

POINT OF NO RETURN: *Dope Sick Love* and *Reindeerspotting* as Documentaries of Addiction

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Contents

1. Introduction
 - 1.1. Creation of Heroin
 - 1.2. Construction of Narcotic Aesthetics
 - 1.3. Heroin and Film Studies
 - 1.4. Documentary, Scientific Discourse and Creative Treatment

2. Conceptual Framing
 - 2.1. Myth
 - 2.2. Ideology
 - 2.3. Hegemony
 - 2.4. Discourse

3. Dope Sick Love
 - 3.1. Dope – Cure/Cancer
 - 3.2. Sick – Health/Sickness
 - 3.3. Love – Romance/Promiscuity

4. Reindeerspotting
 - 4.1. Pre-Escape
 - 4.2. Post-Escape

5. Conclusions: Emancipation, Love and Loss
6. Bibliography

ROSTEN, LAURA MARIA: Point Of No Return: *Dope Sick Love* and *Reindeerspotting* as Documentaries of Addiction

Tutkielma, 72 s.

Mediatutkimus

Abstract

In this postgraduate thesis the focus is on two documentary films, Renaud Brothers's *Dope Sick Love* (2005) and Joonas Neuvonen's *Reindeerspotting* (2010). In both of these films, addicts are on limelight. The directors of both films follow addicts and their everyday lives on streets with handheld cameras. This thesis will analyze and compare the narratives of these addicts. Do these documentaries affirm to the existing conventions, according to which representations of addicts and addiction are always either miraculous survival stories or stories, which always end up in utter decadence.

The main questions this thesis proposes, are how addicts and their narratives are being handled in the two case study films, and how the drug cultures depicted in the films differ from each other. What changes between New York City and Rovaniemi, Northern Finland, and what remains the same.

The academic and theoretical framework of this thesis consists of Susanna Helke's doctoral thesis *Nanookin jälki*, where the history of documentary films' methods and approaches are discussed. Additionally, the thinking is heavily informed by such poststructuralist writers as Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Stuart Hall and Chris Weedon.

Tiivistelmä

Tässä pro gradu-tutkielmassa keskitytään vertailemaan ja analysoimaan kahta dokumenttielokuvaa, Renaudin veljesten *Dope Sick Lovea* (2005) ja Joonas Neuvosen *Reindeerspottingia* (2010). Molemmissa elokuvissa keskiössä ovat addiktit, joiden jokapäiväistä elämää ohjaajat seuraavat kaduilla kameroidensa kanssa. Tutkielma keskittyykin vertailemaan ja erittelemään addiktien tarinoita ja narratiiveja. Vahvistavatko dokumentaarit omilta osiltaan vallitsevia konventioita, joiden mukaan narkomaanien ja huumeriippuvuuden kuvaukset ovat joko ihmeellisiä selviytymistarinoita tai täydellisiä rappiotarinoita.

Pro gradu-tutkielman keskeiseksi tutkimuskysymyksi nousee siis, miten addiktien narratiiveja käsitellään kahdessa esimerkkielokuvissa, ja miten

dokumentaarien kuvaamat huumeekulttuurit poikkeavat toisistaan kahdella eri mantereella. Mikä muuttuu New York-Rovaniemi-akselilla, mikä säilyy? 5

Tutkielman sisältöä hallitsee tietty teoreettinen ja akateeminen sekä käsitteellinen viitekehys. Vaikutteita on haettu dokumentaarien tyylien ja metodien historiasta Susanna Helkeen (2006) väitöskirjan *Nanookin jälki* kautta, ja toisaalta vallan ja diskurssien teoreettista taustaa poststrukturalistien leiristä Michel Foucaultin, Roland Barthesin, Louis Althusserin, Chris Weedonin ja Stuart Hallin kautta.

Asiasanat:

elokuva, media, riippuvuus

1. Introduction

When attempting to think the modernity of 'culture', in a particular form, as a whole, or as the relation between form and whole, be this in terms of historical unfolding, the history of ontology, or on the basis of any other critical thinking, then one can begin from anywhere and on the basis of anything... Why not narcotics? Indeed, one must always 'begin' the study of culture from some specific location, proposition, experience or event... One could, just as well as from any other starting point perhaps, relate the whole history of culture of modernity from the point of view of its relationship to narcotics. (Boothroyd 2006, 186)

As David Boothroyd writes in his study *Culture on Drugs: Narco-Cultural Studies of High Modernity* (2006), narcotics - just as well as any other location, proposition, event – could be a starting point for the study of culture. In the same study Boothroyd notes that the fascination for heroin and narcotics in general as an object of examination can become just as addictive as the substance itself. I agree on both of these points. Before my Master's degree I have written of heroin addiction, identity and user communities in literature and film, and it seems a natural continuum that this thesis focuses on culture of narcotics as well. Once again, I have chosen substance abuse as the starting point of this particular study.

The aim of this Master's thesis is to examine, compare and analyze two documentary films depicting intravenous opioid use. The films in question are *Dope Sick Love* (2005) and *Reindeerspotting – Escape From Santaland* (2010), of which the former is set in New York City and where cameras follow two couples addicted to heroin and crack for a year and a half. The latter film depicts its main character Jani Raappana and his addicted friends in Rovaniemi, North of Finland. In *Reindeerspotting* (2010) the solemn cameraman and director follows the events at Rovaniemi and around Europe for a similar time period.

These two films share some stylistic conventions. For example, cameras are handheld and the film makers escort the subjects around, recording the users everyday life. Characters narrate their own actions either in voice over or right at the time of filming in both of these case studies. All in all film makers interfere very little in the process.

However, I am not aiming to dissect the stylistic maneuvers or form, unless it is related to the content in such a way that dismissing for example camera angle would be dismissing the 'story line'.

What is under the scope here is the content and narratives of these addicts. Arguably, in the most cinematic and literary representations of drug abuse – be they fictional or documentary in nature – the only available narratives deal with two outcomes: complete decadence or miraculous survival. How do these two case studies, *Reindeerspotting* (2010) and *Dope Sick Love* (2005), confirm or challenge these preconceptions? Will the narratives follow these given possibilities, or will they break out of the mold?

Methodologically my research is informed by poststructuralist writings on discourse, power and ideology. In chapter two I will elaborate on how such critics as Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes and Anthony Gramsci influence my critical thinking. In the analysis of the films, I'm hoping to focus on how such topics as crime, health and relationships shape and affect the narratives. Binary discourses at display would then be sickness/health, normal/abnormal and crime/legit.

Both films were made in the same decade, but geographically their settings differ considerably. *Dope Sick Love* (2005) is set in the metropolitan New York City, where at the time population exceeded 8 million people of which approximately 37,000 were homeless in the municipal shelter system according to some evaluations. Number of homeless and adults and children slept in NYC shelters in 2005 exceeds 90,000. These statistics do not include homeless people 'sleeping rough' on the streets. ¹ Homelessness is closely-knitted to drug use in *Dope Sick Love* (2005), and arguably the drug use as a societal issue comes forth and is highlighted as problematic when the individual drug addict moves to the margins of the society. Data shows that in 2005, number of felony drug arrests was approximately 35,000, indictments below 20,000, and commitments circa. 7,000 ²

1 <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/pages/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city-data-and-charts#.UGsEEBxEzpU>

2 http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/pio/annualreport/baseline_trends_report.pdf

In stark contrast, the total population of Rovaniemi in 2009 was just under 60,000³ and according to Rovaniemi police department number of drug offenses was less than 400 in 2010.⁴ According to National Institute of Health and Welfare's *Yearbook of Alcohol and Drug Statistics 2011*, "studies indicate that drug experimentation and use are at much higher level today than in the 1990s...The growth in drug use has increased the demand for services for substance abusers. A marked change among drug abuse clients in the 2000s has been the steep increase in the proportion of people whose primary reason for seeking treatment is buprenorphine abuse. According to data supplied on a voluntary basis by drug addiction treatment units, in 2010, buprenorphine was the primary substance for 32 per cent of substance abuse clients in specialised services for substance abusers, compared with a mere 7 per cent in 2000." (2011, 54-55) Homelessness and drug abuse entangle with other criminal activity, as we will see in the course of this thesis. This 'love-triangle' becomes apparent in both films, and is one of the emphasized themes.

What is of interest here is the geographical span between the locations. Regardless of the apparent differences for example in the population and scale of things, problematics of drug use, health and crime seem somewhat universal. What are these universal conventions and modes, and how do these two seemingly considerably different 'drug cultures' differ from each other?

Academic framework that has influenced this research will be discussed in this chapter. I will briefly explain the history of opioids, the emergence of the 'addict' as a figure, the relation of heroin and film studies, and the connection of documentary films and scientific discourse.

1.1. Creation of Heroin

Opium poppy, or *Papaver somniferum* in Latin, has been cultivated and its opioid content consumed for over six thousand years in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. By the mid-sixteenth century opium had been imported to Western societies. Two hundred years later, its dependence potential was recognized and it was a popular, widely used euphoriant. One of the reasons for opium's wide usage was its easy availability. Opioids were main ingredients in many over-the-counter remedies, for instance. (Brust 2004, 43-102)

3 [Http://www.rovaniemi.fi/Kansainvalinen-sivusto/English/City-info/Facts/General-Information](http://www.rovaniemi.fi/Kansainvalinen-sivusto/English/City-info/Facts/General-Information)

4 [Http://www.poliisi.fi/poliisi/lappi/home.nsf/pages/F40CB51FC6B00553C2257853003C4FE7?opendocument](http://www.poliisi.fi/poliisi/lappi/home.nsf/pages/F40CB51FC6B00553C2257853003C4FE7?opendocument)

Although legal and easily accessible at the time, opium and its usage started to cause public outcry. Opium in Victorian England has been widely researched and Mark Boon is one of the literature scholars to have written of opioids. In *The Road of Excess: A History of Writers On Drugs*, Boon outlines the evolution of opium thus:

The evolution of opium in the nineteenth-century European culture follows a series of displacements: from medicine to philosophy, philosophy to literature, literature to social mythology, and mythology on to politics, where it rejoins a radically transformed medicine at the end of the century in the Decadent movement and the theory of degeneration. (2002, 32)

As this passage suggests, the study of history of substances needn't be contained in any particular scientific or academic discipline. Boon's study on literary figures on drugs aside, Victoria Berridge and Barry Milligan for instance have written on the complex relationship between opium, the Orient and Victorian England – Berridge with a socio-historical emphasis, while Milligan has focused on the late nineteenth century literature and representations of opium usage. Marek Kohn's *Dope Girls: The Birth of the British Drug Underground* takes the turn of the century as a starting point whilst analysing the public discourse on drugs from early twentieth century Britain. All of these three theorists share the concepts of gender, class and race in their research and demonstrate how ideologies and politics are connected to the history of Western drug use.

The rapid scientific advances taking place in the medical field in the nineteenth century resulted in a new way of consuming opiates. As Brust discusses in *Neurological Aspects of Substance Abuse*, the invention of hypodermic needle radically changed the way of using opium. Injectable morphine had more powerful effects and faster results than could be achieved by oral or inhaled consumption. Synthesized form of opium was invented also in the end of nineteenth century. An English researcher C.R. Alder Wright first synthesized diacetylmorphine, or heroin, from opium. Heroin was initially designed to be an over-the-counter antitussive and a non-addictive opioid for morphine dependence treatment. Its commercial production began in 1898. (2004, 51-52)

Irrespective of what angle you look at heroin from, it comes with constructed ambivalence – the most common binary opposition linked to heroin being the cure/disease. As Dave Boothroyd phrases it in *Culture on Drugs: Narco-cultural Studies of High Modernity*, heroin is an

”undecidable poison or cure which exerts an extraordinary hold on the modern imagination, seemingly as strong as the hold it has over those addicted to it.” (2006, 187)

Perhaps it is fair to state that even the particular moment in history when heroin emerged is filled with such paradoxes and ambivalence typical for the substance itself.

Russell Goldfarb gathers in his article 'Late Victorian Decadence' definitions and characteristics of prose and poetry movement closely associated with the end of the nineteenth century opium 'craze'. Contemporary critics deemed Decadents as artificial, impostures and insincere.

Decadence was unconventional and exhibitionist. Fin-de-siecle circles were either amoral or immoral depending on the critic writing of them, they refused to conform to conventional patterns of Victorian thought and behavior. Dark underside of experience was highlighted, the interest for the exotic enormous. Decadents were world-weary, disaffected even, curious, enticed to sin. (1962, 369-373) Decadent movement's ideology fitted well into the spiritual, exotic, Oriental, opium-dens.

However, this cultural atmosphere was about to collide with the rising High Modernity – the era of belief in progress, rejection of past, consequences of industrial revolution, early stages of capitalism, rapid scientific and technological advances, rejection of the past, fast-paced urbanization... (Bradbury&McFarlane, 1976). Up until the 20th century there really had not been addiction or addicts, and thus the construction of related imagery and societal concern begins here, in the crossroads of Modernity and Decadence.

1.2. Construction of Narcotic Aesthetics

Timothy A. Hickman writes in his article 'Heroin Chic: The Visual Culture of Addiction' how the addict has been visually constructed over the past century and dissects the visual strategies employed to do so.

Everyone knows what a junkie is supposed to look like: hollow cheeks, panda eyes, a haunted expression, wasted, decadent, desperate. And yet, narcotic addiction, as a physiological or psychological condition, is invisible. It offers no infallibly visible markers of its presence. We should bear in mind that the difficulty of seeing addiction has never stopped either the professional or lay public from trying to make this inherently invisible condition visible – from en/visioning addiction (2002, 119-120)

Hickman's research on the visual discourse of addiction is divided into four historical periods. He begins by looking at the turn of the century (from 1870 to 1920). He calls these the years of definition, in other words, the period when narcotic addiction emerged as a popular, societal concern. As demonstrated in Berridge's, Mulligan's and Kohn's research on Victorian London's opium craze, public discourse in the United States also differentiated the substance abuse of white middle- and upper-class from the drug addiction of the 'others'.

Many turn-of-the-century medical authorities believed that the necessity of living with modern social, technological and economic pressures caused middle- and upper-class Americans...to become particularly susceptible to the seduction of narcotics. This move greatly reduced the volitional sense of the word 'addict' by minimizing the role of individual choice for middle-class drug users and, thus, spared them the moral responsibility for their condition. In this sense, then, narcotic addiction might be visible after all. It could be seen as a sign of the times. (Hickman 2002, 125)

Whereas those "whose racial or class position was deemed inferior to that of white, middle-class America" (Hickman 2002, 125) were considered free of the modern world and its pressures, thus they had no 'right' to use substances and furthermore had a moral responsibility for their own drug use. Hickman argues that in depicting addiction between 1870 and 1920 class, gender and race issues helped shaping the 'junkie' character. In Hickman's article the next historical period stretches from 1920 to 1950 and he calls these the decades of demonization. The Harrison Anti-Narcotic Act of 1914 was the first federal piece of anti-narcotic legislation, which transformed and integrated the two groups of addicts into one set of criminals and subjects of penal authorities. The Federal Narcotics Bureau was set up as one of the authorities, and this institution produced demonizing material extensively – the images often being documentary and depicting worst extremes. As Hickman points out, though

if the problems portrayed in such pictures were – in the first instance – problems of drug use or, rather, problems of poverty, criminality, hopelessness, the drug laws, a lack of access to medical care, or any number of other conditions that might contribute to the situations that are frozen in the images. If Anslinger and his associates at the FBN asked such questions, they most certainly did not make them public. For them, the logical conclusion to their visual arguments was not to investigate the other possibilities, but rather to increase the pressure on 'dope pushers' and the depraved addicts who patronized them. (2002, 128)

The next phase of shaping visual discourse of addiction was the counter-discourse of drugs began in the late 1950s according to Hickman's view. By the 1960s, substance abuse had geographically moved from inner cities to suburbs. In popular culture – music, film and fashion – substance abuse became 'fashionable' and glorified. (2002, 131). At this point and in the following decades the range of intoxicating substances made illegal became wider. For the purposes of this study, and in Hickman's article, we will focus on heroin use in New York art world and how eventually fashion magazines of the 1990s commercialized the 'heroin chic'. In the 1960s and 1970s an artist Andy Warhol and a band Velvet Underground were most influential in coining the heroin chic look. Later on such photographers as Larry Clark and Nan Goldin used addicts and substance abuse as subjects of their work – much in a similar fashion that became the standard, commercialized junkie look of the fashion magazines in the 1990s.

Hickman believes that in the 1990s the image of the addict was commercialized and he writes of the 'heroin chic'. He argues that the visual discourse of narcotic addiction hasn't simply depicted problematic substance abuse, but produce it. He writes of "visibly deviant, anti-social lifestyle" (2002, 123) and that the representations of 'junkie' haven't always served as warnings, but have gone to construct attractive, realistic, marketable, counter-cultural visual type against the air-brushed, near-perfection imagery that such magazines as Vogue or Harper's Bazaar traditionally featured.

Clark and Goldin were...repeatedly cited through the early-and-mid 1990s as major influences on a generation of young fashion photographers in search of what was meant to be a more authentic depiction of 'beauty' than that embodied by the typically airbrushed, polished images presented in glossy fashion magazines. The style chosen by photographers like Corinne Day, Terry Richardson, Jürgen Teller, and most infamously, Mario and Davide Sorrenti came to be known as 'Heroin-Chic', which is a look that began to appear in British fashion and culture journals like The Face and I-D during the early 1990s and also in American publications like San Francisco's Detour. (2002, 133)

The popularity of the narcotic aesthetics and increasing heroin use statistically were linked together in popular press, and caused a public outcry culminating in Bill Clinton's speech where he condemned fashion industry's obsession with heroin chic. In 1997 Henry Giroux's article 'Heroin Chic: Trendy Aesthetics, and the Politics of Pathology' was published and in this contemporary study he links Postmodern culture with societal concerns over heroin chic. Giroux begins with French philosopher Jean Baudillard's ideas on Postmodernism. Conventional meanings of space and time have collapsed, reality has transformed into a virtual society where information replaces meaning.

Corporate culture reigns Postmodern state, and the boundaries of art and commerce have been blurred. (1997, 20)

In such a society, art and commerce increasingly combine to package identities, commodify bodies, and organize desires to the dictates of the market. Creativity is given free reign as long as it sells goods, rather than connecting artistic transgression with political resistance or democratic struggle. Culture and commodity become indistinguishable and social identities are shaped almost exclusively within the ideology of consumerism. (1997, 20)

Giroux argues, that the heroin chic controversy in the press of the 1990s demonstrates how morphing of art and commerce is connected to critical, social subjects transforming to mere consumers and thus the moral panic reveals more of the contemporary culture than one would first imagine. In his view, heroin chic controversy's audience is nothing more than a domesticated group of voyers – not experiencing sympathy for the representations but rather taking pleasure in consuming "prevailing sexist, racist, and class-specific stereotypes about youth and women." (1997, 22)

Giroux's understanding of the popularity of heroin use and heroin's presence in mainstream culture is based on the retro-aesthetics – past heroin icons and renegades influencing collective ideas and images on the actual substance. He also outlines the contemporary culture of indifference, despair, boredom and pessimism affecting both the upper-middle class users as well as the youth who feel alienated from the 'adult' society. In such context, heroin offers the escapism from the reality of the 1990s. Once junkie culture became mainstream, so to speak, more general public discourse analysing the legitimation of art and fashion advertising using heroin chic aesthetics. (1997, 20-27)

When Davide Sorrenti – a prominent fashion photographer who employed junkie imagery and used heroin himself – died on May 20, 1997, the national outcry against fashion industry gathered further momentum. The following day President Bill Clinton strongly condemned glamourizing substance use in fashion photographs and emphasised how heroin ought not to appear fashionable and hip in consumers' minds. Giroux points out how this particular speech commented indirectly on the mechanisms of art shaping public opinion, and in his view the speech highlighted the intertwined nature of aesthetics and profit margins typical for Postmodern thought.

After this culmination point, heroin chic's popularity in commercial use began to decline slowly, but steadily. (1997, 20-27) Nevertheless, the whole phenomena and 1990s heroin aesthetics has contributed in the construction of the image of 'junkie'.

1.3. Heroin & Film studies

Henry Giroux sidelines the relationship of film and heroin use in his article.

The highs and lows of heroin use and addiction have a long legacy in popular culture and mass media...heroin's rising appeal to middle-class kids by suggesting that one could do the drug over long periods of time and still survive, thus undermining the equation of junk and death...Hollywood has offered its celluloid version of heroin's rhythms in films such as *Drug Store Cowboy* and *Pulp Fiction*. *Trainspotting*, one of the most controversial films to deal with heroin in the '90s, spearheaded its advertising campaign with the memorable line: "Take the best orgasm you ever had. Multiply it by a thousand. You're still nowhere near it." But drug films such as *Trainspotting* and *Gridlocked* also show the downside of heroin addiction. (1997, 25)

Dave Boothroyd's study on the history of culture of modernity and its relation to narcotics includes a chapter titled 'Cinematic Heroin and Narcotic Modernity', which we shall examine here as a starting point for the academic framework of heroin and film studies.

Boothroyd suggests that narcotics and the 'drug scene' have been historically represented as an antithesis to the *ethos* of modernity – strive for "progress, peace, health, efficiency, universality, well-being and so on" (Boothroyd, 2006, 186) In this line of thinking we could place opiates – and particularly heroin – in the binary opposition as the alien 'other', then the offending qualities of heroin for the characteristic Modernity would be stability, disorder, unhealthy/sickness, inefficiency and so forth. As he thoroughly discusses, the borders between illicit substances and drugs authorized by medical profession have been constructed in the Modern era. (2006, 187-188)

According to Boothroyd, a wide range of genres have featured cinematic expressions of heroin use – genres such as crime, sci-fi, social commentary, black comedy, 'literary' films (adaptations of 'drug' novels) vampire films, historical drama...

Even though heroin use has been depicted in various different types of cinema, certain similarities keep re-emerging – cinematic heroin use repeats narratives of “life, death, love, loss, hope, depravity, abjection, greed, desire, humour and violence, alongside the obvious frequent preoccupations with addiction, repetition, and compulsion.” (2006, 189) Modernity can also be seen as the age of cinema. Boothroyd writes of the triangle in which heroin, Modernity and film are entangled in. Paradoxically, even though heroin has been perceived as a threat against modern ethos, it has been a progressive force in its own right in this arrangement. On one level, advances in technology and the emergence of cinema established a new medium for spreading the narco-mythology. On another, heroin and altered states meant new cinematic and artistic possibilities for film makers.

The development of this deceptively simple opportunity for the artistic imagination to enhance the significance of certain aspects of social reality by moving from describing to fashioning them as a framing device...Both the technical possibilities of film and a certain form of narcosis are thus evidently linked in the history of cinema in terms of the *denaturalisation of perception* made possible between them. (2006, 190)

Boothroyd bases his thinking on Deleuze's and Bergson's writings on cinema. As established here, modernity can be considered as the age of cinema, and both Deleuze and Bergson have offered views on the philosophical re-evaluation of subject/object distinction. Boothroyd (citing Deleuze, who in turn draws on Bergson) writes that the whole of reality does not pass through the camera lens, and furthermore emergence of cinema reflects on a techno-ontological transformation of perception. Is there or can there be an ontological continuity between the real world of heroin and the cinema of heroin? (2006, 189)

All films have broad contexts drawn upon their material environments. Boothroyd goes on thinking about the beginning of twentieth century and that era's melodramatic drug menace and hysteria films which were hybrids of education and populist entertainment. Respond from the authorities was to ban these films since the cinematic depictions of heroin use might awaken public's interest in substance use. In Boothroyd's view, Otto Preminger's *The Man With the Golden Arm* (1955) was perhaps the first cinematic representation of heroin use/user that aimed to investigate the theme in a wider, psychological and sociological scope. Since then myriad films dealing with heroin and its effects have been produced within a culture in which illicit substances, particularly heroin, has been scandalized within the mass media. (2006, 191-192)

Boothroyd moves on from the historical paradoxes of public interest and reproach to heroin back to the cinematic expressions of heroin, and he asks "can the 'heroin film' be critically approached as an *expression* of heroin 'itself'?" (2006, 192) The continuum between cinema and reality is under scope here – what relation do documentaries (form of cinema) have with heroin?

For Bergson, thought and thing are simultaneous and there is no distinction between them – movement is in perception, and the perception is the perceived movement. Deleuze argues that movement is not something added to cinema's images, but the movement-image is immediately given to the viewer. In other words, cinematic image hands over the reality itself rather than a representation. In this view the nature of the whole medium isn't representational but rather like "a record, or memory, of the serial process of internal differentiation (between images) *within* perception." (Boothroyd 2006, 193) Furthermore, in Deleuze's account the idea of cinema as a 'sensorium', a medium that engages viewers directly with light, sound, colour, movement, rhythm and so forth, speaks against the notion that film simply represents one thing or another from reality. Thus, film is arguably neither an artistic treatment or social investigation of its subject matter. (2006, 193-194)

Cinematic images of heroin are in Boothroyd's view a subset of the *ensemble* of all heroin images. According to him, our shared and differing understandings of heroin are produced by our possibly partial connection to this *ensemble*. Like all cultural symbols, heroin's range of affect is extensive and visible in everyday life.

Heroin's power ought not to be understood in the restricted sense given to it by pharmacology. The measure is its *productive force*, its scope from localised effects in the brain to the disseminated forms of its manifestation in the everyday life of society: in the street, the police cell, the hospital, the shooting gallery, through to the various discursive forms of its cultural mythologising and political scapegoating (Boothroyd 2006, 197)

Boothroyd discusses Deleuze's association of 'signature' of the film with the visual style of the *auteur*. In cinematic terms the 'signature' here could be a particular frame, shot or sequence. Boothroyd doesn't however assign the authorship solemnly to the director, but suggests that for the purposes here it might be of use to consider the heroin as *auteur* and examine the cultural signature of heroin itself. (2006, 198)

This ties us back to Hickman's and Giroux's articles on the construction of 'junkie' aesthetics, since Boothroyd goes on to write that one of the most paradigmatic signatures of heroin is a close-up of the face of the heroin user as the substance takes effect. In addition affect is expressed in "close-ups of injecting and snorting; syringes emptying into arms, powder disappearing off mirrors up rolled-up banknotes, smoke being sucked up tubes over tin foil; solutions being heated on spoons: full screen shots of bloody mixtures in syringes; shots from the perspective of the paraphernalia itself." (Boothroyd 2006, 200-201)

Varpu Rantala's article 'Samples of Christiane F.: Experimenting with Digital Postproduction in Film Studies' in *Unfolding Media Studies: Working Papers 2010* examines Ulrich Edel's film *Christiane F.* (1981), and this essay is connected to Rantala's doctoral thesis on cinematic images of addiction, in which the audiovisual form's relationship to its content is explored. Rantala's study is a more practical example of study of heroin *ensemble* with a specific focus on the addict's face than Boothroyd's Deleuze-driven chapter discussed above.

Christiane F. is a social commentary film on drug use and addiction and according to Rantala, the film is explicitly concerned with the aesthetics of addiction. Rantala suggests that a dimension of 'cinematic unconscious' can be revealed with the aid of digital processing, an idea drawn on Laura Malvey's proposition of how the possibility of stopping and slowing down cinematic images has transformed our relationship with film. (2011, 20)

Rantala suggests that still images conventionally have been used to analyze the film style. However, focusing on these dissected images differs from viewing the film as a whole. The visual is heightened instead of the narrative. In *Christiane F.*, the recurrent close-ups could be resonant with the concern over addiction as a subjective experience – this is the 'cinematic unconscious' that Rantala explores with studying the still images of the film. (2011, 23)

Rantala formed a montage of Christiane's facial close-ups to examine the arch of evolving addiction.

The series begins with an image from the early part of the film, showing Christiane peacefully laying in bed, her face beautiful and innocent. Gradually the face changes: dark beneath the eyes, abscesses, hair unkempt, pale lips; eventually the face glows with tears, vomit and saliva. The sample evokes aesthetics of horror, most explicit in the third picture that reminds of the girl possessed by the devil in *The Exorcist* (William Friedkin, 1973). The last image is the film's final close-up of Christiane, showing a white face and suggesting a drugged state, sleep, narcosis and deathlike unconsciousness rather than ecstasy.

This kind of succession also reveals something about the narration of the film in general and narration of the addiction problem specifically. It resonates with the common discourse of visuality of addiction as a proceeding disease, a craving beyond words that eats one up alive and turns one into a pale ghost. (2011, 25-26)

1.4. Documentary, Scientific Discourse & Creative Treatment

Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright discuss the origins and nature of documentary film in *Practices of Looking*. In the 1950s and 1960s French, English and American directors engaged in *cinéma vérité* and *direct cinema* movements aimed to record spontaneous action and interfere with direction, camerawork and editing as little as possible. (2001, 250) Once again, we turn to the relationship of reality and film. Are documentaries cinematic evidence of the reality around us? Sturken and Cartwright propose that 'image-producing systems' (such as photography and film) contain traces of the positivist concepts of 19th century science. Photographic truth as such is based on the notion that camera as a mechanical device is objective in recording reality, and furthermore it does fulfill its objective function regardless of the subjective vision of the operating person. Sturken and Cartwright argue that "photographic images are highly subjective cultural and social artifacts that are influenced by the range of human belief, bias, and expression." (2001, 280)

Sturken and Cartwright go on to consider the role of images in scientific discourse since the 19th century. In their view, photograph was invested with the quality of catching things human eye couldn't, and this capability was paired with the increased institutional regulation, categorization and archiving people into types, based on for instance race, criminality, prostitution, mental illness or any other difference to bodily exterior. Thus the creation of images of the *other* was possible with camera with the purpose of scientific research in the medical, biological and social sciences. (2001, 281-284)

Sturken and Cartwright pose a question about the ways in which notions of 'truth' in science are products of contemporary discourses.

Throughout the history of Western science, the idea that science is a separate social realm, one unaffected by ideologies or politics, has been a central doctrine of the hard sciences...What science signifies depends on social, political, and cultural meanings, and what kind of science is practised and rewarded is a highly political issue...In Michel Foucault's terms, we can analyze how the *discourses* of science, like all discourses, change over time, allowing for new *subject positions* to emerge and new ways of speaking about science to come into being. (2001, 294-295)

Sturken and Cartwright argue that science doesn't exist in a social and cultural vacuum – ways of scientific processes are always connected with, influenced by and influential to other social realms.(2001, 308)

Lastly in this chapter I wish to briefly discuss style and method as discussed in Susanna Helke's (2006) doctoral thesis *Nanookin jälki: tyylä ja metodi dokumentaarisen ja fiktiivisen elokuvan rajalla*. To Helke, questions of method and style in relation to reality have been important. According to Helke, filmmakers have to show something in the film – be they subjects, main characters, narrators - even when the topic of the documentary is abstract. People are placed in the world constructed in the film. Helke argues that filmmakers must have a method or an approach. Usually with a narrative voiceover or an interview a meaning is given to abstract content or images. Observing documentaries usually depict events that can be observed and followed. Cinematic scenes are required sometimes to make things visible. Cinematic scenes can be designed based on the documentary's thematic content and events relating to the storyline. Essentially in Helke's study, the idea of mixed filmmaking methods is being untangled. Helke focuses on cinematic ways with which elements of 'documentary' and 'fiction' are combined in documentary films she uses as case studies. Helke discusses the conventions of style and approach relating to social documentary, ethnographic films and direct cinema. Helke draws her ideas on for instance Bill Nichols's work. Nichols's definitions of documentary cinema are being used as reference material widely in film theory. (2006, 7-18)

Helke points out, that one of the essential definitions of documentary filmmaking is the assumption, that a documentary filmmaker controls less what happens in front of the camera than a director of a fiction film. Helke goes on to elaborate, that conventionally a documentary director is not first and foremost directing a film, but rather recording, observing, explaining, intermediating or commenting societal or historical reality. However, this distinction has never been a border entirely uncrossed.

Naturally, there are films that do not fall entirely on either category, or are hybrids of both conventions. American direct cinema of the 1960s, however, made spontaneous observation of events and non-interfering with the subject as its core imperative. This school of style still affects how documentary is understood. At the same time as direct cinema was born, French cinema vérité was emerging. French counterparts integrated interviews and interaction to its cinematic approach. Nichols talks of discourse of sobriety. By describing documentary as 'sober', Nichols attaches documentary together with science, economy and education, for instance. These discourses are operating under the pretense that they can they must change existing conditions. Relationship of knowledge and power is unproblematic in these. Particularly social documentary has been assigned tasks of this nature in the past. Helke writes that in the postmodern crisis of 1980s and 1990s these conventions became questions and crumbled. Subjectivity, ambivalence, heightened style, irony and humor entered the stage instead. Documentaries of these kind are called performative documentaries in Nichols's terminology. (2006, 21-25)

Nevertheless, in the history of documentary there has been a strong tendency to understand style and form as opposites of content. Helke paraphrases Jack C. Ellis's and Betsy A. McLane's (2005) history of documentary film in her thesis. In the Ellis's and McLane's work documentaries are said to not concentrate on universal human experiences and emotions. Instead, documentaries apparently aim to inform viewer of social and cultural phenomena. Documentaries depict something particular and factual, that has to do with the general rather than personal. According to them, there is one quintessential principle in documentary methods and approaches: images or sound is manipulated only, if it is necessary for the greater good of depicting reality. Documentary filmmakers do not aim to please audiences, but to guide and inform them. (2006, 36-40)

Helke asks if documentary film is one clearly defined form of cinema. Is it part of cinema, journalism, propaganda, education, or perhaps even science? Is film a documentary film because of the auteur or the audiences? Helke argues, that documentaries are not absolutely defined entities, but contracts enticed in its own time, maintained by filmmakers, viewers and distribution channels. In different periods this genre's aims, objectives and rules of approach are being defined in relation to previous times and previous demands. (2006, 48-51)

2. Conceptual Framing

In this research I will be utilizing poststructuralist approach in analyzing the audiovisual language and the narrative content of the documentaries. In this part of the dissertation I'll firstly go through the basic terminology of semiotics and poststructuralism using Sturken and Cartwright's *Practices of Looking: Introduction to Visual Culture* (2001). Secondly, I'll try and explain how the writings of Stuart Hall, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser and Anthony Gramsci might be helpful in my analysis.

According to Sturken and Cartwright visual imagery is more and more present in our cultures. Images serve a variety of aims and we give them remarkable power. They also ask questions about the continuum between the image and reality. Are images a form of *mimesis*, an imitation, or according to social constructionist approach, do we make meaning of the material world through cultural contexts, rather? In Sturken and Cartwright's view, language and systems of representation do not mirror or reflect reality but organize, construct and mediate our understandings of the said reality. Although 'the aura of machine *objectivity*' clings to electronical and mechanical images – as discussed earlier in the documentary chapter – subjective choice always influences the creation of the image (2001, 12-16)

2.1. Myth

How do we construct meanings to images around us? Images are produced according to social and aesthetic conventions, and these conventions are *coded*. "We decode images by interpreting clues to intended, unintended, and even merely suggested meanings...We also interpret images according to their socio-historical contexts...We are trained to read for cultural codes such as aspects of the image that signify gendered, racial or class-specific meanings."

(Sturken&Cartwright, 2001, 26) Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure are the 'founding fathers' of semiotic study. In semiotics, codes and conventions produce unfixed meanings and yet, their relationship is arbitrary. Peirce believed that language and thought are processes of sign interpretation. In his view, meaning doesn't lie in the perception of the sign, but in the interpretation and consequent action. Peirce's notions have been utilized in visual analysis, whereas Saussure's writings influenced Barthes, among other visual theorists to understand the underlying system of images creating meanings. (2001, 28-29)

Sturken and Cartwright write of two levels of meaning in images and this is based on French theorist Roland Barthes's work. He described the levels of meaning as denotative and connotative. "An image can *denote* certain apparent truths, providing documentary evidence of objective circumstances. The denotative meaning of the image refers to its literal, descriptive meaning. The same photograph *connotes* more culturally specific meanings." (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001, p. 19) Barthes referred to these connotative meanings that carry cultural values and beliefs in them as *myths* – seemingly universal and given, but actually constructed by nature. Sturken and Cartwright argue that concepts of myth and connotation are useful when looking at the notions of photographic truth. (2001, 19-20)

According to Barthes, myth is a system of communication, a message if you like. Myth is a type of speech, but although the notion of myths is based on linguistic theories, they are not necessarily restricted to the medium of written or spoken language. "Everything can be a myth provided it is conveyed by a discourse...[Myths] can consist of modes of writings or of representations; not only written discourse, but also photography, cinema...Myth can be defined neither by its object nor by the material, for any material can arbitrarily be endowed with meaning." (Barthes, 2009, 261-262)

In Barthes's semiotic model, denotation and connotation are accompanied with further breaking down. The *sign* itself contains the *signifier* (sound, written word or image) and the *signified*, that is the concept evoked by the signifier. Several factors have effect on the production of the sign; social, historical and cultural contexts; surroundings where the image is presented; the viewers. Peirce distinguished the signifier from the *referent*, the object itself, in addition to signified. (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001, 29-30)

Barthes suggests that we find this three-dimensional pattern again in myths. What is crucial here is the signification and its motivation. In 'Myth Today' Barthes writes that the sign itself is arbitrary, but mythical signification can never be arbitrary. "Motivation is necessary to the very duplicity of myth: myth plays on the analogy between meaning and form, there is no myth without motivated form." (2009, 266) The seeming 'naturalness', or 'innocence' of any type of myth is in fact the analogies supplied by history. Furthermore, the analogy between meaning and concepts is partial. How these problematic myths can be deciphered, then? According to Barthes, we need to connect myths to general history and the interests of the society by focusing on the mythical signifier as a whole, constructed out of meaning and form.

By doing this, we respond to myth's own dynamics and its constituting mechanisms. Ultimately, myth is depoliticized speech. This doesn't necessarily mean that all political aspects are removed from the myth as such, but rather that through fabrication things become innocent and natural. According to Barthes, by examining the mythical signification and its motivations, we move from semiology to ideology. (2009, 266-268)

Derived meanings of images might differ greatly from how they were meant to be understood as. Viewer could associate or experience the image in an unintended way, and furthermore the meanings are related to the context or setting where the image is seen in. Class, gender, ethnicity or regional setting of the viewer are also worthy of consideration when backtracking how meanings are produced. In other words, any qualities or meanings do not exist in the image in itself, but depend upon the context, societal codes and the viewer, whose interpretation arguably involve *aesthetics* and *taste*. (Sturken&Cartwright, 2001, 46-48)

Aesthetics refers to philosophical ideas about beauty and ugliness, and how these are perceived. According to Immanuel Kant, beauty as such is separate from judgement or subjectivity and 'pure beauty' resides in nature and art. Kant believed beauty was universal, but in contemporary thinking beauty is considered as particular to specific individual or cultural codes. In addition, definitions of beauty are based on taste that is culturally specific rather than innate or given. Taste, according to Sturken and Cartwright, is shaped by our class, cultural background, education and identity in general. "When we say people have good taste we often mean that they participate and are educated in middle-class or upper-class notions of what is tasteful, whether or not they actually inhabit these class positions. Taste thus can be a marker of education and an awareness of elite cultural values." (2001, 48) In the next chapter we will be looking at the term 'ideology' and how ideology relates to production of meanings according to Hall and Althusser

2.2. Ideology

Louis Althusser, French Marxist philosopher, thought of ideologies as necessary representational tools which enable us to experience and ordain reality around us.

Althusser's modifications to the term 'ideology' are crucial to visual studies because they emphasize the importance of *representation* (and hence images) to all aspects of social life, from the economic to the cultural. By the term 'imaginary' Althusser does not mean false or mistaken. Rather, he draws from *psychoanalysis* to emphasize that ideology is a set of ideas and beliefs, shaped through the *unconscious* in relationship to other social forces, such as the economy and institutions. By living in society, we live in ideology. (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001, 52)

Louis Althusser examines differences between Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) and Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses'. For Althusser, RSAs are what Marx defined simply as the State Apparatuses, such as the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons and so forth. These State Apparatuses use repressive force in order to maintain social order, but not solemnly though – they too employ ideological tools. However, ISAs operate firstly by ideology and possibly by violence. (2009, 302)

The second difference, according to Althusser, is to do with the public and private domains. Although Althusser defines ISAs as *state* apparatuses, he argues that ISAs are 'above the law' in a sense that the State of the ruling class is neither private nor public. This division, in fact, is unimportant to Althusser – what matters to him is how they function. Ideology, in his view, represents the imaginary relationships to real conditions of existence. Why might this allusion be necessary to humanity? Althusser believes, that individuals don't 'represent to themselves' their real conditions of existence in ideology, but their relation to those conditions. Therefore, ideologies do not represent us the real, governing relations but the imaginary relations. (2009, 302-306)

According to Sturken and Cartwright, exploring meanings and images depends upon the acknowledgement that meanings are constructed within dynamics of social power and ideology. Sturken and Cartwright define ideology as a common array of values and beliefs. Ideologies are means to make particular values natural, inevitable, given even. Furthermore, images are a crucial medium, through which diverse and often conflicting ideologies are communicated and constructed. (2001, 21)

Stuart Hall writes on ideology and its uses in media and social studies in his article 'The Rediscovery of 'Ideology': Return of the Repressed in Media Studies'.

In this text, Hall examines changes in critical paradigms to do with 'ideology'. According to him, relations of sub-cultures to dominant cultures have been defined culturally. The problem with this strand of critical thinking in the 1950s was that it focused on the richness of deviant communities without reflecting or connecting it with the larger social system. (2009, 117)

Towards the 1960s the 'naturalness' of the binary opposition of 'deviant' and 'consensus' was soon to be challenged and labelled as socially defined. The critical shift took place, and the new focus was on the problem of social control and what role it played in maintaining social order. In this light, social order was thought to contain enforcement of social, political and legal discipline, whereas before social order 'worked' simply because greater majority of people agreed on certain fundamental issues. (2009, 117-118)

As Hall questions, what could have been the social role of media if the general consensus rose spontaneously? Media weren't simply reflective or expressive of consensus, and although they reinforced and legitimated existing structures of things, media's role in consensus formation was re-conceptualized. Attention turned towards language, and this is where poststructuralism comes in. Reality couldn't possibly be viewed as a set of natural facts, but was seen as a constructed entity. Following this, messages were analyzed in terms of their ideological structures instead of relying on their manifest meanings. (2009, 118)

From the viewpoint of the media, what was at issue was no longer specific message-injunctions, by A to B, to do this or that, but a shaping of the whole ideological environment: a way of representing the order of things which endowed its limiting perspectives with that natural or divine inevitability which makes them appear universal, natural and coterminous with 'reality' itself. (Hall 2009, 119)

Critical paradigm from 1970s onwards, according to Hall, concerned itself with asking how ideological processes and their mechanisms work? Secondly, how the 'ideological' is conceived in relation to other practices within a social formation? Media and its practices had been analyzed merely in a technical way – for example, editing, selection and exclusions were made to 'make sense'. Semiotics and Barthes's work on signification influenced the thinking to turn to such media 'technicalities' as being elements of a social practices. (2009, 120-122)

How media institutions could be articulated to the production and reproduction of the dominant ideologies, while at the same time being 'free' of direct compulsion, and 'independent' of any direct attempt by the powerful to nobble them. Such institutions powerfully secure consent precisely because their claim to be independent of the direct play of political or economic interests, or of the state, is not wholly fictitious. The claim is ideological...because it does not adequately grasp all the conditions which make freedom and impartiality possible. (Hall 2009, 138)

2.3. Hegemony

According to Sturken and Cartwright, dominant ideologies are in tension with suppressed ideologies and in constant flux. The ways in which dominant ideologies gather momentum and remain unquestioned is how they are sustained as 'common sense'.

One class hasn't got a hold of power over another in hegemony, but power is negotiated among classes in the economic, social, political, and ideological fields. In Sturken and Cartwright's view, hegemony is constructed through the negotiations in these arenas of society for example over meanings and social relationships. These relationships are in constant change, however, and thus dominant ideologies have to be revalidated over and over again. In hegemony, counter-hegemonic, subversive elements potentially emerge and question the existing state of things. Sturken and Cartwright pose the following question: "how can Gramsci's concept of hegemony and counter-hegemony help us to understand how people create and make meaning of images?" (2001, 54)

Arguably, if all cultures are in constant state of alteration and in reinvention through cultural representations, this could be because of the free market's economics and ideologies. In liberal society, people "negotiate not only to trade in goods, services and capital, but to produce meaning and value in the objects and representations of cultural products." (2001, 58) Hegemony is being reconstructed continuously. Hence contradictory ideological exist and subversive messages produced through culture products.

2.4. Discourse

One way of dissecting hegemony is by examining what Gramsci called 'common sense'. Stuart Hall writes that universal grammars of culture can lead to insights into the historical grammars, that have shaped the knowledge of particular societies and its ideologies. As discussed, language is not merely a way to transfer apparent truths to the receiver, and thus examining 'reality' of any given discourse potentially results in opening up the social, political, historical and such structures within which the discourse formulates. (2009, 127-128)

Chris Weedon examines how feminist scholars might use poststructuralism as a methodological tool in 'Feminism and Principles of Poststructuralism', and in this text Weedon outlines what common aspects poststructuralist theorists have, regardless of the scholarly pluralism within the school of thought. One such aspect is language. "For poststructuralist theory the common factor in the analysis of social organization, social meanings, power and individual consciousness is *language*. Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested... Our subjectivity is constructed...Not innate, not genetically determined, but socially produced." (2009, 321)

According to Weedon, language exists in historically specific discourses. "Social structures and processes are organized through institutions and practices such as the law, the political system, the church, the family, the education system and the media, each of which is located in and structured by a particular *discursive field*. The concept of a discursive field was produced by...Foucault as part of an attempt to understand the relationship between language, social institutions, subjectivity and power." (2009, 326)

Michel Foucault analyses forms of knowledge in terms of power. Power, as he understands it, contains multiple force relations that are local and unstable, intentional and nonsubjective. Furthermore, relations of power are not excluded from or outside of other types of relationships – economic processes or knowledge relationships, for instance. They don't exist in superstructural positions only to prohibit. Quite the opposite. Power relations, according to Foucault, are internal conditions for differentiations and they have a productive role. Binary opposition between rulers and ruled doesn't exist, unlike resistance, that appears wherever power does. (2009, 313- 314)

”Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy.” (Foucault 2009, 319)

According to Hall, visual media has been traditionally regarded as a 'window on the world' that represents 'reality' without any alterations. Visual discourse, according to Hall, is particularly vulnerable.

The systems of visual recognition on which they depend are so widely available in any culture that they appear to involve no intervention of coding, selection or arrangement. They appear to reproduce the actual trace of reality in images they transmit. This, of course, is an illusion – the 'naturalistic' illusion – since the combination of verbal and visual discourse which produces this effect of 'reality' requires the most skilful and elaborate procedures of coding: mounting, linking and stitching elements together, working them into a system of narration or exposition which 'makes sense'. (2009, 129)

3. Dope Sick Love

In this chapter I will be analyzing discourses relating to heroin, health and relationships in The Renaud Brothers's critically acclaimed documentary film *Dope Sick Love* (2005). My line of thinking is informed by the poststructuralist school of thought elaborated in chapter two. *Dope Sick Love* (2005) depicts two homeless, drug addicted young couples and their every day life on the streets of New York City. The Renaud brothers' website outlines the documentary film as cinema vérité and the aim of it is to bring the viewer close to the subject matter. "What you see is what the Renaud Brothers lived, over the course of 18 months. With no music, and no narration, *Dope Sick Love* is cinema verite at its rawest and most pure form. No film has ever taken the viewer this far, and this close, into a life of crime, drugs, and addiction."⁵

As discussed earlier in the chapter 2, where I outlined the methodological approaches of this thesis, images are invested with significant power. Documentaries might carry in them the 'machine objectivity' – they are a series of images captured with an electronic device, camera – and thus, they reflect reality as it is. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier, Sturken and Cartwright believe that our understandings of the 'reality' are organized and constructed, and could be approached via language and systems of representation – in this case, *Dope Sick Love* (2005). (2001, 12-16) Therefore, even if the Renaud brothers' film claims to be what you see is what they lived, what the reality is, our preconceptions shape what we get out of the film, our understandings constructed.

The film begins with a black screen combined with background sounds of traffic, car alarms going off and distant music. The soundscape suggests that what will unfold takes place in an urban, metropolitan setting. White captions appear on black screen stating that the film follows two addicted couples over the course of eighteen months. Final caption poses a question – 'can love survive on the streets of New York?'. Before the film title appears in caption, we see a sequence of intercutting, short 'scenes', or shots establishing up the thematic framework and issues the film is about to depict. Theme, as established by Stuart M. Kaminsky in *American Film Genres* (1985) can be understood as "a basic conceptual or intellectual premise underlying a specific work or body of works." (1985, 9) I will open up the conceptual and intellectual premises of *Dope Sick Love* (2005) by doing a close analysis on these intercutting scenes from the beginning of film.

Most of the shots are close-ups that set an intimate feel, viewer and the subject are brought close to each other. These quick scenes include a close-up of Michelle, one of the addicts, injecting and cursing off-screen.

This, as Dave Boothroyd established before is the 'signature' of drug films en masse. In Kaminsky's terminology, we could understand these close-ups of injections to skinny, punctured arms as motifs. Motif, according to Kaminsky, is “a dominant, generally recurring idea or dramatization designed, in most cases, to enhance the theme or themes of the director. Such motifs may be peculiar to the director, writer, or cinematographer of a particular work, but, more often, are common to related works in the same medium.” (1985, 9)

If we look at this scene with Michelle injecting heroin in Barthes's semiotic model, the denotation would be the actual injection, and connotative level of these 'signature' scenes includes ideas of addiction. No first time drug user would use 'hard' drugs such as opioids intravenously, let alone a 'healthy' person integral to society. Connotations of illegality and crime also arise – no Western society allows heroin to be used in any form, let alone intravenously. These are myths in Barthes's sense, but it is not that these ideas are completely fabricated and pose as given, innate facts. What matters is that at the given time and place of the injection filmed, these myths are not necessary tied into the actual users in silver screen. What is posed as given and innate here is, that although we see almost no context to the act of 'shooting up', we are presented with images whose connotations are obvious to us. We get the feel that this is an addict committing firstly a crime and secondly an act of substance abuse, although visual clues to this are minimal.

We've established before that close-ups of injections are peculiar and recurring 'signatures' or motifs featured in all films dealing with addiction and heroin use – be they fictional representations or works designed to document actuality. How does this motif or signature enhance the theme or themes of these cinematic heroin presentations? In my view, intravenous substance abuse as an act is crossing a line, or a point of no return. Penetrating hypodermic needle that pierces the skin, is symbolic of crossing a boundary between the normative society and addiction existing in the margins of that said society.

“By living in society, we live in ideology,” (2001, 52) claim Sturken and Cartwright as discussed before. In Althusser's theories, ideologies are representational tools that enable us to experience and predetermine reality around us.

Ideology, as defined before, is a set of ideas and beliefs that are in relationship to such social forces as economy and institutions. In this light, it'd be easy to assume that there are only two ideological stances: either you're in (substance abuser) or out (not a substance abuser), but in reality this is, of course, much more complex. We shall return to ideologies and relations to institutions in the course of this and the subsequent chapter.

Injection close-up is followed by a scene, where two men are standing idly on street, we hear traffic as a background sound and see iconic yellow New York cabs driving by. A short dialogue ensues. Matt, one of the characters, asks the other unidentified man if he likes uncircumcised guys. In the following scene Matt is involved in receiving oral sex in a dimly lit apartment. What do we make out of this, then? Scene, according to Stuart M. Kaminsky, involves a continuing action without apparent breaks in space or time. Furthermore, Kaminsky elaborates the term 'sequence' in *American Film Genres* (1985). Sequences according to him are presentations within a continuing time block. (1985, 49) These discussed scenes follow each other, and form a sequence in viewer's mind, as they are seemingly one continuing action. Thus, a micro-narrative is formed and we as viewers deduct that Matt is involved in either prostitution or casual, promiscuous homosexual encounters. The reason prostitution comes to mind either immediately or afterwards, is that the myth and/or reality of addiction's relationship to crime and financial problems, amongst other things.

In the subsequent shot we see a close-up of Michele counting dollars.

This is followed by Tracy and Matt smoking heroin. Thus, if all of this is rounded up as one narrative, one of the themes appears to be illegal economic activities, such as prostitution. A domestic dispute in public ensues as Michele is chasing Sebastian, her boyfriend down the street. In the next shot Matt exclaims he needs “twenty four hours away from this, man.” In the end of this sequence we see short scenes of both couples embracing and kissing each other passionately. Love and relationships play a vital role in the film. Indeed, can love survive on streets of New York?

The following chapter has been divided into three sections, 'Dope', 'Sick' and 'Love'. In the first chapter I will be looking into the binary of cure and cancer, the nature of heroin and drug use. Will there be patterns in the lives of four drug addicts as depicted in the film? In the second chapter 'Sick' I will examine the discourses relating to health and addiction, and in the third one, 'Love', I will focus on love, family and relationship.

3.1 Dope - Cure/Cancer

As David Boothroyd outlines in 'Cinematic Heroin and Narcotic Modernity', opiates and the synthetic heroin not only alleviate pain but can produce pleasure. "The actual and symbolic ambivalences of heroin – for instance it is both the last pain relief of the dying and source of the sublime pleasure which is like 'kissing God' – mark it as a cultural *pharmakon*: it is an undecidable poison or cure." (2006, 187) If we remain in the position, where opioid is a cure, but understand this both as authorized medical use and self-medication, then the question of what is cured with heroin remains. What are the subjects of the documentary film escaping from? On the other end of the binary we have the perception of heroin as cancer – or 'poison' in Boothroyd's words. How does this binary manifest itself in *Dope Sick Love* (2005)?

As the cameras merely follow the subject matters over the eighteen months their backgrounds are not explained or commented on in any way from outsiders' or filmmakers' point of view. The only way of finding out about the people depicted in this film is from the subjects themselves. This way of narrating could be related as a common or generally most used technique in arranging narratives in cinema vérité genre of documentary films. These films aim not to interfere but present reality as it unfolds before our eyes.

Early on in the film we are with Tracy at a Western Union store where she's filling up a money transfer form. This begins with a close-up of the form. Close-ups in *Dope Sick Love* (2005) seem to work as documentary makers 'hinting' at what is happening when the characters are not narrating their doings themselves. These close-ups, focuses, or even clues, could be understood as recurring motifs peculiar to the Renaud brothers and possibly other filmmakers – working on fictional or documentary field – but not necessarily depicting life of drug users.

Tracy explains that she is receiving money from her father to 'get the day going'. Outside, Matt explains that Tracy has received over thousand dollars from her father this week and it is only Wednesday. Two things become clear here: these two characters are leading an expensive life style, and apparently Tracy's father is economically able to support his daughter even to this extent. More clues to this will follow, but let us focus on this economic stance and situation of Matt and Tracy for a second.

After the scene at and outside the Western Union, we see Matt and Tracy breaking into a residential premise to use heroin. Camera scans the floor where used needles are scattered about. In this instance, connotative level could arguably be that this corridor in a residential building is a somewhat popular spot to inject heroin and discard used needles freely. The innate, given myth or 'common sense' in Gramsci's terms is that it is not the residents injecting heroin at their door step, and nevertheless it would make no sense to argue against this. However, if we remain with this and investigate further, the unapparent connotation would be that heroin use, in general, happens in public spaces. The people mostly existing solemnly in public are homeless people, and thus the suggested 'common sense' here would be that only homeless people use heroin, and that homelessness would somehow be causally linked to substance abuse. But in fact, all heroin users universally and locally in New York City are not homeless, and homelessness doesn't necessarily equal drug problems. The relationship between the two factors is more complex than that. If the binary opposition of cure/cancer is brought into play here, it could be argued that in an extremely distressing situation whereby a person ends up homeless for one reason or another, 'dope' or drugs of any kind would function as 'cure', an escape or ail to the current state of affairs. If in this situation heroin were to be considered as cancer, then heroin use either worsens the situation or maintains the problematic situation in its status quo.

In this injection scene Tracy explains that she was introduced to heroin when she was 17 and that she sniffed heroin until she met Matt. However, she is confident that she can go back to sniffing anytime as the only difference is the 'rush'. Couple leaves, and this is all we hear of Tracy's background and history with heroin from herself. In another subsequent scene Matt and Tracy are outside by the park. Tracy is checking her appearance from a pocket mirror, and Matt is reflecting on who they are and where they come from. In Matt's view, Tracy is not from 'this world' and it's all new to her. She got into 'this world' a year ago when they met. He then elaborates his own background.

”You get caught up in this lifestyle. When you cross a certain boundary, it's like no turning back you know. It's the only life I know, I've been here since I was fourteen.” According to Matt he was in a car accident at the age of twelve and suffered consequently from memory loss. He can't recall his childhood. When Matt was twelve, he was 'scouting' in Madison Square Garden and at thirteen moved downtown with the 'con' and the 'hustle' and later on to Greenwich Village with the 'homos'.

First of all, Matt's background is here. What we see is what he has, nothing more, nothing less, as he can't remember anything else. Matt's lingo reveals that he is 'in' the world, where Tracy appears to be a 'guest'. By speaking in New York street slang and accent, he establishes himself as the one who was born here and thus unable to leave. As he seems to have no childhood memories, he was in a way born also into the lifestyle right there and then, at twelve. ”I've been here all my life. This is everything I know,” Matt relates. There is a class difference that has been set between 'daddy's little rich girl' and born-and-bread New York hustler. Aside Matt's own address to camera about his background, we see Matt and Tracey visiting Matt's mother in the suburbs. On their way there, Matt explains that this neighborhood is 'nigger town', 'ghetto', and that his mother's block is the only 'white' one in the area. In the United States the residential areas – amongst other things – are highly segregated in practice although in theory segregation is illegal. From Matt's account of growing up in the only 'white' block in the 'ghetto', in 'nigger town', we could deduct again that his societal and economical background is in high contrast to Tracey's, who receives thousands of dollars a week from her father.

How does the cure/cancer juxtaposition appear in these narratives? In actual reality, there is no difference in the mechanics and neurological aspects between the addictions of these two people. However, the 'common sense' explanation seems to be that Tracy, who comes from outside, has a loving family and a middle-class background and thus, heroin is cancer, poisonous to her, as the substance abuse pulls her further away from the 'normal' society. For Matt, heroin acts as cure – he doesn't have the middle-class background or place in the society as such.

We meet the other couple depicted in the film in similar circumstances. They are also outside a residential premise pressing door buzzers to get into the safety of a hallway. They manage to do this, and after injecting leave the premises. Recurring motif in the Renaud brothers' film *Dope Sick Love* (2005) is the breaking and entering a semi-public domain that doesn't belong to the addicts, such as staircases of apartment buildings.

Their other options of using premises are public toilets, which are also seen throughout the film. This motif of using heroin in public enhances a theme relating to the complex co-existence of heroin use, homelessness, and other economical and societal problems. Addicts have no place to go, as they are homeless, often broke and have no role in the normative society.

Outside on the street, Michelle explains that they finance their use by scamming men at St. Marks. Michelle first pretends to be a prostitute and then switches the role to an undercover police officer willing to be bribed. The relationship between crime, drugs and finances becomes blurry, as Michelle states that what they think they do is to finance their way out of the streets. "In our brain we believe that, because we are drug addicts and we are dreamers. Every dime goes to drugs. I've been on the streets for nine days now and made about 1,200 dollars. I don't even have money for cigarettes right now." What is the 'common sense' explanation to this triangle? They have begun to use heroin, ended up not having money for it, drifted to streets where they are struggling to maintain the position they are in. Alternative explanation is that they might have ended up on streets and thus heroin becomes 'cure', not 'cancer', because at least you have substances to use as an escape route. We see an example of Michelle robbing a man and afterwards they count the money they made. Sebastian says that when money is made like that it slips through fingers. Crime also has a place in the 'common sense' or dominant ideology about the problematic relationship between homelessness and drug use. Arguably, it is the third participant in a complex triangle. Homelessness and drug use cause crime, such as described above and seen in the film. This applies only to the addicts on the street, visible, but addiction exists elsewhere too. Ideologically it makes sense to 'forget' about the addiction above poverty line, as thus hegemony remains stable.

Towards the end of the film we have learnt from Michelle that she has a seventeen year old son living in New Hamburg. She has also been married and been in a long-term relationship before, but her husband and a long-term boyfriend overdosed and died. After participating in detox program and separating with Sebastian, Michelle is seen waking up from an apartment block's hallway. She remembers the comfortable bed at the detox centre and relates that this is the worst she's ever been. Drugs are killing her – metaphorically and literally, perhaps. She looks out of the small window and sunlight lingers on her face for a moment. She claims that she doesn't know how to stop if she wanted to stop heroin use. "I'm sure I want to stop, 'cause who the fuck wants to live like this." She turns back to camera and explains why she is not in love with Sebastian anymore.

”Without drugs there is nothing there.” We then follow her to Grand Central Station where camera focuses on homeless people sleeping rough on the grounds. Michelle explains that when she was a child and saw homeless people on television sleeping at this very spot, she wondered how can these people not have a bed. She seems to be apologizing to her younger self. With what we know of Michelle's background, she is also escaping painful memories with the aid of heroin, but substance abuse doesn't solemnly act as cure in the narrative she relates to the cameras and viewers. Heroin has become cancer, as it certainly doesn't improve her economic status, her health or status in society.

Of Sebastian we know barely anything, as he is quiet introvert and relates nothing of his background or current situation to camera. All we know is that he was initially in a relationship with Michelle, and that for one reason or another never showed up to detox program with Michelle and doesn't look her up later.

3.2. Sick - Health/Sickness

In this chapter I will look at the health/sickness division and discourses in *Dope Sick Love* (2005) with the aid of Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963), as well as the key ideas and concepts explored in chapter 2: Methodology.

In *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963) Foucault examines the emergence of objective medical knowledge during the Enlightenment, at the end of eighteenth century. Essentially the medical gaze brings light to darkness. “The eye becomes the depository and source of clarity; it has the power to bring a truth to light that it receives only to the extent that it has brought it to light” (1963, xiii). Arguably in this cinema vérité film primarily the lens of the camera scans over the sickness, and its gaze brings light into the dark, the truth into our screens. Secondly, the viewer's gaze becomes the medical gaze.

Illnesses are ordered and classified. ”Before it is removed from the density of the body, disease is given an organisation, hierarchised into families, genera, and species.” (1963, 14.) The body becomes a signifier of the disease. “The patient is the rediscovered portrait of the disease.” (1963, 15) Arguably, as a signifier of the disease, the patient becomes only an external fact according to Foucault. “If one wishes to know the illness from which he is suffering, one must subtract the individual, with his particular qualities” (1963, 14).

According to Foucault, 'discursive formulation' of medical knowledge fundamentally changed in the end of eighteenth century. Shifts contained for example 'perceptual codes' applied to bodies. At this time period the ideology of medicine as timeless, transhistorical emerged. "In the non-variable of the clinic, medicine, it was thought, had bound truth and time together...Medical experience...succeeded in striking a balance between *seeing* and *knowing*." (1963, 55)

Education was considered a positive value during the Enlightenment. Clinics formed "a language without words, possessing an entirely new syntax, to be formed: a language that did not owe its truth to speech but to the gaze alone" (1963, 69). In Foucault's study, clinic becomes a structure crucial to scientific coherence that has also a social and political utility. Shift from confined hospital spaces to clinics increased training, education, and professionalization of medicine. (1963, 71)

The disease was observed through symptoms and signs. Symptoms of the body thus became representations of illness. Symptom acts as a signifier of the illness, as the disease is a collection of symptoms. (1963, 90-92) Symptom is the disease in its manifest state. Signs as well as symptoms are and say the same thing. (1963, 92-93)

The recognition of [the gaze's] constituent rights involved the effacement of their absolute distinction and the postulate that henceforth the signifier (the sign and symptom) would be entirely transparent for the signified, which would appear, without concealment or residue, in its most pristine reality, and that the essence of the signified-the heart of the disease-would be entirely exhausted in the intelligible syntax of the signifier (1963, 91).

How is this related to heroin addiction? As discussed in the section of academic framework, the birth of heroin chic popularized the 'junkie' look which had already been brought into public domain via popular culture (films, TV) and educational material. For most of the film we can only detect sickness in close-ups of faces as the two couples are homeless and therefore dressed in multitude of layers. During the hot New York City summer we see them in short sleeved clothing, but at no time camera particularly focuses on track marks (injections in arms) or their skinniness. Tracy particularly stands out as an exception to the rule. Her appearance communicates she is high, as her speech and motor skills affected but she is not seemingly underweight or facially different to 'healthy' people whereas Matt in 'wife-beaters' is obviously severely underweight and cheek bones stand out, eyes are hollow.

Again, this couple as opposites manifests different body shapes too – Matt being the long-time born-and-bred New York thug and Tracy only involved and used drugs for couple of years.

Sebastian and Michele also form a couple where the other draws attention more with anomalous outlook. Sebastian doesn't seem as affected by drug use and street life whereas Michele is painfully skinny, her eyes are sunken and as with Matt her cheek bones are sharp. The only point in the film where the attention is drawn into abnormal physical shape happens after a sequence of Michelle and Sebastian struggling to make money. We are with Michelle in ladies room, where she lowers her shirt revealing decollete area where her bones are visibly sticking out. Michelle comments thus: "Look what drugs have done to me. Hundred and twenty pounds. I'm nothing." Michelle turns to camera. "Sometimes I wonder if I'm better off dead."

According to Foucault, health has become a domain to be managed. The ill at the end of eighteenth century was placed primarily in the confines of hospital before the times of the clinic. "The hospital, which creates disease by way of the enclosed, pestilential domain that it constitutes, creates further disease in the social space in which it is placed. This separation, intended to protect, communicates disease and multiplies it to infinity (1963, 18-19.) According to Foucault, medicine becomes a state management system, the clinic is born. "At this point, a quite new form, virtually unknown in the eighteenth century, of institutional spatialization of disease, makes its appearance" (1963, 20) Medicine becomes institutionalized and politicized, and furthermore, 'the medical gaze' assumes a sovereign status. As Foucault argues, the medical gaze circulates in an enclosed space where it is controlled only by itself. "In that experience medical space can coincide with social space, or, rather, traverse and wholly penetrate it" (1963, 31).

The locus in which knowledge is formed is no longer the pathological garden where God distributed the species, but a generalized medical consciousness, diffused in space and time, open and mobile, linked to individual existence, as well as to the collective life of a nation, ever alert to the endless domain in which illness betrays, in its various aspects, its great, solid form (1963, 31).

According to Foucault, the aims – or 'dreams' – of the system is strict medicalization of society and the remedying of illness in an organized, supervised environment. (1963, 32) How politics and government are related to modern medicine and its institutionalization? In Foucault's view, disease and poor health is often connected to social problems.

If medicine could be politically more effective, it would no longer be indispensable medically. And in a society that was free at last, in which inequalities were reduced, and in which concord reigned, the doctor would have no more than a temporary role (1963, 33)

Medicine and medical knowledge also effected the notions of 'health' and 'normalcy'. (1963, 35) According to Foucault, 'medical gaze' is not faithful to or a subject of truth – the gaze dominates. (1963, 39) Doctors, in Foucault's view, became the assessors of where social help was needed. However, hospital in Foucault's view was not a suitable solution for the problems of the poor.

It is often thought that the clinic originated in that free garden where, by common consent, doctor and patient met, where observation took place, innocent of theories, by the unaided brightness of the gaze, where, from master to disciple, experience was transmitted beneath the level of words. (1963, 53)

We see yet another scene of Sebastian smoking heroin inside a public toilet. This, as the many other usage scenes, is dominated by close-ups and silence. Activities in public toilets and staircases have not changed, but outside on the street as the cameras follow Sebastian and Michelle the summer has gone a long time ago. Michelle sounds like she has cold, although she is wearing a hat, scarves and a winter coat. Michelle starts explaining that they're heading to Midtown court. Michelle has been arrested for possession recently, and instead of penalties she has been offered a five-day program consisting of detox. "We'd like to go together." Michelle says. However, Michelle enters the Midtown court by herself.

If illness, in this case addiction, is to be managed and confined into appropriate places by the society or government, then in this case the distinction is made – a willing addict gets detox instead of being restricted into punitive space. Michelle certainly seems keen – if not desperate – to undergo detox. As she's inside waiting for an elevator, she says: "I'm very, very nervous, but this is good for me and Sebastian. We need to get the fuck out of here. Or we're not going to make it. Our relationship will not last. I love him. We can't run like this anymore. I can't take being on the streets anymore. It's killing me." As she is getting out of the elevator Michelle wipes tears away.

There are complications, however. An officer confirms over the phone that Michelle will require ID to enter detox. Michelle's ID is located in Wappinger Falls where her son Anthony lives. Michelle manages to arrange to go and pick up the necessary identification.

Outside of the court Michelle is reunited with Sebastian and she makes him to make arrangements over the phone to get into care as well. Sebastian is asked to call back eight o'clock in the morning. Michelle makes sure Sebastian is hundred percent sure he wants to do his, he seems uncertain. Nevertheless, the scene ends with Michelle asking Sebastian what he wants to do now. They both laugh mischievously. This is one of the occasions when double-standards or rapid mood swings become apparent. One moment the addict is in tears and crying out for help, then almost manic at the prospect of getting high – be it that one last time or one in the series of many.

If 'health' and 'normalcy' stand opposite of 'sickness' and 'addiction', and if the illness as Foucault suggests is connected to other social problems, we ought to take a look at the well-being of the two couples in relation to their social status and problems. Crime – as discussed earlier - is often either coupled with any substance abuse or seen as a natural or innate consequence of substance abuse. Perhaps hence why Michelle is offered detox instead of punitive action.

Let us discuss the scenes where economics and well-being are under scope. For example, before entering detox Michelle needs finances to be able to afford heroin for the journey to Anthony's house where her ID is, otherwise she will have to undergo these prearrangements (before the supervised detox in a clinic/hospital) 'dope sick' or in other words suffering from withdrawal symptoms. Crime is the field of business Michelle and Sebastian operate in.

Camera doesn't follow Michelle to any 'crime scenes' but remain outside of for example St. Marks hostel where most of her scams take place. She wears microphone so the dialogue is audible, though. Also Michelle oftentimes explains what she is about to do or has just done. Very rarely she has to resort to prostitution. More often she offers prostitute's services to men and then pretends to be an undercover police officer willing to be bribed. Occasionally, like in the sequence before entering detox, she scams an unidentified man that she is a crack dealer, accepts the money but never actually delivers the crack cocaine. With the money made, Sebastian and Michelle purchase heroin and consume it in a staircase. An argument ensues, as there isn't plenty of heroin, Sebastian can't keep up with whose sets of needles belong to whom, and as the other needle is bent. As if Michelle's journey to detox wasn't already hazardous enough, she is left without that all important dose of heroin to keep her going until she can check in.

After the scene in the staircase, we see Michelle in stupor leaning against phone booth walls. Sebastian walks over and camera zooms in. Sebastian tries to warm her hands, tuck up her collars and clumsily picks her up. He then carries her round the corner and they sleep rough in a door way. A shot of city employee sweeping the ground as per usual across the street without paying any attention to the homeless couple or the cameras. After the night on street, Michelle comes to it when it's still dark outside. "What happened?" She asks. Michelle is disorientated and doesn't remember how they got there. Her motor skills are affected and she is unbalanced. The couple start heading to subway and Sebastian almost has to carry Michelle. On the stairs down to the subway vulnerable and confused Michelle barely manages to walk the steps. Michelle is in tears and unaware of the people around her, who are commuters going to work and obviously in discomfort because of the 'shady' couple and crying Michelle. "I can't believe I'm not on my way to see my fucking son." On public pay phone overground Michelle talks to Anthony and tries to rearrange the ID pick-up. Anthony agrees to take a day off from school. After a belated trip to New Hampurg, Michelle negotiates on the phone with Bellevue Hospital. She is allowed in, and cameras follow her there. Michelle is in despair because she doesn't know where Sebastian might be, and she prays that he is in detox as well. "I just want to be somewhere safe." Michelle ends with these words before entering Bellevue Hospital

3.3. Love – Romance/Promiscuity

As the initial captions and the name of the film suggests, love is a theme and a subject matter that has great emphasis in *Dope Sick Love* (2005). Captions in the beginning wonder whether love will survive on the streets of New York. Romance and decadence are popular themes in fictional heroin depictions, for instance in Neil Armfield's *Candy* (2006), Darren Aronofsky's *Requiem For a Dream* (2000), Uli Edel's *Christiane F.* (1981), to name a few. In this chapter I'm looking into promiscuity, sexual behavior and romantic love depicted in the film. What motifs are used to emphasize this theme?

Matt and Tracy have differing backgrounds, as I discussed earlier in this chapter. The couple are seen in an elevator smoking heroin, and we hear Tracy's voice over juxtaposing this visual scenery. She explains that she fell in love with Matt at first sight, although Matt didn't like her in the beginning. The couple in elevator is intercut back to street where Tracy resumes to talk about their relationship.

Apparently, Matt used to tell people to avoid 'daddy's little rich girl' who runs around with 'daddy's money.' Matt didn't consider her a 'real' drug addict. We have some intriguing elements here regarding their relationship. Tracy fell in love with Matt immediately, 'at first sight', which is a romantic thing to say. Arguably even irrational, typically 'feminine' kind of behavior in film narratives, literature and so forth. Matt, however, wasn't even attracted to her current girlfriend as they seemed to be from different worlds. What eventually happened, though, was that the two got together, and typically, as with many heroin narratives, there is one in the relationship that corrupts the other one. It might be considered even a theme, an underlying premise here.

Matt is standing further away on the street when Tracy is talking about their relationship. "If I'm daddy's little rich girl, then he is every homo's boy toy" Tracy continues her address to the camera. Matt is apparently trying to find a customer. Tracy ends discussion with camera and director by telling them that Matt tries his best to look lonely and pathetic. She then goes on to Matt to advise him to try and seek out potential clients by phone. The tone between the two is neutral, suggesting that prostitution is just another mean to survive financially on the streets.

In the next scene Matt is inside a telephone booth making a phone call. As established before, one of the motifs in *Dope Sick Love* (2005) is the use of close up shots as clues of sorts, that direct the eye and viewer towards the theme. Here, we see a close-up of a flyer that states "are you a guy who has sex with other guys? Are you still HIV negative but have risky sex?" There are helping phone numbers provided. The flyer's existence suggests that prostitution and picking up partners by telephone in this scenery is somewhat common practice, and not just a singular event of Matt calling up potential customers. The flyer is a small detail in the scene, but the wording of it is worth some discussion. It asks whether you are a guy having sex with other guys, and not if you are homosexual.

This implies, that there might be other reasons for men having sex with men than homosexuality – for instance financial gain, as with Matt. The second question asks if the person reading the flyer is *still* HIV negative, and implies that with risky sex the ultimate outcome is HIV infection. As an outcome of this telephone call, Matt finds a client and travels to the client's apartment.

As opposed to most 'scams', 'cons' and 'hustles' witnessed in this film, cameras are allowed to follow Matt to the tiny bedsit apartment. An older man and Matt are engaged in oral sex. Afterwards Matt and the client exchange goodbyes like close friends or family members.

Camera turns from the bathroom to bed where a third man is half-clothed under duvets and smokes a cigarette.

We also see Sebastian and Michelle in similar situation in the course of the film. Sebastian picks up a guy called Colin from the street and the two return to Colin's place for oral sex. As opposed to Matt's pick up, cameras are not allowed to follow Sebastian and Colin into the premises. Afterwards Sebastian talks about being a prostitute and how to deal with the 'hook ups'. According to him, the only way he can be there physically is to focus on thinking what he'll do with the money afterwards.

Michelle interrupts and expresses concern and upset as they are 'running partners' at the moment instead of being girlfriend and boyfriend properly. Michelle doesn't elaborate what this might mean in practice. "I'm good to Sebastian, even though I'm poisoning him." She adds. Perhaps she believes that Sebastian only engages in prostitution because of her and burden, the need for more money. Again, this line echoes of the all-familiar narrative of couple madly in love where the other one's heroin habit somehow poisons the other one as well. Furthermore, in the next scene they are seen smoking heroin together. Michelle says that previously they didn't use heroin together. "We thought when we'd get high together it'd be all over."

According to Matt's mother who we meet once during the film, Tracy "does nothing for him, she brings him down. They do nothing for each other." Matt's family members are keen to pronounce Tracy as the one, who is dragging them both to gutter. We see Shawn, Matt's brother, on the street confronting Matt and Tracy. According to Shawn, Tracy has invited him to a flat up in Harlem at some point. Shawn questions if Tracy is being faithful to Matt. "I don't know, maybe she was horny that day" is Matt's explanation to this, and all the while Tracy is standing there, present, but doesn't get involved or explain herself. Confrontation escalates to a verbal and physical abuse. The two brothers and Tracy go their separate ways. Afterwards the couple is clearly shaken, and it is Tracy who relates to camera. "Shawn has little beneficial contribution to Matt's life even though he deeply cares for him." In Shawn's view, Tracy is no good for Matt, but at the same time he acknowledges that the problems don't in actual reality arise from the relationship but the drug misuse. "Fight between me and my brother, is actually a fight between him and the drugs he's doing. It's going to kill him. Seems like he is living on a suicidal mission." Not only love but death is touched upon here, and we might see the theme of love and intertwining death in narrative, that has existed since William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

In consequent set of scenes, we see how Matt and Tracy are dealing with separation. Tracy has been sentenced to 30 days in detention center for an assault. Matt is sitting outside a residential building's steps and writing a love letter on brown paper bag. He reads the letter out loud.

To Tracy, hey mama girl. It's been too long since I heard your voice or held your hand. I can't take it out here without you. I miss you so much I couldn't sleep for seven days. You know that song, 'You don't know what you got until it's gone.' Well that's what I learnt baby. I don't ever want to be apart from you again. And I promise you we're going to get married right away. Anyway, hold your head baby. I love you, stay strong and hurry home. I need you. Love, Matt.

They were fighting before Tracy was arrested and Matt regrets that. He is suffering from withdrawals. We also meet Tracy inside the detention center, and she also reports from loss of sleep and feeling 'hyper' because all she thinks about is Matt, and she can't wait to be out again to meet up Matt. It is possible that the couple suffers from episodes of insomnia and restlessness because of withdrawal symptoms and not out of love for each other.

The day of Tracy release arrives. Matt wakes up after a night slept rough on a park bench, and as he gets going he explains how he is supposed to go and pick up Tracy with a bag of dope, needle, crack and thus far he only has himself. "She's not going to be happy." Matt predicts. However, Tracy does seem as jovial as Matt when they finally meet up. They pick up cash from Western union and get a taxi "to cop some coke from the projects, drive to a hotel and engage in some sexual activities" as Matt sees it.

Subsequently we meet Tracy's father in New York. Before her father meets up with the couple, Tracy is restless and constantly checking up on her make up from store window's reflections. Matt says that she wants everything to be perfect. Tracy's father arrives with a seemingly expensive, new car and immediately starts unloading 'souvenirs' from the trunk. Matt gets a birthday jacket, for example. Tracy's father then takes them to a store to buy video games. According to her, they need to do something now that they don't get high anymore. After Tracy's father has paid for the games, they move to a coffee shop, where Tracy receives a letter from her aunt and her father takes the opportunity to have a serious monologue to the camera. "As much as she [Tracy] thinks that the world has turned her off, or she has turned off world, there are people who want her to make it, and come back."

He then continues to talk to Matt, who is seemingly under influence and quiet.

”Also you Matt, there's no strong male figure in your life, we want to help you as much as we can, but we can't do it without your help.” After they have said goodbyes, camera follows Tracy's father out on the street where he continues explaining how money means nothing if you lose your child for life. ”We could still lose Tracy or Matthew, give up without trying and not put out every effort you can to help them get back.... I think that's the whole thing about being a parent, you brought this person to the world, you help them to make sure they survive this world, if they fall down, you help them.”. In the next shot, we see Tracy and Matt – who has just been announced as a member of this family – smoking heroin.

Later we walk down the street with Matt and Tracy who have just found a place to live in Brooklyn. They are moving in straight away, and according to Tracy her father will help furnishing it. They enter the place and Matt jokes that for the first time there is no need to use credit card to open the door. Inside the flat, Matt is showing off for instance TV and DVD player that Tracy's father has bought them. Tracy in turn explains that this flat is not just to humor her father, but they genuinely want off the streets. We see Matt smoking in the open kitchen area. ”We still have some issues, but they are lessening, and positive things are more so. I'm not concerned at all.” Tracy says and they kiss. This is the last we see of Matt and Tracy. Their narrative in this film consists of contradictory elements. Has their love overcome the class differences? Arguably, yes. Although they have not successfully given up heroin consumption, they manage to get off the streets, which is one prerequisite of approaching 'normal' society once more.

Matt and Tracy never engaged into melodramatic arguments on film, as opposed to Michelle and Sebastian who often have verbal and even physical confrontations on streets. In one such scene, Sebastian has been missing and Michelle begins the verbal abuse. Sebastian is about to walk off, when Michelle starts throwing things at him. Sebastian forcibly takes her belongings and throw them away somewhere in the traffic. Michelle spends sometime running around and howling looking for her bags, but of no avail. Then physical abuse ensues and Michelle falls on the ground. They descend to subway, where Michelle still weeps, but the situation boils down.

Michelle's son Anthony, who lives in New Hampurg, offers his view on his mother's future prospects. "I wish she would get better but I'm used to her not getting better. She'll come up and leave, it doesn't effect me anymore. I just deal with whatever I got to deal with. If she gets better I'm happy but I'm used to it." As we know, Sebastian and Michelle separate after Michelle's detox. Sebastian seems somewhat affected by this break up. For example, we see him entering an apartment building where he injects in a staircase. "I miss Michelle, we always come here together. I wasn't really planning on leaving her like that. " Sebastian explains he was supposed to go to detox, but woke up an hour late and kept losing sense of direction. At the same time, Michelle is moaning and running down the street with a big winter coat and bags, "I'm fucking freezing. How can he have conscious? Look at the fucking weather. And where is he? And is he wondering where I am? Freezing." Michelle and Sebastian's love story ends quite differently to Tracy's and Matthew's. Essentially, they still have the same problems as before, but now they have to deal with homelessness, finances and drug addiction on their own. Seemingly, this is the decadent route, though, as Michelle and Sebastian's narrative is juxtaposed with Matt and Tracy's survival narrative. By sticking together, they've managed to make some advances in life and expect to turn out better ultimately.

4. Reindeerspotting – Escape from Santaland (2010)

We will now relocate from streets of New York City to Rovaniemi, North of Finland. In this chapter, I will analyze Joonas Neuvonen's documentary film *Reindeerspotting – Escape from Santaland* (2010) and compare and contrast its discourses and content to *Dope Sick Love* (2005). First of all, in *Reindeerspotting* (2010) there is only one scene where heroin is being used intravenously. There are plenty of scenes where buprenorphine is injected, however. I will consider *Reindeerspotting* (2010) in the same league as all the before mentioned fictional and documentary heroin films, as buprenorphine is a semi-synthetic opioid and its effects close to those of diacetylmorphine and morphine. Also, intravenous and other means of using Subutex – where buprenorphine is the effective ingredient – is statistically more common and popular than the misuse of heroin in Finland.

Reindeerspotting (2010) is director Joonas Neuvonen's first documentary, and according to the film's website Neuvonen began filming addicts when he returned from abroad in 2003. "Some of them [addicts] are his childhood friends, and at first he just wanted to document their present life without any particular plan or goal. Soon Jani became the main character that Joonas followed closely and intensively for several months." After Jani was sentenced to prison, Neuvonen took a break and returned to the material in 2004 and received support in editing from Sadri Centincaya. In 2008 the film was offered to Bronson Club, that released the film in 2010. "Reindeerspotting is a documentary film of a group of young guys living in Rovaniemi, Arctic Circle, dabbling in petty crime and hard drugs. One of them, Jani, has lost five years of his life and two fingers to his debotators. He wants to leave Lapland and his old life behind...This is the story of Jani." 12Such is the premise of the film. *Reindeerspotting* (2010) became an instant success with audiences and is critically acclaimed as was *Dope Sick Love* (2005) respectively.

Reindeerspotting (2010) also gained considerable amount of media coverage.

Essentially the most apparent difference between *Reindeerspotting* (2010) and *Dope Sick Love* (2005) is the lack of a decadent, romantic relationship. The film focuses on one addict, Jani, and the main thematic framework, as the title suggests, is the 'escape'. I've divided this chapter into two sub-chapters, pre- and post-escape respectively.

There are similarities in discursive field regarding how confined and restricted, somewhat hopeless the addicts themselves see their situation. In *Reindeerspotting* (2010) Jani often ponders on the community of addicts around him, how he ended up misusing drugs and so forth. In *Dope Sick Love* (2005) Matt notes that "you get caught up in this lifestyle. When you cross a certain boundary, it's like no turning back you know. It's the only life I know, I've been here since I was fourteen." In one sense the substance abuse is escapism, but there is also a strong sense of escaping the drug field. How does escapism manifest itself in *Reindeerspotting* (2010)?

4.1 Pre-Escape: Santaland

Reindeerspotting (2010) begins interestingly enough with a similar sequence to *Dope Sick Love* (2005). There is a time lapse of bleak Rovaniemi landscape changing from bright daylight to dark night. The soundtrack consists of traditional Sami music. As in *Dope Sick Love* (2005), white captions appear on black background explaining what Subutex is and what it used for, and that during the winter 2003 intravenous use of Subutex was overtaking injecting amphetamine in popularity in North of Finland. Next visual contains a shot of a Christmas tree standing in the centre of utterly quiet market place. There is a definite contrast to the 'hustle' of New York City, that never sleeps. The following captions are written in first person from the director's point of view, and state that at the time (in 2003) he was living in Rovaniemi, was unemployed and lived on social welfare. He also states that he used various substances on daily basis, and at this point he started filming his close friends. Thus, the premise is slightly different here than in the Renaud brothers' film – the director doesn't arrive from outside to point the camera at addiction, but is already rooted within the community his film depicts. However, as the final caption states, "this is the story of my friend Jani."

The story begins with Jani and the director foraging around in a parking lot during the night. Jani explains he needs to find Madza 323. We see the director's shadow on the snow and stylistically his presence is more felt than in *Dope Sick Love* (2005), where the directors are mere witnesses. In this documentary, however, the director is part of the group, one of the addicts, and a direct participant in the unfolding events.

Jani manages to find a suitable car, steals a car stereo and the alarms go off. The pair escapes from the crime scene into cold, dark winter night. Title sequence interrupts the scene, and it is followed by a domestic scene at Jani's home.

A rap group from Lapland is playing on the background and Jani is on the floor making telephone calls trying to buy some Subutex with the car stereo he has just stolen. He uses several mobile phones.

Jani manages to find Subutex and we see him in the kitchen with a bag of the substance. He is being hypnotized by the bag. Jani tries to offer the substance to a friend who refuses it. We see the all-familiar close up of injection taking place. Jani's arm is thin, scrawny, veins are all in the surface and there are some tattoos on the skin.

Thus far, we have already seen from very close the illegitimate issues, the crime that finances the substance abuse. As opposed to *Dope Sick Love* (2005), the income stream and resources do not come single-handedly from crime, but from social welfare as well. As suggested previously in the academic framework of this thesis, substance misuse was never an issue of addiction and addiction only when spoken of as a problem and something that ought to be denied. Substance misuse goes hand in hand with economics (society financing health care and living for people who purposefully insert substances in to themselves, and are unable to work and thus support themselves) and crime (as in selling, buying, consuming and possessing are all illegal, and the ways in which funding for the substance abuse is being accumulated.) How is this related to the binary discourses I have already discussed in the previous chapter relating to *Dope Sick Love* (2005)? If we look at the abnormal/normal-couple in relation to the material here, we can obviously state that Jani (and the director) as characters fall into the abnormal category. Abnormality here is founded on the fact that the characters work as outsiders of the society, creeping around parking lots in the night stealing car stereos, where as 'the normal' do not work nocturnal hours, outdoors or as thieving addicts. It is also the stereotypical addict look and air of Jani that pushes them to the abnormal, 'the other'.

Next we are in a car with Jani, director and three other friends cruising down the streets of Rovaniemi and again we hear Finnish rap music in the background. Captions appear on the screen exclaiming that the active ingredient of Subutex is buprenorphine, and as heroin and morphine it creates a pleasant, euphoric state. The captions that appear throughout the film either as explanatory footnotes or headings of kind give the viewer a sense that the purpose of this film is to enlighten the viewer, open up the world of addiction and intravenous substance abuse from an inside perspective.

Following the driving scene, we see a sequence of close ups of preparations and drugs exchanging hands in Jani's bathroom. As opposed to *Dope Sick Love* (2005) where practically all injections happen in public restrooms, staircases or back alleys, in *Reindeerspotting* (2010) injections take place mostly indoors, in domestic environment. While this sequence takes place we hear Jani's voice narrating off screen, as edited on to the scene. Jani explains he began taking drugs at the age of fourteen and that he has moved to Subutex around his twenties. Jani adds that although drug scene arrived to Rovaniemi relatively late, it has been a "speedtown" for a long time, or in other words that intravenous amphetamine use has been more popular until recently.

In the next caption the director explains that they are spending an evening with friends, good food and Subutex. We arrive to Jani's kitchen in mid-heated argument between Jani and a friend. Jani wants half a Subutex from his friend who is getting junk food out of the oven. Jani's friend asks money for it, and in Jani's mind he is trying to make profit out of him. Nevertheless, price is agreed reluctantly and the evening ensues. After Jani has injected in the toilet, we see them eating and watching a film starring Dr. Dre, Eminem and Snoop Dogg. All these gentlemen are American rap artists of international fame. There's discussion and apparent admiration going on here. Is it abnormal that these twenty-something men from Rovaniemi can relate to the lives of American rap stars – what role does the drug scene play here? Not that substance abuse and drug culture has been entirely imported to Finland, as argued by Mikko Ylikangas in his book *Unileipää, kuolinvettä, spiidiä* (2009).

Jani wakes up on the couch. Captions appear on screen saying that Jani has lost two fingers after a misunderstanding and a failed 'gig'. Jani is planning to leave Rovaniemi. Intercutting scenes follow where Jani is seen on sofa sleeping, sitting by the window smoking, staring outside to rain and overlooking people on the street, watching world go by. In all scenes where Jani is awake, he seems a bit shaky - perhaps he is having withdrawals. During these intercutting scenes Jani's narration is edited on the visuals, he speaks off screen. According to Jani, if you feel rough and you dwell in it, you'll feel worse. But if you try to eat and get in touch with normal world the withdrawals don't feel that bad. Sequence is followed by intercutting scenery following people on the streets, solemn skier crossing a white plain snow covered lake. Town lights flicker in the background. A highway opens up. Jani's voice explains that Rovaniemi is one-horse-town, everybody wants to get out. Months and years slip through his fingers and yet the time seems to be crawling. Jani believes that he is too far out, he wants to be in the limelight, in the eye of the storm.

The next captions explain that due to recent police crackdowns there is no Subutex left in town. Withdrawals are beginning. "Luckily there is a legal option: booze and tranquilizers." Next we see Jani with expanded pupils, hair messed up, and seemingly incoherent and chaotic. However, he does come across lively as opposed to Subutex use which can close you off from world. Jani is drinking lager. The friends all go out to see reindeer rodeo of some kind.

They are at someone's balcony. An acquaintance with a mohawk starts talking to the camera but doesn't even have the time to finish the sentence when another man gets on the balcony rail and leaps or falls off. Chaos ensues. Director Neuvonen runs downstairs with Jani to see that a first aid crew is already looking after the man. Jani finds it hard to take this scenario seriously. The fallen man is escorted into an ambulance and the police arrive. Jani and director leave to a dingy pub.

In the following scene Jani and a random girl are drinking beer in an apartment building staircase waiting for the apartment owner to arrive. Once they are indoors, the apartment occupier starts a long-winded brawl with Jani. Nevertheless, they manage to work things out and the next debate rises over the fact if Jani can operate a vehicle or not. Jani says that although he is under influence he will drive his car. Apparently there is a burglary gig where Jani is needed.

In the next scene an undercover police officer does a security check on Jani who has his arms spread in the air. All this is shot from somewhere above, from birds eye view. Jani is put into the car and captions appear explaining that the burglary has backfired because police got into the scene. In the next scene the camera is panning outside police station and focuses on the 'police' sign.

Jani is released subsequently and he boasts that he has been denying the charges for three days. They go for a coffee at Jani's. Jani explains he confessed attempted theft, but denied everything else and refused to name his partner-in-crime. He goes on to explain the 'highway code' applied to these situations. For the first two days he told the first examiner that he has nothing to add, nothing to tell. On third day the examiner was changed and the new police officer asked if it was really necessary to take this route. In the examiner's logic, the pair committed - or at least attempted to commit - crime together so they ought to suffer the consequences together. Jani explained to the examiner and explains now to the camera that this is not how it works. He is not a telltale.

Caption appears and explain that in order to control Subutex-problem, addicts are offered tranquilizers free of charge. In the next scene we see Jani, the director and a third friend at Jani's house drinking either tea or coffee and having a 'wine-tasting club.' They compare tranquilizers based on taste. From this, Jani starts talking about his medication at the 'institute' (most likely referring to the police station) where he was on 40mg of temazepam and 200 mg of promazine and he still couldn't sleep at night – nevertheless, he was a bit stoned in the mornings and people were asking him how come he is out of it. Director gets involved in this scene not only on the discussion on medication, but he asks why Jani couldn't sleep at night. Apparently because he was suffering from withdrawals.

Next scenario begins outside courthouse. Captions state that the prosecutor has panned out charges against Jani, and now he is waiting for the court's decision. Jani explains outside the court house what the charges might be. "Drunk driving, thefts and possession." Jani finishes his cigarette and goes back inside to wait for the verdict. After a shot of empty court room, we see Jani returning from his hearing. He puts his hat back on and announces that the outcome is imprisonment. As captions further explain, district court sentences Jani to prison for a year. The verdict will become effective next summer. After this we see Jani inside friend's apartment where someone wants to lend money off Jani. "All my money goes to trial charges." Shooting procedures follow up, Jani and a friend are both in the toilet. The friend in money trouble gets a phone call from the benefits office (assumably). A heated discussion over the phone ensues. Jani's friend asks the clerk how is he supposed to live off eighty euros. The clerk also demands to know how he is planning to support himself. Jani's friend states that he is not going to live off his girlfriend's money, and that he will probably end up committing theft and burglary again and end up to prison again, "all thanks to you."

A sequence of Jani's calm, pondering voice over narration is mixed with images of Christmas decorations, light bulbs, trees and so forth in a shopping centre. Jani is staring at the bright lights with a zombie glare. Shots of Jani asleep at the flat with a flickering TV on in the background ensues. Jani's ponderings are this time about first times of substance abuse and the reasons behind it. Jani states that he wanted to get rid of mundanity, every day life. The first times he used Subutex he got into a trance state of sorts. According to Jani, in that state of mind you can travel anywhere you like – but, in the long run you won't even take note of it anymore. The next sequence begins with a shot of sign stating 'Arctic Circle' and another sign indicating that this is Santa Claus Village.

Landscape behind consist of 'nothingness', plains of white snow and great, white sky above. As is the landscape in the visual, the voiceover of Jani's narration is desolate in content. Jani explains that in the past when he has taken morphine 'only for a couple of days', all of a sudden weeks have passed. Jani states that his mind was placid, he didn't think of anything. "You die of that." This passage ends with an image of lake unfrosting slowly, we see grey water reflecting light and streaming underneath the melting ice that already is gone in some places. Captions appear once again, stating that Jani's debt increases during the spring and he is trying to get some money together. The enforcement of the sentence is getting closer day by day.

In the next sequence we see glimpses of the spring. This passage begins with Jani's friend going through bags of garbage at his house. He is searching for needles and finds some. This friend is seemingly under influence, he's speech is somewhat incoherent and motoric skills impaired. As he is washing teaspoons in the kitchen he explains that he takes even Subutex and Temestan through filter, because of chalk and its effects on your health in general but particularly eyes and blood-vessels. As he says this his very own eye lids are drooping. Close up of injection follows and friend comments how he found the best spot to shoot up (vein in his arm) What is somewhat different here is that the signature close up is never crook of arm, and there is no belts or anything tied in the bicep like in fiction, but the shoot up takes place between wrist and crook, sometimes on top of the arm. Jani arrives to friend's house and he is also incoherent and staggering. Director asks if he is on diazepam or other tranquilizers. Jani explains while washing up a needle in the bathroom that he has consumed 2,5 grammes of amphetamine intravenously last night with a friend who has been visiting from jail.

Afterwards Jani is desperately trying to reach by phone people who owe him money, director and friend discuss shooting a parked police car with bazooka. Then they leave to pharmacy – or, 'drug store', as Jani's friend likes to call it in English. At the pharmacy the friend explains he is about to get a family size pack of new needles and little cups for filtering. These items can be found at the checkout, but the friend and director are standing in an aisle and Jani's friend is looking at something. He asks director if anyone is staring at him. Director says yes, and this ends the possible shoplifting scenario. They proceed to counter where the friend deals with the pharmacist. The pharmacist asks if he requires a receipt, and friend replies that he won't be needing it, he's off to do dope.

In the next scene we are again in a car with Jani, director, friend and a girl. Jani is multitasking – he is driving and unhooking car stereo from its place. This is probably a stolen car and Jani is trying to take the stereo with them to decrease debt. The passengers of this car tell Jani repeatedly that there is no rush, drive calm and normally, but in Jani's view his haphazard style is normal driving – until they nearly knock over an elderly person crossing the road.

The next scene takes place in toilet and all familiar close ups of injections fill the view. Jani's narration in voice over deals with the community of drug users and Rovaniemi. In Jani's view, it is difficult to remain sober when all your friends use substances. When you're trying to remain clean people will offer drugs, but when you're desperate for substances and ask for them, you will get nothing. Jani points out that this micro-community consists of twisted people, you can't tell a friend from an enemy. While Jani elaborates the two-faced system, visuals cut from toilet to streets of Rovaniemi by night where mainly young, intoxicated men end up fighting. Jani continues. He doesn't know if his friends from this micro-community have been anywhere (outside Rovaniemi). He thinks they try their best to go somewhere, and a number of people have left but they remain in Finland. Jani believes that he couldn't even stay in Finland if he managed to leave. In comparison to *Dope Sick Love* (2005), we see a lot of this community of users and different friends, whereas in *Dope Sick Love* (2005) the two couples mainly rely on each other and they are not seen with friends, for example. The only 'outside' contacts happen between people they hoax and occasional family member appears every now and then.

4.2. Post-Escape: Beyond Santaland

The next caption brings about a dramatic change in affairs. Jani has sent the director a message advising him to pack up his stuff as they are leaving in an hour. Then we see Jani very excited at home and in the backdrop we see a world atlas on the wall. Jani is preparing a shot. Next we follow Jani on street and he narrates in English. "Today we are in Finland, tomorrow we are in Paris." Jani is excitable, mischievous laugh escapes his lips. What is the explanation for this sudden escape from Santaland? Captions explain that Jani has successfully stolen 5,000 euros from supermarket safe. He has decided to escape Finland with this money. They are on the train, and the plot starts to remind of Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* (1996). The similarities relate to the escape and how it is depicted.

As in *Trainspotting*, (1996) *Reindeerspotting's* (2010) first part depicts hard times, increasing drug use and general boredom at home up North. Then, a miraculous 'deal' involving criminal action appears almost out of nowhere and consequently the depicted addicts are able to escape by train from the hardships at home. *Trainspotting*, (1996) however, ends to the point where the main character Renton is seen on ferry on his way to Amsterdam, where as in *Reindeerspotting* (2010) a notable part of the film is the depiction of life post-escape.

Nevertheless, when Jani and director are still enroute to south of Finland by train Jani is a bit uncomfortable and worried that he will be caught before they have left Finland. Although he is worried, he is confident about future prospects. If he runs out of money, he can always work somewhere abroad. Jani is confident that he will stay on this journey and never return. The director and Jani arrive to Helsinki safely and next we see them in Stockholm train station. Jani is seemingly taken back by the size of the place – apparently the train station is the size of Rovaniemi -, he also explains that he has never been this far from his flat. The following day they will arrive to Copenhagen at seven o'clock in the morning and head straight to Christiania.

Next we see Jani posing in front of Christiania signs. He is in disbelief that they actually made it here. As they walk down the streets of Christiania district, Jani wonders if he could live there and if 'they' would allow him to build a small cabin somewhere. They are smoking weed in a cafeteria and Jani sends his regards to Rovaniemi Police force, 'you fuck heads'.

Next step of the journey is Paris. Jani is asleep while the landscapes pass by. In voice over he explains that he has left nothing behind to Rovaniemi, expect some worldly, secular belongings. Jani's family has dispersed and mother is "just drinking." Jani says that he does love them all, but he has his own life.

A new morning follows and Jani is awake and excited again. They'll arrive to Paris in twenty minutes and within an hour Jani has been able to purchase Subutex again. While he's checking out metro maps like a cosmopolitan citizen, he explains he hasn't been on Subutex for four days. Captions explain that in order to control heroin problem, French government offers drug addicts Subutex medication free of charge. Some of those addicts sell their medication in order to buy 'better' drugs such as heroin and crack. Stills of Chateau-Rouge station appear, and captions state that Jani and director have arrived to the source of all illegally dispensed Subutex in North Europe. Is this a pilgrimage of sorts?

They finish a deal and walk away, Jani tips a busking violin player in slow motions. There is a fatalistic sense in all this.

Jani has problems with a hotel clerk. They are trying to obtain a hotel room, but language barrier appears out of nowhere. Embarrassed Jani and director find another place with two beds and TV. In the hotel room Jani demonstrates packs of Subutex and explains what he is doing as he prepares a shot. Again, Jani is very livid as opposed to placid attitude at home. Jani is throwing packs of Subutex around, keen to show things to camera, dancing and singing about, repeatedly stating how great everything is now that he is here... Although technically he's getting high in a small room with a TV which doesn't differ that much from the primary conditions back home.

Director speaks in a kind of interview-esque manner and asks how long will it take until the effects kick in. Jani estimates that it will take about five minutes.

Jani and director are out and about on Avenue des Champs-Elysees and background soundtrack is French national anthem. Jani is once again clearly taken back by everything around him. Everything is glamorous, great and grande, "like in the States", Jani exclaims. We see shots of skyscrapers and masses of people moving about.

At the Eiffel tower Jani explains he just had a fix – an injected dose of Subutex – at a public lavatory at the highest point of Eiffel tower and he got all of it on film. We see intercuts with the material mentioned. After a hectic day out, we see drowsy Jani back at the hotel room explaining that even the alley they see from the window is full of life at this hour, unlike in Rovaniemi, where it'd be dark and quiet. Jani says himself that he compares everything around him to Rovaniemi, and he wants to stop doing so. It's time to move again, and we see Jani asleep on a station and on train. Captions appear. Apparently memories of Rovaniemi and the times of barely surviving are lost in the fleeting landscapes of the south. The drug use increases day by day.

Once they have spent a night on a ferry, "a hotel with seaside", they arrive to seaside somewhere in the Mediterranean area. We see Jani wading far out in the ocean, while director and camera remain on shore. Waves hit the shore.

The night has fallen and director and Jani are sitting in a beer garden, surrounded by loud British tourists who are only audible – shot focuses on Jani by the table. Jani seems a bit disorientated and occasionally stops socializing with camera and director to follow what the unseen Brits are up to. According to Jani this is starting to be the coolest place they have been so far. He pauses to ponder something for a while, seems a bit embarrassed and flashes a cheeky smile. He can't remember the name of the place, but director helps out by telling that they are in Cefalu. Jani goes on to explain how the cognitive functions are affected by substance use. According to his experience, one can use drugs for year and a half on daily basis and then when you take for instance a four day break in between, and you think of all sorts and you wonder what you have been doing during the past year and a half and you can't remember a single thing that you have actually done. It's all in fog. Jani reveals that he is upset because he has been taking a lot more drugs than he would have for example in Rovaniemi and his tolerance to Subutex has risen. If he wanted to quit now, not even a half of Subutex would ease the state. In fact he wishes in hindsight that he should have not bought Subutex since the primary purpose and fun of it all is the journey. All of the budget should have gone to the cost of the trip and not 'trips'. Jani ponders that he even could have quit during this time. The message, according to Jani, is that there is more to life than drug addiction.

In fact, the step to changing lifestyle takes place in the next sequence where they are in a rocky tourist attraction near the sea. Jani is shooting up under a pile of rocks and gets the impulse. He wants to stop shooting up and start snorting instead. He damages the needles and throws them into the sea. Shots of clear blue water, beach and holiday makers at the port follow and Jani's voice over explains this time that alongside the traveling he has come to see himself living in Spain. He imagines having his own house, wife, few children, wife at home and himself maybe working. Quite conservative dreams. Jani, the dreamer he is, believes that since he has already arrived to Spain, 50 percent of the dream has come true. In the next scene we see Jani and director walking down the street and the dreams and good intentions of giving up have been forgotten again, as Jani complains that his nose feels stingy and he could use a shoot up. All this is underlined with a mischievous laugh.

We are on train again. Jani has a rant going on. If he decided, Subutex and its misuse would be forbidden. Astonishingly he has forgotten that it is already forbidden and outlawed – at least the misuse. He wishes that nobody would do that first time expect dope addicts who need it in order to normalize their daily life.

He doesn't recommend it to himself. He is confident that he will quit, which will not be simple. Director asks why he wants to quit. Roma Termini sign appears, and Jani responds that he doesn't know why, maybe to improve his quality of life.

In the next rant Jani attacks the well off side of society. They are on the streets of Rome walking past a trendy cocktail bar. Jani begs us to look at the 'ad pub' where career orientated people look at commercials and drink cocktails while stuffing more Gucci on. Captions appear explaining that as they wonder the street of Rome, director receives a text message from home. Jani is told to get in touch with the sender, and if he won't, director's apartment will be axed to pieces. Jani calls back from the hotel room, and an incoherent conversation about someone's car happens. Jani gets really agitated after this. He describes the situation as if you were involved in something once and automatically you're in all this for the rest of your life. Captions state that after a strange chain of unfortunate events Jani is in debt and his friends have been threatened by the debtor. We see needles scattered again in the hotel bed. As soon as something serious or unfortunate happens you go back to your old ways because those are the coping skills you have.

They arrive to Spain. Jani is filmed again in wading in the sea. Voice over of Jani explaining that when he has his own house and field that will be his center. Connection to earlier when he said he wants to be in the eye of the storm.

From Spain they head to North of Africa to a Spanish town where Jani purchases heroin. Back at the hotel room an exchange between director and Jani happens, and the tone of it all suggests that there is some friction over this heroin business. Director sort of steps forward. Director repeatedly asks Jani why he wants to take heroin, and after ignoring the question – hypnotized by the preparations - at first Jani sounds a bit agitated. Jani doesn't have a clear reasoning behind what he is about to do. First shots of zombified Jani without any philosophical pondering in the voice over. Landscape shots of rough, dry African fields morphs into bleak, white snow covered rugged trees at Rovaniemi. Voice over ensues. Jani explains that it is difficult to change that life style completely. It doesn't happen in a blink of an eye. You need to want it more than anything else. Visuals from the field change to prison surrounded by high prick walls and barb wires. Jani continues on the subject of wanting the change yourself. You need not to fear and runaway. Many good things have been ruined with that. Next caption states that when the travel funds end, they return to Finland where Jani gets arrested and ends up in prison.

5. Conclusions: Emancipation, Love and Loss:

In this chapter I will be tying the loose ends together and discuss how the two films are related to each other in more detail. I will examine the contrasts and similarities with regard to the academic and theoretical framework discussed in chapters 1 and 2. We begin with Timothy A. Hickman's ideas on heroin chic and the visual culture of addiction – how do heroin chic and the archetypal addict, substance abuser as ideas manifest themselves in *Dope Sick Love* (2005) and *Reindeerspotting – Escape from Santaland* (2010)? Are the characters depicted in these films archetypes of addicts?

“Hollow cheeks, panda eyes, haunted expressions, wasted, decadent, desperate” (Hickman, 2002, 119-120)– these are just a few of the key words outlined by Hickman that we come up with when describing our constructed idea of addict. Hickman argues, that addiction as a physiological or psychological condition is invisible, and yet all the addicted characters in the films under scope do look worn, are underweight, have hollow cheeks and panda eyes. What is noteworthy, however, are the moments when the characters do not look wasted, decadent, or have haunted expressions.

This is most apparent in *Reindeerspotting* (2010) where Jani in various occasions looks vibrant, fresh and vivid: there are moments when he is extremely excitable. These tend to happen after Jani and the director have taken the money and ran. Addiction as a physiological or psychological condition might manifest itself, but what is apparent here is the fact that Jani's look and outlook on life changes because of the change in scenery – as he states and as is implied in the narrating captions, Jani's abuse of Subutex increases on the road. However, he is more relaxed and finds joy and meaning in things, because he is not 'imprisoned' metaphorically in Rovaniemi, where he has no expectations or interest in anything. Rovaniemi is bleak and offers nothing to those addicts who live there. Characters of *Dope Sick Love* (2005) are not either constantly and coherently zombies or living dead inhabiting and roaming around the streets of New York City. They too, are depicted in almost every day situations looking almost as 'normative', healthy members of the society.

As discussed earlier, Hickman outlines the role of social stance in the construction of narcotic aesthetics in his article. In the late 19th and early 20th century period, addiction was somewhat accepted if you happened to be middle- or upper class.

According to Hickman, medical authorities of the time accepted that living in the modern social, technological and economic pressures caused middle- and upper classes to resort to substance abuse to survive these pressures. However, as discussed, racially 'inferior' or those inferior by class position were free of the said pressures and thus morally accountable or responsible for their own substance abuse. In other words, gender, class and race issues shaped the character of addict. (Hickman, 2002, 125)

One could argue, that these concerns are still, almost a century later, visible or audible in the two films under scope - particularly if we focus on the narratives. Let us look at Tracy and Matt from *Dope Sick Love* (2005) for instance. Matt, as we've established from his own narration, is born within this world. He has never had a real job or schooling, he's education happened on the streets. As we know from the sequence where we visit his mother, his childhood home is in an area that has high density of racial minorities and is a lower-class suburban area. His background is here, in the world of crime, drugs, and 'street life'. If we look at this in the turn-of-the-century framework outlined here, Matt would be morally responsible for his own actions. He is not a middle- or upper class gent trying to survive the pressures of the modern society, susceptible to substance abuse. In fact, unless he would overcome his addiction, he will never be integral part of the society and here is the conundrum of sorts. As he has never been part of the 'normative' society, he has no means of ever becoming such. His class and social position as well as the addiction stand between him and the chance of getting off the streets - something he desires to do.

If we turn to look at Tracy, Matt's girlfriend, the situation is different and her participation and inclusion in the *Dope Sick Love* (2005) somewhat challenges the turn-of-the-century ideas of addiction and class. She does not 'belong' to this 'world' as the characters testify. Tracy was born to a wealthy family, but for one reason or another, ended up homeless on the streets using drugs and supporting herself with crime. If we continue with Hickman's ideas on the turn-of-the-century logic, she would not be held morally responsible for her own actions or substance abuse, since she is of middle- or perhaps even upper class background. However, in contemporary world, class position is not inherited or rather sustained just like that. Class fluctuates - although Tracy receives financial support from her father, she does live the life of 'junkie' just like Matt, despite of her background. She faces similar problems stopping her of going *forward* in life as Matt and the rest of the characters. Arguably, it'd be easier for her to go *back* to her old life.

Let us move from the streets of New York City to Rovaniemi, Finland. Traditionally, Finland is not a class society as such compared to traditions of Great Britain for instance and hardly as segregated as United States of America. Where does this leave the main character Jani in *Reindeerspotting* (2010)? Based on Jani's own commentary, we know that he wants to get out, escape, of the environment he lives in - be this strictly the micro-community of drug users or bleak, one-horse-town Rovaniemi. We know that he is on welfare, and thus nowhere near the middle- or upper classes that - at least traditionally - have been considered free to sustain problematic habits such as substance abuse. What of it? Is Jani's drug use problematic to us because he hasn't got personal financial means to use drugs? Is substance abuse a societal concern to us because it costs tax payers money to partially finance the use and because of the cost of crime entailed in the drug world? Do we, as viewers of the document, relate to Jani's problems because we don't see an easy way out for him - in a sense that we think he ought to either have a job or education? Or is it sublime pleasure we are after, watching the decadence and arguably the freedom from arm's length? This last question relates to later phases of construction of narcotic aesthetics. Hickman argues in his article, that counter-discourse of drugs began in the late 1950s. As discussed before, substance abuse became fashionable and glorified in popular culture. (2002, 131) Thus, we want to see decadence that is glorified in popular culture, as this gives subliminal pleasure.

As David Boothroyd states in his study of narcotics and Modernity, certain similarities in films depicting drug use keep re-emerging - be the actual film of any genre - and these similarities are to do with repeated narratives. As discussed in chapter 1 where I introduced the academic framework of this thesis, these repeated narratives are of "life, death, love, loss, hope, depravity, abjection, greed, desire, humor and violence, alongside the obvious frequent preoccupations with addiction, repetition, and compulsion." (Boothroyd, 2006, 189) The two very different societies that work as backdrops in the films in question share common cultural and societal elements, and this could be because both are considered Western societies, and because of globalization. Nevertheless, drug cultures as micro-cultures seem to share these narratives both in film presentations and in actual reality, perhaps. We discussed the narratives of *Dope Sick Love* (2005) and *Reindeerspotting* (2010) in chapters 3 and 4, and hence I will not bore anyone to death by going discussing these narratives again in great detail. As we noted, similarities exist and themes listed by Boothroyd are used and handled in similar ways both in United States and in Finland.

Let us go back to chapter 2 and Althusser's thoughts of ideologies as representational tools that we use to understand and organize surrounding reality. Representation and images are crucial to social life, be it economic or cultural, In Althusser's view, ideology is an array of ideas and beliefs that are formulated in the unconscious, but at all times in relation to social forces. (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001, 52)

How do these ideological forces function? How are meanings produced within dynamics of social power and ideology? How are certain values, beliefs, ideologies seemingly natural or given? If we look at the values and ideologies in these two films examined, thus far we have established quite a few things. I will elaborate on the narratives of these films and how there are 'morals' to the stories, even though the films themselves do not set out to do anything but follow the substance abusers around.

We could begin this dissecting of ideologies from *Reindeerspotting* (2010). The narrative begins with the stable situation, where Jani feels and is seen as trapped in Rovaniemi, his drug habit, his circle friends using substances. Emancipation comes, but not in the way of detox, getting a job or assimilating to the normative society in any 'acceptable' way. Emancipation happens, because Jani commits a crime and thus gains finances to escape and go traveling around Europe. All is fine and wonderful for a while, until the past creeps up even though the geographical distance to events in Rovaniemi is considerably expanded. Money also runs out, and Jani has to return to north and face awaiting imprisonment. Perhaps the moral of the story, or an ideological premise, is that you can run but you can't hide. What you leave behind will come back and haunt you. It is all fun and games until someone loses an eye. Crime doesn't pay off. In other words, there is no escaping the pressures of Rovaniemi, and people can't just abandon their responsibilities as citizens. Although society requires self-made men and success stories, the premise is wrong here because it is all financed by crime - and not by white-collar crime like tax evasion, but by theft. Greed, a sin of excess, is one of the moral forces here. We follow Jani on this journey from gutter to glitz, and we as viewers arguably feel for him even when his naivety is apparent.

The main narrative in *Reindeerspotting* (2010) is based around this idea of escape and emancipation, whereas the main narrative of *Dope Sick Love* (2005) is built upon elements of love and loss. This narrative is split between the two couples, where the other one survives the hardships and the other couple quite literally and also metaphorically lose each other. As we remember, Sebastian and Michelle have difficulties re-locating each other after Michelle enters detox and Sebastian remains on the streets despite of what he promised Michelle. 62

In the long run, Michelle is keen on getting off drugs and off streets, but as she herself relates to camera, her intentions and short-term aspirations regarding this detox program are not to quit substance abuse right there and then. She needs a break from the life style and a few nights in a clean bed. Additionally, she is required to participate in the detox program by punitive institution. As discussed before, Sebastian barely speaks of his situation or what he sees in the future. Arguably, it could be said that this couple, these two addicts, show little 'remorse' or attempt to assimilate back into the normative society. Is it their punishment that they should fall apart because of this? Is it that love can't survive on the streets of New York City? If this couple's outcome is contrasted with Matt and Tracy, who in practice are not either perhaps willing or capable to give up heroin and crack. Nevertheless, in theory they attempt to change their life style bit by bit and at the end of the film are seen in their newly acquired apartment. Deviant communities, arguably, will not survive with their own rules, and the only way out is to give up and join the dominant culture, the normative society and behave and play by the rules defined by the consensus, the mainstream social system.

In this master's thesis I set out to examine two documentary films that share similarities in content and style. Both films depicted lives of intravenous opioid users, and film makers followed them around with handheld cameras and aimed to depict their subject matters in a very raw, behind-the-scene manner for a long period. Content and narratives were under the magnifying glass. Initially, I proposed that there is seemingly only two possible outcomes in the fictional and documentary narratives of substance abusers: complete decadence, or miraculous survival. Perhaps I managed to demonstrate, that although this broad dichotomy can be made, there are more shades, nuances available if we begin dissecting these two main narratives available with poststructuralist tools. These preconceptions I offered were indeed challenged, but partially confirmed. The narratives did break out of the mold, but at the same time some elements confirmed the old truths.

I also questioned if the films - or rather, the worlds they depict - share a universal culture peculiar to substance abuse outside, above or co-existing with the dominant cultures of the said societies. As has been established by now, some similarities do exist when it comes to narratives, hegemony and ideology - although the said societies are in stark contrast to each other, and even when the geographical span between the locations is notable.

Perhaps the most apparent, prominent difference between the two films is, that in a culture, where neo-liberalism reigns and individuality is valued highly, addicts or the subversive element works together as couples. *Dope Sick Love* (2005) that is set in the United States, survival and every day life revolves around maintaining relationships between people. *Reindeerspotting* (2010), that is set in an affluent, social democratic society of Finland, individuality and ideas of self-made men is emphasized.

Naturally, it is hard to set any truths in stone based on such a small sampling. Conclusive results might obviously prove to be quite different had I analyzed samplings from different decades and outside the Western document tradition. The purpose of this thesis was not to comment on issues around legality of drugs or morality of substance abuse. However, I hope that this academic writing might help create understanding on how we perceive and perhaps treat addiction, and ultimately ease human suffering.

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä pro gradu-tutkielmassa keskitytään vertailemaan ja analysoimaan kahta dokumenttielokuvaa, Renaudin veljesten *Dope Sick Lovea* (2005) ja Joonas Neuvosen *Reindeerspottingia* (2010). Molemmissa elokuvissa keskiössä ovat addiktit, joiden jokapäiväistä elämää ohjaajat seuraavat kaduilla kameroidensa kanssa. Tutkielma keskittyykin vertailemaan ja erittelemään addiktien tarinoita ja narratiiveja. Vahvistavatko dokumentaarit omilta osiltaan vallitsevia konventioita, joiden mukaan narkomaanien ja huumeriippuvuuden kuvaukset ovat joko ihmeellisiä selviytymistarinoita tai täydellisiä rappiotarinoita.

Pro gradu-tutkielman keskeiseksi tutkimuskysymyksi nousee siis, miten addiktien narratiiveja käsitellään kahdessa esimerkkielokuvissa, ja miten dokumentaarien kuvaamat huume kulttuurit poikkeavat toisistaan kahdella eri mantereella. Mikä muuttuu New York-Rovaniemi-akselilla, mikä säilyy?

Tutkielman sisältöä hallitsee tietty teoreettinen ja akateeminen sekä käsitteellinen viitekehys. Vaikutteita on haettu dokumentaarien tyylien ja metodien historiasta Susanna Helkeen (2006) väitöskirjan *Nanookin jälki* kautta, ja toisaalta vallan ja diskurssien teoreettista taustaa poststrukturalistien leiristä Michel Foucaultin, Roland Barthesin, Louis Althusserin, Chris Weedonin ja Stuart Hallin kautta.

Ensimmäisessä luvussa rajataan tutkimuskysymyksiä ja lyhyesti esitellään suurennuslasin alaiset elokuvat, ja miten ne pintapuolisesti eroavat toisistaan, ja miten ne muistuttavat toisiaan. Painopisteiksi muodostuvat maantieteelliset erot, sosiaalinen ympäristö ja kulttuurien erot elokuvien laajemmassa ympäristössä. Tutkielmassa esitetään, että suurista eroavaisuuksista huolimatta elokuvien aiheista voidaan vetää yhtäläisyyksiä huolimatta maantieteellisistä ja kulttuurisista eroista. Tutkielmassa pohditaan, voiko tästä tehdä sen laajempia johtopäätöksiä. Ennen varsinaisiin dokumentteihin lähestymistä tutkielmassa tutustutaan teoreettiseen ja akateemiseen viitekehykseen. Ensimmäisessä ja toisessa luvussa käydäänkin läpi kulttuurintutkimuksen aikaisempia tutkimuksia, joiden keskiössä on huumausaineet ja erityisesti heroini. Suurimpia vaikuttajia tutkielman ajatusmaailmaan ovat David Boothroyd, ja kyseisen tutkijan ajatuksia on poimittu esimerkiksi teoksesta *Culture on Drugs: Narco-Cultural Studies of High Modernity* (2006).

Boothroydin mukaan huumausaineet ovat hyvä lähtökohta laajemman kulttuurin tutkimiseen. Boothroydin teoksessa käydään läpi modernismia ja kulttuurintutkimuksen kannalta huomattavimpia teorioita huumausaineiden kautta. Tutkielman ensimmäisessä luvussa tutustutaan myös heroiinin syntyyn ja historiaan, aina esiasteen morfiinin käytöstä länsimaisessa historiassa injektioneulan ja diacetylmorfiinin keksimisestä 1900-luvulle kriminalisointiin ja epidemiaan asti. Lisäksi tutkielmassa esitellään heroiinin paikan vaihtelu ja ristiriitainen luonne populaarikulttuurissa ja mediassa sekä taiteessa. *Heroin chicin* analysoinnissa ajatuksia on haettu Timothy A. Hickmanin artikkelista 'Heroin Chic: The Visual Culture of Narcotic Addiction' (2002). Tutkielman tässä osassa keskitytään myös heroiinin representaatioihin elokuvataiteessa, ja vaikuttavina ajattelijoina on noteerattu Deleuzea Boothroydin analysoimana. Varpu Rantalan tutkimusta eritellään myös osana laajempaa kokonaisuutta, jossa pohditaan elokuvan ja heroiinin suhdetta toisiinsa. Dokumenttifilmin akateemista viitekehystä valottavat Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin teos *Bla* ja Susanna Helkeen *Nanookin* jälki.

Toisessa luvussa eritellään teoriaa ja käsitteitä. Tässä tutkielmassa perehdytään poststrukturalistisiin teorioihin, joiden innoittamana elokuvien lähiluentaa käsitteilyluvuissa eritellään. Semiotiikan ja poststrukturalismin peruskäsitteiden määritelmiä on lainattu Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin teoksesta *Practices of Looking: Introduction to Visual Culture* (2001). Perusmääritelmien jälkeen katse ulottuuikin jo syvemmälle Louis Althusserin, Stuart Hallin, Roland Barthesin, Michel Foucaultin ja Anthony Gramscin suuntaan.

Sturken ja Cartwright esittävät, että kulttuurissamme alati läsnä olevat kuvat palvelevat tarkoituksia laidasta laitaan, ja niihin sijoitetaan merkittävästi valtaa. Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin mukaan kuvat ja representaatiot eivät suoraan heijasta tai peilaa todellisuutta, vaan auttavat meitä järjestelemään ja ymmärtämään todellisuutta niiden kautta. Subjektiivinen valinta siis omilta osiltaan vaikuttaa kuvien syntyyn.

Tutkielman toisen luvun ensimmäisessä alaluvussa keskitytään rajaamaan ranskalaisen teoreetikon Roland Barthesin ajatuksia ja valottamaan semiotiikkaa laajemmin. Osittain tämä tapahtuu Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin aiemmin mainitun klassisen oppikirjan kautta. Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin ajatuksia mukailien tässä tutkielman kappaleen alussa esitetään kysymys: miten kuvien merkityksiä rakennetaan? Kuvia tuotetaan sosiaalisten ja esteettisten käytäntöjen mukaan, ja käytännöt ovat koodattuja. Sturken ja Cartwright ehdottavat, osaamme lukea kuvien kulttuurisia koodeja, kuten luokka-, sukupuoli- ja rotusidonnaisia merkityksiä.

Semiotiikan “isinä” pidetään Charles Sanders Peirceä ja Ferdinand de Saussurea. Peircen ajatuksia on hyödynnetty visuaalisessa analyysissä, mutta Saussure vaikutti enemmänkin Barthesiin sekä muihin visuaalisiin teoreetikoihin, jotka pohtivat kuvien merkitysten synnyn systeemiä. Barthes jakaa kuvan denotaatioihin – kirjaimelliseen merkitykseen - ja konnotaatioihin – kulttuurisiin merkityksiin. Konnotaatiot ovat pintapuolisesti luonnollisia ja synnynnäisiä, tai myyttejä, kuten Barthes ajattelee kriittisesti. Myytit ovat viestinnän välineitä, joskaan eivät rajoittuneita puheeseen ja kieleen, vaan myös kuviin, jotka ovat myös viestinviejiä. Myytit ovat ongelmallisia Barthesille, ja hän keskittyykin näiden rakenteiden purkamiseen ja erittelyyn.

Tutkielman tämän luvun seuraavassa alaluvussa eritellään ideologiaa ja Louis Althusserin näkemyksiä. Althusser uskoo ideologioiden olevan tarpeellisia representaatioiden työkaluja, joiden avulla ymmärrämme ja järjestämme todellisuutta ympärillämme. Sturken ja Cartwright ehdottavat, että merkityksiä tuotetaan sosiaalisen vallan ja ideologian dynaamisessa suhteessa. Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin teksteissä ideologia määritellään joukkona uskomuksia ja arvoja. Ideologialla saadaan tietty arvo vaikuttamaan luonnolliselta ja väistämättömältä. Kuvat ovat oleellinen media, sillä niiden avulla rakennetaan ja välitetään arvoja ja ideologioita. Stuart Hall kirjoittaa myös ideologiasta ja sen käytöstä mediassa. Tutkielman tässä alaluvussa jatketaan Hallin kirjoittaman artikkelin erittelemisellä. Hall käy läpi ideologian asemaa kritiikin muuttuessa.

Tutkielman seuraavassa alaluvussa käsitellään hegemoniaa. Sturken ja Cartwright ehdottavat hallitsevan ideologian olevan jatkuvassa vaihtelussa vaimennettujen ideologioiden kanssa. Hallitsevan ideologian tapa kerätä vaikutusvoimaa ja pysyä vallassa on naamioituminen 'maalaisjärjeksi'. Hegemonia Sturkenin ja Cartwrightin mukaan rakentuu neuvottelujen perusteella, ja neuvottelujen kohteena ovat merkitykset ja sosiaaliset suhteet. Nämä suhteet ja merkitykset ovat jatkuvassa muutoksessa.

Hegemonian jälkeen siirrytään diskursseja käsittelevään alalukuun. Hegemoniaa voidaan tutkailla analysoimalla Gramscin nimittämää 'maalaisjärkeä' (*common sense*). Kieltä ja representaatioita ei käytetä vain 'totuuden' välittämiseen vastaanottajille, vaan sen avulla rakennetaan myös sosiaalisia, poliittisia, historiallisia ja muita rakenteita.

Kolmannessa luvussa keskitytään ensimmäiseen elokuvaan, Renaudin veljesten dokumentaariin *Dope Sick Love* (2005). Elokuvan lähiluennasta syntyneitä materiaalia tarkastellaan kolmesta eri lähtökohdasta. Elokuvan materiaalia tarkastellaan ja tutkitaan heroiniin, terveyteen ja ihmissuhteisiin liittyvien diskurssien kautta.

Tutkielman kolmannen luvun ensimmäinen alaluku keskittyy näistä kolmesta näkökannasta heroiniin, ja heroiniikeskusteluihin liittyvästä parannuskeino/syöpä-jaottelusta. Boohtroydilta lainattu ajatus perustuu heroinin ominaisuuteen lievittää kipua ja tuottaa mielihyvää.

Samanaikaisesti heroini on myös myrky, ja addiktio kuin syöpä. Alaluvussa keskitytäänkin pohtimaan, mitä kipua dokumentaarin henkilöt yrittävät lievittää, ja miten addiktiota kuvataan. Mitä on heroini, ja miten sen käyttöä 'kuuluu' kuvata.

Teoreettista apua seuraavassa alaluvussa tarjoaa Michel Foucaultin teos *Birth of the Clinic*. Tässä luvussa pohditaan terveyttä ja sairautta ja sen kuvaamista dokumentaarissa. Lääketiede Foucaultin mielessä ei ole sen suojatumpi diskursseilta ja vallankäytöltä kuin mikään muukaan yhteiskunnallinen instituutio. Niinpä Valistusajan ja modernin lääketieteen syntyessä alkaa sairauksien ja oireitten luokittelu. Lääketieteellä on valtaa, ja sairauteen liittyvät kysymykset sosiaalisesta, taloudellisesta ja poliittisesta ulottuvuudesta.

Kolmannessa alaluvussa keskitytään romanttiseen rakkauteen ja siveettömyyteen. Tutkielman tässä luvussa pohditaan, miten ihmissuhteet tai niiden puute vaikuttavat suurempaan narratiiviin heroiniiriippuvuutta kuvaavassa dokumentaarissa. Elokuvassa seurataan kahta pariskuntaa, joista toinen eroaa ja toinen pysyttelee yhdessä elokuvan loputtua. Yhdessä pysyttelevä pariskunta ei yritä lopettaa huumeiden käyttöä, mutta jättää jäähyväiset katuelämälle ja muuttavat taloon. Pariskunta yrittää siis jälleen lähentyä normaalia yhteiskuntaa, joten heidän "loppuaan" kuvataan onnelliseksi. Eronneesta pariskunnasta kumpikaan ei juuri pysty tai yritä muuttaa tapojaan, joten tuntuu vain "luonnolliselta" ettei heidän parisuhteestakaan tule mitään, eikä näille kahdelle elokuvan lopussa jätetä hyvästejä vakuuttuneena siitä, että he ovat onnellisia.

Neljännessä luvussa siirrytään New Yorkin kaduilta Rovaniemen lumisiin maisemiin. Tässäkin luvussa pohditaan heroinia käyttävien narratiiveja ja kuvausta tarkastelemalla Joonas Neuvosen elokuvaa *Reindeerspotting* (2010).

Elokuvan keskiössä on rovaniemeläinen nuori Jani, joka elokuvan ensimmäisellä puoliskolla elelee yhteiskunnan reunamilla harmaissa mielenmaisemissa, ja toisella puoliskolla rikoksella rikastuttuaan matkustelee Euroopassa interrailaten elokuvan ohjaajan kanssa. Mielleyhtymiä tulee esimerkiksi kulttielokuvaan *Trainspottingiin*.

Käsittelylukujen jälkeen tehdään johtopäätöksiä ja vertailuja omassa luvussaan.

Yhteneväisyyksiä kahden tutkailun elokuvan välillä on muun muassa heroiniriippuvaisen fyysinen ulkomuoto, josta kuitenkin vedämme johtopäätöksiä aina taloudellisiin, sosiaalisiin, poliittisiin ja kulttuuriisiin ulottuvuuksiin asti. Narratiiveissa ja 'selviytymistarinoissa' on myös samankaltaisuuksia, riippumatta elokuvien ympäristöjen erilaisuudesta. Tutkielmassa pohditaankin huumeiden käytön ympäristöjä omina mikrokulttuureinaan.