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## Editorial

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# MEMORY STUDIES

## *Editorial*

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With *Memory Studies* we want to provide a forum that is genuinely innovative in provoking and maintaining a dialogic presence. Our launch issue (January 2008) included invited shorter articles setting out views on the agenda, challenges and prospects for the field of memory studies. For the current issue, we invited a range of contributors to respond directly to these initial texts, generating a whole new set of articles and providing the kind of intellectual dialogue that we hope to be able to offer our readers on a regular basis. We are committed to building on this momentum and we encourage submissions that will continue to energize debate in the field. In particular, we welcome shorter commentary-style pieces from authors representing a wide spectrum of experience and standing (including, for example, PhD candidates, senior academics and those often seen as outside of the scholarly community).

This commitment also extends to providing flexibility, both in terms of space and format. For instance, we welcome research articles that are outside of the scope that is customary for journal articles (longer or shorter). Also, we would like to feature visual content as often as possible (as in our May 2008 issue). Finally, we welcome proposals for special issues; forthcoming themes include: *Materializations of times: From memory to imagination*; *Experimental memory paradigms*; and *Constructions of conflict: Memory and perpetrators*.

Turning now to the contents of this issue, in our opening article, Steven Brown identifies three 'fundamental obstacles' to the study of memory: first, what is the 'substantive' to which the term refers; second, the difficulties of mapping and delimiting the domain of enquiry; and, third, what are the bases (histories, methods, etc.) upon which memory is 'claimed' as an object of enquiry by those who pursue its study. His effective exposition teases out these obstacles as articulated in our launch issue articles. Ultimately, he proposes the idea of 'mediation' as a productive basis for the emerging field.

Three articles tackle Paul Connerton's (2008) article 'Seven Types of Forgetting'. First, Matthew Erdelyi provides a nuanced comparative analysis of Connerton's model,

identifying the similarities and differences between Connerton's approach and a spectrum of classical to contemporary works in psychology. In doing so, Erdelyi illuminates the multi-dimensional aspects of memory and forgetting. Second, Jefferson Singer and Martin Conway re-evaluate each of Connerton's seven types of forgetting and ask, 'Should we forget forgetting?' They suggest that Connerton's typology, relating both to individual and cultural systems of memory, would be strengthened by focusing on the concept of 'accessibility' (and shifts in accessibility over time, circumstances and selves) rather than on the concept of forgetting. Third, and finally, Ineke Wessel and Michelle Moulds examine the relationship between Connerton's take on forgetting and the discipline-specific language of psychology around remembering and forgetting. These two authors develop the theoretical framework of individual autobiographical memory as a metaphor to engage with Connerton's formulations of the forgetting of cultural groups. In this way, they highlight the value of cognitive research paradigms in exploring the impact of social factors on personal memory.

Our penultimate invited article also takes disciplinary concerns as a prism through which to explore key issues raised in our launch issue. Nancy Van House and Elizabeth Churchill introduce the perspectives of human-computer interaction (HCI), computer supported cooperative work (CSC) and science and technology studies (STS) in their exploration of individual and collective 'technologies of memory'. Their analysis confronts (like Wessel and Moulds's article) a particular memory discourse: hence they see memory as potentially 'colonized' not only in the developed world and the private sector through the digitization of knowledge, but also in the technological metaphors and models that are shaping an emergent discourse on 'digital memory'.

In her consideration of journalism and also in response to Zelizer's (2008) article, Carolyn Kitch provides our final invited article. She echoes a theme of a number of our contributors in questioning how our subjects of study come to be defined. Kitch situates the significance of the 'stuff of everyday life' in social memory as central subjects of journalism. Thus, by extending our definitions of journalism (beyond a concern with just 'hard' news) and of memory (as intertextual), Kitch argues that the relevance and the uses of journalism in memory studies can also be broadened.

Finally, this issue includes a substantial research article: James Burton provides a significant exposition of the work of Henri Bergson in providing a useful conceptual framework for re-thinking the relationship between memory and the archive. This includes the application of a 'non-archival' model of memory in an explicit engagement with 'memory studies'.

As ever, our thanks go to our editorial assistants: Andrew Mumford (Warwick, UK) and Celia Harris (Macquarie, Australia) and Charles Stone (Macquarie, Australia/New School for Social Research, USA), and to the convivial people at Sage: Kerry Barner, Réhannah Karim and Francisca Perez.

## References

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