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Collective Memory Work

A Methodology for Learning
With and *From* Lived Experience



COLLECTIVE MEMORY WORK

A Methodology for Learning *with*
and *from* Lived Experience

Edited by Corey W. Johnson

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1

THE HISTORY AND METHODOLOGICAL TRADITION(S) OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY WORK

Corey W. Johnson, B. Dana Kivel, and Luc S. Cousineau

She remembered the time that she went to Atlantic City when she was six. She was there with her grandmother and her great aunt, Kate. She was very excited because she had never been to the beach before and had never seen such a huge wooden sidewalk (the boardwalk) and had never seen the ocean. She was amazed by how tall the hotel was and at how tasty the waffles were that she ate every morning. She also found a secret passageway under the hotel that took her out to the beach. It was on that same day, a day that she remembers as being very hot and sticky, that she noticed lots of people, and there were some kids who looked like her who were wearing shorts and no tops, and others who were wearing one-piece outfits that covered their bodies. She asked her grandmother about these swimsuits. Her grandmother said that only boys could wear shorts and no tops and girls had to wear suits that covered their entire bodies. She was confused because she thought for sure she saw girls wearing shorts and no tops. She didn't think too much about it before she went running in the sand in her swimsuit, her grandmother, then in her early 60s, running behind to keep up with her.

On the face of it, this story looks like a child's recollection of her first visit to the beach with her grandmother and great aunt. You might say that this is a fairly benign story: "this is a child's earliest memory of going to the beach and of seeing children wearing different swimsuits." Yet, if you were to ask a few questions about the story, examine the use of language—what was said and what was not said, the author's use of verbs and adjectives, and narrative structure—you might see that there's another story beyond the individual memory. Indeed, after a bit more analysis, you might say that this is a story about the ways in which an innocent leisure context serves as a powerful social force for gendering children; it is a story about what girls are taught about their bodies relative

to boys, and what girls are taught about being female—‘covering up,’ lack of freedom, and shame (very potent and powerful messages that convey a status of ‘less than’ and ‘other’).

At the heart of this story and the discussion of its analysis is the question of ‘experience’ and what constitutes an individual’s experience. Can an individual experience be fully and wholly separated from the ideologies that have shaped an individual? How do individual experiences link to collective, shared experiences?

The answers to these questions can be found in the process and product of collective memory work (CMW). Based on an egalitarian approach to inquiry, collective memory work asks co-researchers (participants and researchers, or research teams) to recall, examine, and analyze their own memories. Exploring these memories within a broader cultural context allows them to see how their individual experiences link to collective, shared experiences of similar and/or different groups in society (Haug, 1992). Collective memory work is unique as participants are involved in the generation and analysis of data, which is useful to the community knowledge base and as a form of conscious raising as they engage in the process (Kidd & Kral, 2005).

What Are the Basics?

Grounded in social constructionism, the theoretical foundation of collective memory work rests on the idea that the effects of ideology and discourses (the metaphorical point where culture and language converge) position us in relation to a variety of social forces; they *subject* us. In other words, discourses enable us to see the ideological positions in cultural institutions and language. Rather than merely describing or mirroring reality, these discourses constitute and shape our concepts of identity (Campbell & Kean, 2016). This process encourages and assists participants to make sense of how, unconsciously and through the internalization of taken-for-granted beliefs, they have created social and ideological dimensions of identity, including gender, race, sexual orientation, and other socially relevant categories.

In collective memory work, the collective engages in a process of discourse analysis whereby they examine and deconstruct their own use of language in written narratives as “language is not simply a tool” but rather a means to “convey ... the construction of meaning” (Haug, 1997, p. 9). The goal of this deconstructive analysis is to recognize the complexities obscured by the implied and tacit knowledge found in conversation, and therefore politicize speech. In the end, collective memory work seeks to unravel the ways in which individuals collaborate with discourse and ideology by implicating themselves in the social structures that act to oppress them (Haug, 1987, 1992, 1997). This unraveling allows us to see hegemonic identities at work. The result is the collective’s

articulation of a theory that explains how everyday life is the site where society reproduces itself. This theory is grounded in the experiences of individuals constructed through cultural ideologies by processes of hegemony; in other words, this method allows for the personal sphere of experience to be articulated in political terms (Haug, 1987).

Much of the research around ‘experience’ has been focused at the individual level, with extended analysis from the researcher to societal or ideological contexts. While this approach illuminates the life of the individual, it does little to give wider context to that experience in a real way for the participant of the research. Sociologist Dorothy Smith (1987) argued for a contextualization of experience that is based on an examination of social relations and institutional structures. Smith (1987) asserted that, “Rather than explaining behavior, we begin from where people are in the world, explaining the social relations of the society of which we are part, explaining an organization that is not fully present in any one individual’s everyday experience” (p. 89). She argued that while we may not ‘see’ these institutional structures, they operate at various levels and in ways that influence our everyday experiences. Experience is never simply a reflection of what someone has done, felt, or thought—experience is always constructed through discourses of a priori knowledge and power (Smith, 1987). Similarly, individuals emerge in and through various ideologies and discourses of power that revolve around a variety of identity markers including gender, race, and sexuality. Thus, how can scholars examine individuals and their experiences apart from the ideologies and discourses that shape everyday lives (Johnson & Samdahl, 2005; Kivel, 2000)? Instead, ‘experiences’ need to be contextualized and theorized in relation to these important social factors.

It is here where collective memory work can help us fill the void left by traditional research methodologies. The collaborative nature of the method, along with a natural inclination toward social justice in its practice, allows this method not only to contextualize individual experience within a collective social experience, but to have participants share and grow from their participation as co-researchers. What follows in this introductory chapter is an overview of collective memory work, from its inception in the work of Frigga Haug and her colleagues in the Socialist Women’s Association (*Sozialistischer Frauenbund*) in Germany, to its contemporary evolution and application across diverse fields of study. We begin with the onto-epistemological foundations of the method (Box 1.1). These foundations allow us to then explore the theoretical developments and evolutions of the method, including a detailed explanation of collective memory work and its offshoots in contemporary practice. Then, we provide a detailed exploration of how collective memory work has been used in academic research, followed by our own contributions to that collection of research. Finally, we will share what we hope this book will do, and what you can expect from the other chapters.

Onto-Epistemologies Theory

BOX 1.1—ONTO-EPISTEMOLOGIES

How we come to know knowledge, how truth(s) is/are understood, their expectations for researcher bias or subjectivity, the possibilities for capturing and relaying reality, their understandings of representational logic, and their intentions for research findings ... underlying philosophies of science that contingently position researchers and their research (Berbary & Boles, 2014, p. 7).

Social Constructionism

Collective memory work is about uncovering ideologies that influence how individuals see themselves, their relationships with others, and the world. The practice of collective memory work is therefore grounded in the epistemological perspective of social constructionism (Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault, & Benton, 1992; Kivel & Johnson, 2009; Onyx & Small, 2001). Within the social constructionist paradigm, meaning is created by the interaction of subject and object, where both of these are influenced by the social context in which they exist. Because of this, meaning is not discovered, but is instead constructed by those involved. Burr (2015) gives a thorough examination of social constructionism in her book on the paradigm and distills the main tenets to five significant points:

1. Social constructionism takes a critical approach toward taken-for-granted knowledge. This form of anti-essentialism challenges assumed understandings of experience and established facts, with particular attention to power structures and relations that affect the lives of those immersed in those power relationships.
2. Social constructionism approaches all ways of understanding as historically and socially relative. By working from the perspective that we construct our own social and cultural realities based on personal experiences, locality, and temporality, this paradigm is distinctly anti-realist, insofar as it does not privilege established understandings of what is 'real' above the lived experiences of individuals. By doing so, it acknowledges the experiences and lived realities of people as true and as legitimate reflections of the multiple truths and realities that are experienced by individuals.
3. Building on the stance of anti-realism, social constructionism understands that versions of knowledge become fabricated through daily interactions between people. This creates for the individual a historically and culturally specific form of knowledge that extends beyond the strictly personal and allows for collective understanding, or commonality.

4. Within social constructionism, knowledge and social action go together. Because of this, language becomes very important, as language is a precondition for thought, and in itself can be a form of social action.
5. Social constructionism focuses on interaction and process. Beyond simple personal experiences, personal interactions, as well as the social processes and power relationships with which individuals are confronted in their daily lives, are significant influences on their realities.

Seeing what is 'real' as a constructed formulation of the interaction between the 'known' and the 'knower' allows for the existence of a subjectivity of knowledge in which truth, and particularly the truth of experience, is contingent on the knowledge, experiences, and understanding of the person undergoing the experience. It is these conditions that allow for the presentation and acceptance of memories as points of knowledge, and subsequently data in research projects.

It is here that we must discuss the use of memory as data. Although memories, as the personal reconstructions of events by the individual, are therefore the embodiment of socially and personally constructed 'truths,' Biklen (2004) cautions that memory is a complex and problematic phenomenon that must not be taken for granted. Biklen's assertion is based on the fact that within memories and recollections, we often have gaps, confusion, and problematized recollections that are reflective of our current states of being and personal predilections at the time of remembering. There is also a danger, as highlighted by authors like Confino (1997), that memory, and especially collective memory, becomes depersonalized and turns out to be the political memory of liberalism, communism, regionalism, etc.; veiled in the personal account of the individual doing the remembering. Those elements considered, we believe that memories recollected, discussed, and analyzed do present important information and support the Personal Narratives Group's (1989, cited in Glover, 2003) assertion that "when talking about their lives, people lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they *are* revealing truths. These truths don't reveal the past as it actually was, aspiring to a standard of objectivity. They give us instead the truth of our experiences" (p. 261). The expression of memories and their subsequent analysis helps individuals articulate how they have been constructed, and helps them to identify their own markers of identity (Kivel & Johnson, 2009). This is the very point made by Haug (1987) and her colleagues in their work developing and presenting memory work as a method stating, "the very notion that our own past experience may offer some insight into the ways in which individuals construct themselves into existing relations, thereby themselves reproducing a social formation, itself contains an implicit argument for a particular methodology" (p. 34).

(Critical) Interpretivism

Using the same framework for the development and implementation of collective memory work, authors have also placed this methodological approach into

slightly different epistemological frameworks. Markula and Friend (2005) are firm in their assertion that the development of collective memory work derives from a combination of two interpretivist approaches: hermeneutics and phenomenology. For Markula and Friend, memories, especially work with memory, are interactive processes engaging in interactive knowledge construction along the theoretical path of hermeneutics, while simultaneously engaging with the importance of the individual like phenomenology is known to do. This individualized knowledge construction positions the knower and the researcher in interpretive spaces, where the meaning of the memory rests in how the individual ascribes meaning to the memory. These interpretations, as valid data, also allow for the critical interpretation of the context of the memories. In other words, Markula and Friend argue that the larger meaning of the memory lies in the interpretation of the person who hears it (someone else or the person remembering). Although the theoretical contextualization is slightly different than that presented by Kivel and Johnson (2009) or Onyx and Small (2001), the outcome for the measures of validity and value of collective memory work are the same, in that the self is considered a social product mediated by language and text, and memories are the representation of those selves projected into the past.

Participatory Action Research

Regardless of the epistemological perspective used to guide the research, collective memory work is a method that falls under the participatory action research (PAR) methodological umbrella. Reason and Bradbury (2001) define PAR as “a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes” (p. 1). Like the epistemological viewpoints that underpin it, PAR methodologies acknowledge that the actions of humans are influenced by social structures and power relationships that they are exposed to, and this affects both their experiences and their descriptions of those experiences. The acknowledgment of the social influences on the lives of participants, and their integration into all elements of the research process, makes PAR particularly well attenuated for social justice research, where full participation of research participants is of particular importance. For these same reasons, PAR can be an important contributor to research that seeks to explore or reflect the lived experiences of those marginalized by society, or with minoritized viewpoints.

With that objective of PAR in mind, it is important to understand that the implementation of PAR exists on a continuum, and researcher/participant engagement can take different forms. Although participant involvement may be as simple as having input into the final research product or presentation, it may also include full actualization of the research outcomes by the participants themselves, alongside the researchers. Collective memory work has a place on the PAR continuum because central to this research method is the involvement of participants in the sharing of stories, collective analysis of group data, building of

community around shared experience, and social connection. Participants may even be fully immersed in the development of research products and the dissemination of research findings to larger audiences (e.g., Singh & Johnson, Chapter 7).

The History and Development of CMW

Collective memory work as a method was originally developed by Frigga Haug and other authors working as part of a socialist collective in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s. First published in complex detail in *Female Sexualization: A Collective Work of Memory*, the method was a way of working toward “reconstructing scientific work along feminist lines, and that of remodeling Marxism to open up a place within it for issues concerning women” (Haug, 1987, p. 23). The authors were heavily involved in women’s movement groups in Germany at the time, including the Women’s Liberation Movement, as well as being among the founders of the Socialist Women’s Association (*Sozialistischer Frauenbund*). The development of this research method was a working model, and was first published with the first volume of *Frauenformen (Women’s Forms)*, which was a reflection on the socialization of women. The collective continued this work and development of collective memory work with the publication in 1983 of *Sexualisierung: Frauenformen 2*, which was translated into English in 1987 under the title *Female Sexualization: A Collective Work of Memory*, with Haug presented as the principal author at that time. Haug continued to develop the method in her subsequent work with extensive exploration in her (1992) *Beyond Female Masochism: Memory-Work and Politics*. Given the heavy influence of Marx on the socialist and women’s movements of the 1970s and 1980s in Germany, it is understandable that the members of the collective would approach research methods and data with the fundamental concepts of social constructionism in mind. The construction of self at any given time plays an important part in how events are constructed and how individuals might remember those memories. Because of this, Haug (1987) and her colleagues used memories as their initial data; hence, the name of the method.

As a feminist collective interested in the exploration, emancipation, and development of women in society, the advance of collective memory work was not benevolent, but was intended as a way of developing a research methodology that looked to the depths of women’s experiences, and provided a voice to their lived experiences contextualized by the social realities of their lives. This focus on the lived experiences of women, the legitimation of women’s experiences as valid historical data, and proper representations of reality, created a feminist space that was designed to be used by women for the development of women’s rights and possibilities. This mindset around the intention of collective memory work has been carried forward by some researchers who see this method as a highly gendered exploration, and designed to be that way (e.g., Fraser & Michell, 2015). Haug (1987) and her colleagues would not have shied away from that characterization; in fact, it was enshrined in how they contextualized their own approach

to this research: “The question we want to raise is thus an empirical one; it is the ‘how’ of lived feminine practice” (p. 33). In the process of answering that question, it is possible to reassess and reconstitute the feminine self within current social practices. The contemporary method presented in this book is grounded in feminism, like the work of Haug and her colleagues, but also in the failure of these white women to recognize their racialized identities. The acknowledgment of these oversights has allowed the method to develop a core attention to intersectionalities, and embody the active engagement of the intersectional nature of shared experience as it does so.

Haug et al.’s original collective memory work approach was distilled from developments made by the members of the Socialist Women’s Association as they attempted to generate a more equitable and representative research methodology, which would give women a voice within the research and beyond. In order to accomplish this goal, they reflected on both the role of the participant within the research, as well as the role of the researcher throughout the course of the research project. These ideas are detailed in the final chapter, and brought to life in others. However, it is worth detailing them briefly here.

Role of the Participant in CMW

The most important element of how the participant is viewed in collective memory work is that each participant must also be seen as a researcher. This creates a co-researcher relationship between participants and with the research team of the project. Seen as a way to level the hierarchies that are inherent in academic research, collective memory work conceives of participants as being collaborators in the conduct of research. The final chapter of this book provides a more detailed explanation of the participant role and relationship as co-researcher.

Role of the Researcher in CMW

In order to accomplish the emancipatory goal of a less power-laden research environment, the researcher or researchers must participate and consent to have their experiences as part of the research. The researcher must also presume that all participants in the research, whether lay or academic, are capable of analyzing, interpreting, and discussing one another’s experiences.

With these roles in mind, the members of the Socialist Women’s Association laid out a simple formulation for the development of their participatory research method based on memories. The first element was a collective agreement on a focus for the memory work. Conceptualized as a trigger (or cue) word or phrase (Haug, 1987), Haug and her colleagues devised this as a way to limit the breadth of memories presented by the participants in order to focus the analysis later in the project’s development. After the establishment of the trigger, the participants were asked to independently write about the memories elicited by this trigger.

The writing phase for participants came with guidelines in order to create robust and useful memory texts. Haug's four basic rules were as follows: (1) write one to two pages using the trigger as a focal point; (2) write in the third person and use a pseudonym—the purpose of this is to anonymize the experience for the reader and allow for thorough analysis without the layering of pre-conceived understandings about the writer; (3) the writing must be as detailed as possible for the author, including details that might seem mundane or trivial; (4) the memory text should be a description of the event, which are factual accounts, as void as possible of personal interpretation or analysis (Box 1.2). The last phase in the process was that these memories were copied and shared with the entire group. Each of the memories would be read by the other participants, and each in turn would be discussed and analyzed by the group as a whole. This group analysis forms the important participatory crux of the method, as it is the point where the participation of the group and the collective analysis of the memories of each participant create a collective memory space, as well as a collective analysis of the meaning of the memories and memory trigger for the group.

BOX 1.2—HAUG'S FOUR BASIC RULES OF MEMORY WRITING

1. Write 1–2 pages
2. Write in the third person and use a pseudonym
3. The writing must be as detailed as possible
4. The memory text should be factual and avoid interpretation or analysis

Continued Development of CMW

After the initial development of the method with the Women's Socialist Association, Frigga Haug spent time in the mid-1980s as a visiting scholar at Macquarie University in Sydney Australia (Onyx & Small, 2001). During her time there, she disseminated the idea of collective memory work to students and colleagues, and this began a legacy of the use of collective memory work as a method in Australia and New Zealand. Essential to the development of the method in Oceania and elsewhere were the evolutions that were generated in the early 1990s by researchers who had worked with Haug during her time in Australia. Chief among these are the contributions made by the SPUJJ collective, five researchers (June Crawford, Susan Kippax, Jenny Onyx, Una Gault, and Pam Benton) who embarked on a 4-year study of the social construction of emotion using collective memory work as the primary method. This work resulted in the book *Emotion and Gender* (Crawford et al., 1992), and provides the most robust development of the method after Haug and her colleagues. Crawford et al. (1992) maintained the assertions of Haug. (1987) and her colleagues that significant

events remembered by individuals, and the underlying social structures of those events, play an important role in the construction of self. As well, the construction of self at any given time plays an important role in how one remembers.

CRAWFORD, KIPPAX, ONYX, GAULT, AND BENTON'S (1992)

Procedures for Collective Memory Work

Crawford et al.'s work expands on Haug's version. Using the initial rules for the creation of the memory texts, Crawford et al. (1992, p. 49) presented a set of procedures for the analysis phase of the memory work to be done as a group.

1. Each memory-work group member expresses opinions and ideas about each written memory in turn.
2. The collective looks for similarities and differences between the memories. The group members look for continuous elements among the memories whose relation to each other is not immediately apparent. Each member should question particularly those aspects of the events that do not appear amenable to comparison, without resorting to biography.
3. Each member identifies clichés, generalizations, contradictions, cultural imperatives, metaphor, etc. This is one way of identifying the markers of the 'taken-for-granted' social explication of the meaning of recurring events.
4. The group discusses theories, popular conceptions, sayings, and images about the topic, again as a way of identifying the common social explication of meaning around the topic.
5. The group also examines what is not written in the memories (but that might be expected to be). Silences are sometimes eloquent pointers to issues of deep significance but are painful or particularly problematic to the author.
6. The memory may be re-written.

The analysis phase as described in Crawford et al.'s (1992) work, along with honing the memory texts themselves, provides the participants in the research group an opportunity to uncover the common social understandings that come to light based on the triggers. This allows the analysis to move from reflecting on the memories of the individuals in the group, to a more cross-sectional understanding of the social constructs and influences at play for the collective. In essence, this is an exercise in locating and identifying group meaning from the memory texts, and for Crawford et al. (1992): "In this way the method is reflexive. It generates data and at the same time points to modes of action for the co-researchers" (p. 49).

One important factor that is often excluded in memory work is the opportunity for the memory to be re-written if the group and the participant whose memory

is in discussion decide that this is merited. This allows for a new version of the memory to be added to the discursive space around group meaning, potentially with problematic interpretation removed, or increased specificity, which will allow the group to generate better understandings based on its content.

Crawford et al. (1992) also discuss a third phase of the collective memory process. In this phase, the data gathered from memories, as well as the discussions of the group process, are intermingled and further theorized. It is in this phase where the information gathered as part of the project is related back to the academic theory and literature, which may inform the cultural and social concepts discussed and analyzed by the participants. This phase of collective memory work is usually conducted by the co-researchers who are academics and engaged in the production of academic scholarship as an individual or collaborative exercise. Although drafts of the products generated in phase three are sometimes shared with the participants and opened for discussion with the research group, this is not always the case. This phase is an important part of collective memory work which takes place on the spectrum of PAR, and the recursive nature of research findings and dissemination is an important aspect of the social justice and participatory nature of this research methodology.

Development of Collective Biography

In Haug et al.'s and Crawford et al.'s collective memory work, there is an important focus on the memories shared, and the analytical discussion surrounding those memories is focused on as factual a description of the event as possible. Both subscribe to the idea that the writing of the memory should be a description that is as void as possible of interpretation, explanation, or biography. Some authors have suggested a different interpretation of committing memory to text, and the use and necessity of biography. Bronwyn Davies (1992, 1994, 2000) has suggested a modified version of collective memory work which she calls 'collective biography.' Davies et al. (2001, p. 169) explain their interpretation of how the method is meant to function by stating that,

It is 'biographical' in that it draws on memories of the lives of particular individuals. It is 'collective' in that the process through which the stories are told and written and analyzed is one which reveals the ways in which we were (and are) collectively produced as (sometimes) coherent subjects, experiencing ourselves as 'individual' and 'autonomous.' Through the processes of talking and listening, of writing and rewriting, the edges that mark off the texts of ourselves, one from the other, are blurred.

The modified collective memory work presented by Davies, while being modeled on Haug (1987) and her colleagues' work, adds a phase to the process that comes before committing memories to text. This initial phase involved a collective story telling using the same trigger as will be used for the written memories.

This collective story telling allows for the remembering of lost pieces of memory, as well as group discussion “in terms of everyday ‘cultural knowledges’” (Davies, 1994, p. 84). Also in Davies’ (1994) model, the fourth phase of the research is not the generation and theorization by the academic co-participants in the research, but instead a re-discussion of re-written memories that have been stripped of the personal and are as close as possible to a version that “might have been true for anyone living in that particular culture and taking up that culture as their own” (p. 84). What then must occur in Davies’ collective biography is a post-phase where the work is contextualized properly for dissemination in the academic environment if that is indeed the goal of the research.

Davies’ approach has been taken on by many researchers engaged with collective memory work, using and adapting Haug et al.’s concepts with a more biographical approach to achieve their research goals. Cornforth, White, Milligan, and Claiborne (2009, p. 69) are particularly direct with their reasons for undertaking this more biographical approach,

In contrast to its earlier origins, collective biography focuses more on discourse and power than on the individual and liberation. The associated ‘unsettling’ of humanist versions of memories as interior and personal draws on the work of Judith Butler (1995, 1997) to interrogate the processes of ‘subjectification’ through which researchers are subjected in their own lives and, as a result, become participants themselves. One benefit of taking this embodied, but non-humanist, approach in researching our subjectification is its potential to remove guilt and pain from individual participants. Since the focus is on the discourses within which revelations were ‘materialised’ rather than our capacity to express individual agency, the collective was rendered a safe place within which to share.

Citing a more easily internalized feeling of comfort and trust within the group, Cornforth and colleagues make a case for the use of collective biography over Haug’s collective memory work; an approach that has a great deal of traction within research using this type of method.

Although Haug (1987) and her colleagues conceived the method as an emancipatory exercise for women and women’s voices, the epistemological roots of this method allow for its application across populations with the use of alternate trigger concepts. As we will explore later in this chapter, collective memory work and its offshoots have been used in a targeted way with gay and straight men, transgender individuals, marketing research groups, lesbian women, foodies, among others.

Where Has CMW been Used?

Since its beginnings with Haug (1987) and her colleagues, collective memory work has become an established methodology across a number of research contexts

and engaging with diverse research topics. Its most significant proliferation has been in Australia and New Zealand where it has been in regular and consistent use since the late 1980s. Although a great breadth of research using collective memory work exists, establishing loose categories helps to put that research into context, and several such categories emerge: research with women on women's and feminist issues; gender and its influence on social and life spaces; collective memory work research with men and/or surrounding men's issues; race and the influence of race on decision-making and personal experience; the use of collective memory work to approach theoretical thinking in diverse fields; and critiques and reflections on the use of collective memory work.

Owing to the fact that collective memory work was conceived as a feminist methodology, it seems appropriate that the largest sub-category of studies using this method is research on issues specifically affecting women, focusing specifically on the role of feminist theory and praxis in the lives of academic and non-academic women. Cornforth et al. (2009) used collective memory work to explore the role of feminist practice for academics engaged with a major institutional merger. Using Davies' collective biography, this group of academics explored their early conceptions of 'good girl' students, contextualized in their current lives as academic women. Susanne Gannon (2015), along with giving a thorough description of the development and implementation of collective biography, used the method in the mapping of the subjugation of girls in fiction literature, and the complexities of that subjugation and representation for female readers of fiction.

Justine Mercer (2013) used collective memory work to explore the experiences of young female academics experiencing the rejection of papers and proposals for the first time. Although Mercer engages with this method out of an admitted curiosity to explore its potential in this type of research area, she concludes that it has value in research. In this same vein, Kern, Hawkins, Al-Hindi, and Moss (2014) used collective biography to explore expressions of joy in academic work, and they express that their choice of this method was greatly influenced by its desire to make visible the process of 'selving' from past experiences.

Coralie McCormack (1998) and Jennie Small (1999) have both used collective memory work to interrogate women's leisure and tourism experiences, and how leisure and tourism experiences manifest differently for women. Elna Oinas (1999) chose to use collective memory work as her method as it "is especially useful for research into health and body issues due to its potential to offer multi-layered accounts with a variety of different narrative modes, compared with in depth interviews" (p. 267). Her work on young women's perspectives on the dissemination of information about menstruation by public health officials in Finland illuminated not only the experiences of the young women, but also the potential failures of the educational system employed by the public health officials. Jennifer Cole (2005) also focused on health and body issues in her work on the politics of reproduction in Africa. Using collective memory work, she explored the role of biological and social structural influence on women's views

of reproduction, and how past social/emotional/physical violence affects these opinions for participants in the research.

Irene Ryan (2009) expounded the role that collective memory work can play in illuminating previously lost or ignored ways of knowing in her work with older women field hockey players. Using collective memory work in this context, Ryan describes how the juxtapositions and intersectionalities of gender, age, sport, and story are brought to light. Lynn Burnett (2010) brought together young lesbian-defined women to explore their experiences of the intersection of their lesbianism and careers. Burnett, like Ryan, expresses how the use of collective memory work allows for the complexities of identity and social spaces to show through in the research context.

This broad swath of literature using collective memory work with women is only a sample of what is available. We could also explore: the experience of women leaders (Boucher, 1997a, 1997b; Boucher & Smyth, 1996); body/landscape relations (Davies, 2000); women's sexuality (Farrar, 1999); women's writing (Gannon, 1999; Kamler, 1996); women and mathematics (Johnston, 1995, 1998; Webber, 1998); women's speaking positions and feminine subjectivities (Stephenson, Kippax, & Crawford, 1996; Stephenson, 2001); women and AIDS prevention (Kippax, Crawford, Waldby, & Benton, 1990); older women, health, and relationships (Mitchell, 1991, 1993, 2000); and heterosexuality and desire (Davies, 1992; Rocco, 1999).

Although work with women and on women's issues is by far the most significant body of collective memory work literature, other researchers have expanded its use to different populations, including men, transgender, and mixed groups. Working especially with men, Kivel and Johnson (2009), Johnson, Richmond, and Kivel (2008), Dunlap and Johnson (2013), and Johnson and Dunlap (2011) have worked with groups to explore the role of media in the constructions of masculinity, representations of masculinity in men's lives, including racialized, heterosexual, and gay men. Using collective memory work, these projects used reflections on media exposure to help illuminate how those exposures affect personal visions and embodiments of masculinity and what meanings might be associated with those embodiments. Bob Pease (2000a, 2000b) has also used collective memory work with groups of men. Pease has used this method to explore the roles and lasting effects of father-son relationships on participants, as well as the (re)construction of heterosexual subjectivities in the memories of men in his groups.

Research using collective memory work has also engaged with diverse groups of research participants when examining issues of gender and gender spaces. Johnson, Singh, and Gonzales (2014) explore youth experiences in high school using collective memory work with transgender, queer, and questioning students. This work looked at participant experiences of gender and gender identity in school, as well as the influence of understanding and existing attitudes on those experiences. Connor, Newton, Dennis, and Quarshie (2004), as well as Purohit and Walsh (2003), used collective memory work to reflect on participant experiences

and memories surrounding gender in schools. Connor and colleagues used collective biography in their exploration of the embodiment of gender spaces in school and the experiences of participants navigating these difficult issues in their youth. Purohit and Walsh, in a two-phase study, used collective memory work with an entire middle school class to explore the effects of gendered discourse on the lives and beliefs of young people. In the second phase of the study, they limited discussion to a girls-only group, to both contrast the larger group experience and to broaden and deepen the questions brought forward by the work. All three of these studies highlight questions about gender and gendered spaces within schools, and the role that schools have to play in mediating these spaces. Christine Ingleton (1995) used collective memory work to explore the intersections of gender and learning with Australian university students, uncovering collective narrative descriptions of troubled inter-relationships between being both caring and competitive, as well as pressures to both comply with and rebel against gendered expectations as students.

Reflections on the Development of CMW

As with most methods, collective memory work has undergone substantial reflection since the 1980s. As discussed earlier, Crawford et al. (1992) provided significant development to the implementation of the method and set the guideposts for many researchers who would follow, and Davies, Dormer, Honan, and McAllister's (1997) work would move the method in a slightly different direction with collective biography. Its implementation across a variety of research domains in the 1990s, especially in Australia and New Zealand, prepared it for re-theorization 15 years later. Onyx and Small (2001) gave an overview of this process in their work, and along with describing the development of the method to this point, provided several points for further reflection; including troubling the collective subject, and lingering issues about the phases and rules of the data collection within the method. That same year, Susanne Gannon (2001) troubled how collective memory work was represented, especially in academic texts. Using creative analytic practice, she suggested representation that took the form of poetic or creative embodiment of research findings, in order to help avoid some of the essentialism inherent in a single-person representation of collective findings. Fine and Beim (2007) reflected on interactionist approaches to collective memory work saying that it "is a living concept, linked to the behaviours and responses of social actors who generate meaning" (p. 5). They proposed three analytical questions that should be asked of the method: (1) Should we conceptualize collective memory as process or product? (2) What makes a collective memory effective: its inherent qualities or its cultural promotion and reception? (3) How is a collective memory transmitted and manifested—through media or interpersonal diffusion? Markula and Friend (2005) cast memory work as an interpretive methodology and applied its

use to sport management. They established it as a viable method in the field, but also raised questions about its practicality. Frost et al. (2012) provide a reflection on their experiences implementing the method itself. Along with reflecting on some of the difficulties of engaging with this method as a group, they reinforce the structure of collective memory work as laid out by Crawford et al. (1992), and that the ultimate goal of the method is “shifting one’s perception of one’s experience through the appropriation of discourses that emerged during analysis” (Frost et al., 2012, p. 245).

Some authors have critiqued memory work more generally, discussing the inherent fallibility of relying on memory for data. Alon Confino (1997) and David Berliner (2005) provide critique of the use of memory in research from historical and anthropological perspectives, respectively. For both Confino and Berliner, memory has value in the cultural history and social construction of time and place, but it has some serious deficiencies in the way that it can represent factual and true information in the lives of individuals and society as a whole. Sari Knapp Biklen (2004) echoes that worry by troubling how the memories of adults can be used to accurately explore the experiences and feelings of youth. Although performative memory has strong links to identity, there is danger in the adult identity having so strong an influence over the recollection of the memory that it might lose validity in seeking the desired information. Aaron Beim (2007) also suggests an important cognitive factor in the use of memory insofar as there is a conflation between the production of memory and memorable experiences, and the reception of the social and cultural phenomena that contribute to their creation. His work presents not only a justification for his worry about the conflation of these two processes, but also a model for the cognitive mechanisms of collective memory. Snelgrove and Havitz (2010), in their work on retrospective methods in leisure studies, provide discussion and critique on the reliability and validity of the method. Their critique is focused on concerns with poor memory recall and that reconstructions of people’s pasts are often shown to be largely inaccurate, but do suggest that collective memory work might be a viable alternative to personal narratives as it maintains the political. What each of these critiques has in common though, is the presupposition that memories and some kind of objective ‘fact’ can be reconciled, illuminating their onto-epistemological perspectives on what is ‘real’ and ‘factual’ (see Johnson & Oakes, Chapter 9, for further exploration of onto-epistemological issues in CMW).

Wulf Kansteiner (2002) provided what is a thorough methodological critique of CMW. In his analysis of the state of the methodology, as well as its conceptual underpinnings, Kansteiner (2002, p. 180) comes to three significant conclusions:

1. Collective memory work studies have not yet sufficiently conceptualized collective memories as distinct from individual memory. As a result, the nature and dynamics of collective memories are frequently misrepresented through facile use of psychoanalytical and psychological methods.

2. Collective memory studies have also not yet paid enough attention to the problem of reception both in terms of methods and sources. Therefore, works on specific collective memories often cannot illuminate the sociological base of historical representations.
3. Some of these problems can be addressed by adopting and further developing the methods of media and communication studies, especially regarding questions of reception. For this purpose we should conceptualize collective memory as the result of the interaction among three types of historical factors: the intellectual and cultural traditions that frame all our representations of the past, the memory makers who selectively adopt and manipulate these traditions, and the memory consumers who use, ignore, or transform such artifacts according to their own interests.

Alongside these conclusions, Kansteiner argues that some texts that have used memory work have made significant errors in conceptualization when they have used and placed memories in an individualized context; an approach that ignores the socially constructed nature of memories created in time and space.

What Are Our Experiences with Collective Memory Work?

As a newly minted assistant professor at the University of Northern Iowa, Dana worked with many outstanding colleagues in the then Women's Studies Program, one of whom knew Frigga Haug. This colleague invited Haug to campus to give a talk and to conduct a workshop about collective memory work. Dana attended her talk and participated in her workshop. This was in 1997 and while happy to have finished the dissertation the year before, Dana was struggling to find different ways to 'do' research so as not merely to be engaged in 'representing' the voices of individuals who were part of marginalized groups—women, young people who were lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT), etc. Dana was also a new faculty member and had the latitude to 'try' new strategies and methods. Indeed, Dana was in that period of her life where Kuhn (2012), in the *Structure of Scientific Revolution*, argued that those who are early in their careers (the young and naïve) and those at the end of their careers (less young and more cynical who have nothing to lose) are precisely the ones who can actually help to shift old paradigms.

After Haug's workshop, Dana realized that this method of writing stories in the third person, each participant sharing their stories and each person contributing to the research, was, at the time, quite a radical departure from graduate school and early career research-related work. In graduate school, Dana landed on doing identity research, but in reality wanted to explore how heterosexuality functioned in ways that diminished the lives of young people who identified as LGBT. Dana had come to graduate school having been an activist and co-founder of an LGBT youth group in San Francisco, the Lavender Youth Recreation and

Information Center (LYRIC). Yet, Dana's research focus in graduate school had been on making visible the lives and experiences of LGB youth in leisure settings. The focus on 'representation' was what was needed in the mid-1990s. The crisis of representation and legitimation was in full debate. But, while living in Iowa and as a result of Haug's work, Dana realized that collective memory work had the potential to shift how we think about research—the idea of collaborating with participants as co-researchers—but it also had the potential to make visible the connections between individual experiences, ideologies, and social structures.

Collective memory work has the potential to support participants to peel back layers of hegemonic identities such that collaborators could begin to discuss how they have come to see themselves, their relationships with others, and the world. The opportunity to engage with the questions: Who am I?; Why do I believe what I do?; How do I fit into society?; also makes this research methodology an incredibly powerful tool for social justice work. Haug's work was, in part, about consciousness-raising and that aspect of the work—raising awareness and consciousness so that the work of social justice and social change begins with the individual—continues to be critical to research today. Further, Haug's ability to bridge the gap between agency and structure by creating a method in which the individual links their experience to ideologies and hegemonies, as well as social structures, further helps to bridge the gap in research between the researcher and the researched, and theory and practice.

In Corey's scholarly inquiry, he has deployed collective memory work as a means of contextualizing research and personal experiences in a way that reflects the larger social and political constructs at play in the generation and development of personal experiences. As a social justice researcher, he has used collective memory work, along with other research methodologies (i.e., ethnography and narrative inquiry), to illuminate experiences that are often neglected in academic research, and highlight cultural and social inequities through those research projects. Throughout, he has maintained a commitment to participant empowerment, which along with the use of PAR and collaborative methodologies like collective memory work, has included ensuring that participants in his research have continued input and agency throughout the entire research and dissemination process.

Although maintaining the centrality of the methodology's commitment to the exposure and unraveling of social power structures that affect our lived experiences and recollections, Corey has parted from Haug's original insistence that collective memory work is used only by/with women. His research has been with groups of men, as well as transgender, queer, and questioning young people, while still interrogating the discourses that are implicit in our lives. In practice, this has meant the exploration of a variety of research topic areas, and the use of a variety of theoretical perspectives to help illuminate these power structures. Johnson et al. (2008) is a discussion of the constructions of race and masculinity in popular

media, which focused on four main themes of (1) media perpetuates violent/aggressive expectations of men and women as objects; (2) men's leisure is marked by racial stereotypes; (3) men use media to construct racial identity; and (4) media can be used as a catalyst for understanding white male privilege. This work also engaged the participant-researchers in discussion about the 'crisis of representation' of masculinity, and the meaning of being a racialized man. Kivel and Johnson (2009) used collective memory work to explore the relationship between media exposure, constructions of masculinity for youth, and male youth violence. The participant-researchers shared memories that demonstrated constructions of masculinity and personhood that were underpinned by ideals of heroism, violence, and machismo, and provided an opportunity to critically analyze and discuss these constructions with peers. Kivel, Johnson, and Scraton (2009) is a call for the broadening of the scope of leisure research to be more inclusive of research that uses individual experience, but contextualizes that experience within broader discourses of ideology and power. Using race as a contextualizing social construct, we proposed collective memory work as a potential method to help alleviate the individualized research tendencies within leisure sciences and (re)theorize leisure experiences at the societal level. Johnson and Dunlap (2011) and Dunlap and Johnson (2013) work through the development of masculinities and sexual identity through the media memories and experiences of gay and straight men, respectively. For gay men, media experiences and constructions of masculinities took on two roles: opening the closet door and mainstreaming gay identity. For the participant-researchers in this project, media portrayals of masculinity and gay men were instructive in shaping their understandings of their own masculinity, but also provided valuable exposure to heteronormative discourse and possible avenues for resistance. For straight men (Dunlap & Johnson, 2013), media exposure was also instructive about masculinity, although in this case they were primarily learning about the hierarchical nature of masculinities within the social discourse. This meant that actions and ways of being were judged to fit into hierarchical levels of masculine performance, and judged accordingly. Johnson et al. (2014) undertook a significant project with transgender, queer, and questioning youth about how they interpreted and made meaning out of sexual orientation as they moved through high school. Pairing collective memory work with PAR, participant-researchers were included in all aspects of this project, which produced, among other items, a documentary film. Through the experiences of the youth involved in this project, a host of institutional and discursive difficulties were uncovered that affect the safety and personal wellbeing of participants. Versions of these projects are articulated in the chapters that follow, as are other important projects where Corey has served as the methodologist part of a research team.

And what about Luc? Well, the future Dr. Cousineau is just beginning to get his feet wet with collective memory work and his introduction, like your own, means developing a comprehensive understanding of the ontological, epistemological, and theoretical underpinnings of CMW; the history and development

of the work; those studies that have been done using CMW; what CMW is not; the methodological nuances of designing and executing the study; and moving the work from data generation/analysis to presentation, publication, and knowledge translation.

What Will This Book Cover? General Goals and Organization

There are nine chapters in the book divided into three parts. You're wrapping up the introduction to collective memory work describing its history, differentiating it from other methodologies (grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, collective biography, etc.). In Part II, chapters focus on CMW 'in action' and show scholars how they can adopt and/or adapt the methods to suit the purposes of their research endeavor. Each chapter will also focus pedagogically on a specific feature of the methodology. The chapters are ordered sequentially in terms of the typical execution of the research design. In addition, these chapters simultaneously account for interesting and relevant content (unique projects) related to employing the methodology for the purposes of social justice. In Part III, we alert scholars to the importance of CMW as one of many appropriate methodologies and encourage them to consider overall 'fit,' challenges and rewards of its use. We will discuss the increasing utility and popularity of collective memory work as a qualitative research methodology, chart directions for its future, and discuss significant challenges and pitfalls. The final chapter will review the key methodological features and provide detailed justification and instruction on how to employ the methodology. Using a conversation between Corey and a PhD student looking to use CMW in their dissertation, this chapter will give a set of guides for implementing CMW, and a discussion about the important practical and theoretical considerations when undertaking this method.

As qualitative and collective methodologies continue to undergo robust development across diverse fields of study, continued engagement with their roots and developmental trajectories is paramount to their continued success. In the chapters that follow, you will find the resources required to engage with and exercise the use of collective memory work in your own research, as well as the tools to continue its development. We hope you find this book and collective memory work methodology valuable and meaningful as we continue to explore and value the experiences and perspectives of the individuals we engage in research alongside.

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