, as Wiesel primarily meant. In this context, memory is a means to salvation rather than forming salvation itself. For Evan, he could achieve salvation through his memory; it was used as a means or a device to time travel, correct mistakes and attains salvation and healing. (Volf 8-9).

Personal healing is intertwined with memory considering it as a path to salvation. Psychological wounds resulting from trauma can only be healed if one faces the painful recalls directly. The protagonist Evan realized that too and faced his traumatic experiences directly and repeatedly till he understands that true redemption lies in self-sacrifice. Essentially, bearing the suffering of remembering is crucial to find healing, reflecting one of Sigmund Freud's basic perspectives. Evan Treborn had dealt with that till the recall of past suffering becomes pleasurable. Undischarged traumatic event is similar to a foreign object that persists to exercise its effect long after it happens. Evan's traumatic events have long effect on him, shaping his present and attitude towards his surroundings.

Healing is attainable if an individual remembers the incident along with the feelings they that came with it. In *The Butterfly Effect*, the protagonist Evan could reach a state of healing as he traveled back to the event and face the recollection along with the accompanied emotion. Therapy plays a pivotal role here evoking these recollections and accompanying feelings into consciousness. This procedure permits for the spontaneous release of emotional stress that had been suppressed, as Freud depicted it, no longer held back but freed. Through this freedom, true healing can happen. (Volf 9). Evan's emotions were suppressed. He was healed only when he expressed his feelings, faced his mistakes and tried to change them during his mental journey.

Freud's explanation proposes that simply recollecting undischarged incidents and the linked emotional response can result to healing to some extent. It's like illuminating the dark depths where memories of distress and misdeeds are secretive, freeing oneself from his hidden and devastating effect. However, this explanation seems inaccurate. If only recalling a traumatic incident had the power to heal, there would be no need to bury those recollections initially. In fact, recalling often reenacts the initial trauma in a different form, and this repetition is an issue rather than a resolution. For me, remembering undischarged or repressed events can be the first step toward healing if the one remembering that has a strong personality and was seeking for redemption and healing from the bottom of his heart and is willing to take the road no matter how hard it was.

As highlighted in trauma literature, healing traumatized psyches needs more than just remembering traumatic events. It includes the integration of these retrieved recalls into a greater pattern of our life narratives, whether by finding significance in the traumatic incidents or acknowledging them as essential parts of our personal narratives. Evan Treborn could reach healing when he embraced painful memories and considered them as a part of his personal story and a way that he had to face and surpass in his way

to redemption. Salvation, viewed as personal healing, is attained not only by recollecting the traumatic incidents and its associated feelings, but by interpreting these recalls and integrating them into a greater pattern of significance. Meaning that we have to consider traumatic incidents as a tool to teach us the essence of life as way to make us grow, rather than letting the pain of these memories destroying us.

Healing does not come merely from recalling but from reinterpreting these recollections and their meaning. Basically, the memory of pain is a crucial step towards healing, with the actual healing procedure arising from how we interpret and integrate these recollections into our life story. (Volf 10).

The movie's primary focus may be on its psychological suspense and time travel elements, but it also offers glances into the treatment of depression, specially through the storyline of the protagonist Evan. While the film does not delve profoundly into the therapeutic interventions, it does recognize the role of mental health treatment, such as Evan's interactions with his therapist and references to medication, in addressing his challenges with anxiety and depression. Therapy sessions with a psychologist include techniques such as journaling and hypnosis, intended to help Evan understand and potentially control his capability to manipulate past occurrences. Although these interferences are not explicitly applied to Kayleigh's depression, the movie emphasizes the significance of embracing a comprehensive and trauma-informed approach to tackle the complex psychological problems experienced by the characters .

(Psychological Analysis of 'The Butterfly Effect')

Moreover, the therapeutic journey of Evan gives insight into the obstacles of identifying and healing his complicated disorder. While classical methods such as hypnosis showing efficient, diary writing appears as a crucial therapeutic method allowing the main character to face and understand better the implicit reasons of his blackouts.

Overall, in "The Butterfly Effect" Evan's psychological problems are complicated and profoundly integrated with his past traumatic experiences and his exceptional ability to change the timeline Effect. ("Psychological Analysis of 'The Butterfly Effect'").

Conclusion

Evan Treborn's epic through time travel is a proof to the metamorphosis power of facing memories both painful and happy. By returning to the past, he wasn't just altering incidents; he was struggling with his emotional baggage. The enjoyment of reexperiencing happy moments powered his persistence while hurtful past mistakes obliged him to confront his defects. Ultimately, the process of healing disrupted Evan's memories not just changing events, but also enabled Evan to find redemption. His story is a testament that the past is not a weight to be erased, but a tapestry interwoven with experiences that form who we are. By embracing our memories, both bad and good, we pave the way for a more satisfying present and a promising future.

General Conclusion

The Butterfly Effect is a movie that revolves around time travel and trauma. Most of the characters in the movie face some terrific events to varying degrees. For instance, the main character, Evan Treborn, witnessed the accidental death of his father and was also obliged to participate in a pornographic film with Kayleigh, in addition to witnessing the savage death of his dog by Tommy. As Evan discovers his remarkable ability to change the past through his diaries, he repeatedly attempts to change the traumatic events he endured, confronting intense challenges and unexpected results in multiple realities.

This research shows that time travel is indeed unique, that it has considerable effects and that it is linked with memory and trauma. As Evan mentally traveled in the past, he was forced to face his trauma repeatedly and to encounter different traumatic events causing him more blockouts, nosebleeds and pain. In the movie, most of the characters experienced trauma, but each of them reacted differently. Evan Treborn, for example, blocked all the traumatic memories he experienced. The ego, in an attempt to protect itself in those situations, either repressed those memories or completely dissociated from the incidents. In other words, Evan's mind shielded him by blocking his memories and keeping them out of his conscious and awareness. In "The Butterfly Effect," memory plays a pivotal role in Evan's quest for redemption among past mistakes and their unanticipated consequences. Traumatic memories such as Kayleigh's tragedies and his father's death haunt him as he tries to change the past through time travel, encountering psychological and physical distress. Memories can intensify both pleasure and pain, reflecting past experiences into present feelings, as seen in Evan's determined struggle with his repressed traumas and his modified realities. The plausibility of erasing painful memories as suggested by Augustine aligns with Evan's wish to escape the emotional

burden of his past deeds for redemption. Ultimately, the movie explores how painful memories shape the Evan's life leading to the quest for redemption.

Despite Evan's repeated efforts, each change leads to unforeseen results forcing him to confront and tolerate the limits of his superpower and the unintended harm caused. Eventually, he realizes that redemption does not lie in rewriting history but in self-sacrifice. Through this Evan's personality develops from a controlling and selfish to someone willing to give up everything for the safety and well-being of others, attaining truthful redemption.

The movie shows trauma's ongoing effect on identity, highlighting mental health struggles and therapeutic treatment in Evan Treborn's journey. Evan's resilience is distinct as he faces painful memories, noisebleed, and blakouts to shape a brighter present. Memories not only provoke pleasure or pain but also form identity through deeds and responses.

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