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THE INTERVIEW AND RESEARCHING COLLECTIVE MEMORY

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INTRODUCTION

Collective memory refers to how the past is remembered by social groups, such as communities, organizations, societies – or other mnemonic communities (Olick & Robbins, 1998; Zerubavel, 1996). Olick (1999) introduced a distinction between collective and collected memory. The former, he argues, rests on a conception of memory as residing within people's brains. This distinction has methodological implications as the study of collected memory is consequently often conceived of as an individual-level issue and approached through methods rooted in methodological individualism, usually aggregating different individual views into a compendium of a community's view of the past. This frequently includes oral histories which study social phenomena either through the individual analysis of specific events or through the aggregative analysis of data consisting of the memories of individuals (Hodgson, 2007).

While *collected* memory indicates the aggregation of individual 'pieces of memory', more complex *social* processes are involved in *collective* memory, indicating how memory is created, changed, or preserved, therefore drawing from "objective symbols or deep structures that transcend the individual" (Olick, 1999: 338). Whereas collected memories are the aggregates of individual memories, Rowlinson et al. (2010) suggest that collective memory was developed in opposition to such an individual-psychological notion of the self. Collective memory refers to social frameworks of memory; how we remember and forget our pasts as members of groups or communities (Olick & Robbins, 1998). This again has methodological implications as it suggests,

in particular, that interviews, which have for a long time been a staple method in business and management research while adequate for *collected* memory studies, are individualistically limited and therefore of much less use for attempts at studying *collective* forms of memory. Much has since been made of the ‘collected memory’ problem in management and organization studies (Rowlinson et al., 2010), especially as a justification against the use of interviews as data for studying collective memory as they are only able to capture concurrent sentiments instead of the process that characterizes *collective* memory (i.e., Anteby and Molnar, 2012). Against this trend, our chapter explores whether and how interviews can still be useful for the study of collective memory, and more specifically if the individualist problem may be exaggerated or be overcome when interviews are designed differently, for example when involving groups of interviewees or when allowing for free-flowing discussion.

The chapter is structured as follows. We begin by briefly recounting the relevant theories regarding the ontology and epistemology of collective memory and how it might be studied. Next, we move on to arguing why and how the collective interview is a useful approach to studying collective memory. Following that, we suggest a few guidelines for conducting interviews – both collective and individual – in the study of collective memory. Based on our analysis of relationality between the interviewer and the interviewees we suggest six practices that support using interviews to study collective memory: focusing on the present, asking questions that facilitate remembering relationally, using supporting analytical techniques, combining different types of data, serial interviewing, and encouraging collective conversations.

COLLECTIVE MEMORY STUDIES

There are various perspectives on collective memory in management and organization studies

(e.g., Foroughi et al., 2020). Most approaches understand collective memory as an ongoing cultural process by which the past is represented and commemorated socially. Collective memory has important social functions in relation to a group's identity, its visions, or its assessment of its current situation. Although collective memory is related to, and sometimes conflated with the study (organizational) history the examination of collective memory differs from studies of history. The most pronounced difference is that studies of collective memory do not strive for an objective account of what happened. Instead, of importance are the social influences that unfold in the process of joint remembering (Rowlinson et al., 2010). Collective memory is a cultural process that, although only a part of individuals' and groups' culture, relates to the past (Foster et al., 2011) and is carried forward into the present, and it is therefore subject to continuous re-evaluation and change.

Decker, Hassard and Rowlinson (2020), for example, illustrate how history and memory differ, but rather than seeing both as incommensurate as a consequence, they suggest that reflexive engagement with history written in verbal images and discourse (*historiography*) can bridge both domains in the pursuit of organizational theory generation. This involves recognition of the intellectual origins of historical concepts. Engaging with the history of history, so to speak, generates a hermeneutic loop between objectivity and subjectivity, giving voice to both historical facts as written (*'graphie'*), as well as their social production and continued reproduction.

Studying collective memory

Decker et al. (2020) also suggest that historical as well as memory studies fall into two categories, respectively. We are particularly interested in the latter couplet they suggest, which comprise: 1) *retrospective organizational history*, i.e., research that reconstructs the past

principally from retrospective accounts, such as oral history, and 2) *retrospective organizational memory*, which often draws on ethnography and interviews to explore the role of memory in the present. These two approaches to the past will help inform our discussion as to how interviews, particularly the collective interview, can be employed to understand the working of collective memory.

Fine & Beim (2007), for example, note the difficulty with *retrospective organizational history*, in particular relating to the assessment of long-past, or long-evolving collective memories. Methodologically, they rely on sources of data that reflect public opinion, such as newspaper articles, to assess such collective memories while acknowledging the imperfection of such proxies (see also Fine, 2012). While important to understand these often broad and culturally significant events and understandings, the limitations of reproducing the past from these two perspectives are two-fold. First, a retrospective organizational history is an aggregation of curated sources. Archives and newspapers, although invaluable to accessing the past, are not neutral. And, unless there is a deliberate attempt to further one's historical consciousness (Tennent, Gillett and Foster, 2020), these events can be sedimented and canonized. Second, *retrospective organizational memory*, although encouraging interviews as a vehicle to study the past, assumes that interviews are the domain of the manager and are collected for instrumental purposes and not as a way to understand the social processes of the past.

Thus, individual memories can and do differ; yet, what matters from a collective memory perspective, is how community members share their common past with one another, and not necessarily the canonical view of the past or how it is and can be used. The concept of culture involves aspects of knowledge, schemas, routines or beliefs used to 'interpret experience and generate social behavior' (Spradley, 1979: 5). Spradley (1979) therefore implies that, as

collective memory is embedded in cultural processes it can be studied through in the context of ethnographic interviews if these manage to uncover meanings and interpretations of different mnemonic communities.

Here, Olick (1999) has also commented about the possible difficulty of empirically studying long-past collective memory. His primary concern is with attempting to study any notion of collective memory through surveys. In-depth interviews, however, were not of much concern to Olick as there is only a single mention about interviews in a footnote. Olick highlights how “[h]istorians Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen...also use survey research as well as depth interviewing to produce an aggregate picture of what I am calling American “collected” memory.” (Olick, 1999: 338). Olick does not provide significant commentary on the use of interviews for studying collective memory.

Despite the indication that collective memory can be studied through interview(s), the hesitation to employ this method is focused on the content of the interview and not the process or relations that occur when interviewing. The primary critique is that the interview does not unlock an accurate or collective understanding of the past. In contrast, our position is that the use of interviews to study collective memory can similarly resemble empirically grounded studies of celebrations (Zerubavel, 1982), commemorations (Spillman, 1998), or the curation of monuments and museums (Nora, 1989). That is, understanding the processes of how collective memory develops from recollections of the past is the ultimate goal and not just understanding what has been said by the interviewee.

RECONSIDERING THE COLLECTION-COLLECTIVE DISTINCTION

In considering the methodological implications of Olick's (1999) influential distinction, it is worth pausing for a moment to ask whether the distinction itself is as clear as it seems; whether it veils other aspects of memory; and whether the methodological implications follow as naturally as it is often assumed. Some organization studies scholars have seemingly made the interpretation that Olick's distinction, (as well a footnote in his book on individualism specifically), implies in-depth interviews are an entirely flawed approach to studying collective memory. Using this argument, Rowlinson and colleagues (2010) argue for the study of museums as a way to avoid the collected memory problem, while Anteby and Molnar (2012) use the same claim to justify their study of corporate archives as a way to capture the collective memory of the organization as it has unfolded over time.

In terms of Olick's (1999) collected-collective distinction, the argument was specifically that there is an ontological mismatch between methodological individualism and collective memory. Olick's collective/collected distinction is therefore animated by a concern for a static form of knowledge which resides in individuals' memories, and which is merely recollected – versus a more performative form of 'memory', the memory work (Foster et al., 2020, Coraiola et al., 2022) which is not merely an act of recounting what happened, but which is shaped in the moment of recollecting. 'Collective' therefore indicates the double influence of static memory and social intermediation of memory which is now performed or produced rather than merely recounted.

This distinction is helpful in acknowledging the influence of social elements in the production of continually changing accounts of the 'past'. Yet, despite the utility of the distinction between collected and collective memory, it can also be questioned in at least two key regards. The first is that even the most solitary individual cannot remember in solitude as there

would be no social framework for memory where “our individual thought places itself...and participates in this memory” (Halbwachs, 2001: 38). This is not just a matter of skepticism about the (un-) trustworthiness of someone’s memory, but the more basic problem that it is impossible to know whether a recollection is wrong because there is no outside referent by which correctness itself can be judged. This is to say that language is not merely representative of things but is, itself, subject to interpretations and in need of establishing meaning which is necessarily a social process – otherwise anything (however changing) remembered would be remembered as ‘correct’. Purely private memory is therefore not a question of ‘each person possess[ing] [their] own exemplar [of a recollection], but that nobody knows whether people also have *this* or something else’ (Wittgenstein, 1958: §272). The establishment of meaning -even of something seemingly private - is therefore subject to social, shared backgrounds or frames.

A second, and related, limitation of Olick’s distinction refers to the ‘content’ of memory itself. Remembering described here appears to liken memory to things which can be transported across time and space without altering their appearance or nature. It is a conception that maintains the idea of the content of memory as constituted of more-or-less discrete parts; “objects of attention appear as bounded entities which exist against a background whose main purpose seems to conceal itself from conscious viewing.” (Cooper, 2005: 1689). The problem is therefore not only the potential malleability of instances of memory in and through the process of remembering (a process more like a reproduction), but also that instances of memory seem to be disentangled from their surroundings, therefore containing meaning and significance that is not contextualized because they are ripped out of their situationally-specific situations.

Yet, constructivist and phenomenological accounts, in particular, have posited that shared backgrounds are essential to meaning making, establishing not just *which* elements are related

but *how* they relate. Anything that ‘is’, a person, organization, a physical building or a memory is only so against a background of what it ‘is not’: “*You are you because you are not me. Today is today because it is not yesterday or tomorrow*” (Cooper, 2005, 1691, original italics). This means that all the objects of the world (people, days, memories) are only identifiable by virtue of being different from what they are not. It also means that what ‘is’ – what stands out for perception and understanding – is only ever an infinitesimally small number of noticeable aspects vis-à-vis the infinite potential of the negative, absent or latent, which provides their necessary (and necessarily hidden) other. This means that remembering is dependent on not just what is being remembered, but also what is not and the context where the memories occur.

Cooper refers to this as a pre-objective space, which “cannot be objectified or grasped as an object of thought. And yet it is the source or reserve of all our ideas, objects and forms; it is like an infinite womb which can receive and generate the multiple seeds of human agency as well as accommodating their complex developments and perpetual movement (Cooper, 2005, 1692). Neither collective nor collected explanations of memory pay heed to this latent, backgrounded in-betweenness which first gives rise for the meaning (i.e. the connection of sensations and signs) to be formed. Sitting outside Olick’s (1999) distinction are therefore relational approaches to collective memory recalibrates how collective memory can be investigated.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews are a staple in the management scholar’s toolbox. As their name suggests, interviews are a coming together of views. These are typically in form of two or more individuals communicating vocally or in writing, in person or at a distance, done on a specific site or whilst moving, frequently recorded and transcribed, and often being combined with other

modalities of research. Even in a qualitative and open form, interviews are often a time-efficient way of gathering data quickly and they are typically non-invasive, requiring little resource or negotiation for access. Interviews also allow research subjects voice. In making the research process apparent (the ‘interview’ situation) research subjects may allow interviewees to prepare themselves, as well as guard against, explain or defend their reasoning.

Despite their ubiquity and utility there are, still, criticisms around the use of interviews. These critiques (e.g., Silverman, 2015) range from the inherently selective and staged nature, the priority, typically, of the spoken word, the artificial nature of the mode of inquiry over observations of organizational practice, bodily, spatial, audial and other non-verbal aspects, and the concern for peripheral and novel insights which may not surface especially in scripted interviews which may be guided and influenced by the researchers’ preconceptions. Further, there are wider concerns about voice, for example, when organizations nominate interviewees versus a researcher encountering employees freely and being able to build rapport, especially as part of more longitudinal research designs.

Various types of interview methods have been commonly applied in exploring memory in organizations (e.g. Aeon & Lamertz, 2019; Foroughi, 2020; Foroughi & Al-Amoudi, 2019; Mahalingam et al., 2019; Petani & Mengis, 2016; Sierra-Arévalo, 2019). In these studies, interviews have been used as ways to collect data for oral histories or to add to a deep ethnographic understanding of a particular historical period. Yet, as noted above, interviews are usually associated with the collection of collected memory. That is, these interviews are thought to be only useful for the collection of memories of individuals at a particular point in time.

However, interviews are not just methods of extracting data, but themselves “complex cultural, social and psychological products, which construct a particular version of those

experiences” (Moisander, Valtonen & Hirsto, 2009: 337). In other words, individuals, when interviewed, draw on the cultural and social currents around them to inform (as they are informed by) collective memory. This makes for a curious conundrum for management researchers studying the past. The researcher may be after a particular constellation of collective memory at some historical point in time. To do so they ask interviewees questions and, in response, they get interview answers which are the products of more recent and current processes of collective memory, namely those which shape the ways in which interviewees remember in the present.

The relational aspect of the interview and memory are also discounted when interviews are seen only as uncovering collected memory. Collective remembering occurs not only in a specific context, but also within a specific culturally bounded group. As mentioned previously, it is not possible to remember the collective as if outside the collective. There is always a need to formulate memories in relation to the world where the memories occurred or are recollected. Moreover, it is not possible to remember the group without reference to the relationship that the remembering individual has to the group. Collective memory accessed through interviews, is, therefore, always a product of the person’s connection to that which is “not”. In other words, the memories remembered through interviews are always part of “social frameworks for memory” (Halbwachs, 2001: 38).

Moreover, the individual’s memory of the group is also important because of the nature of the relationship between interviewer and interviewee (e.g. Alvesson, 2003). A qualitative interview, for the basis of our argument, is a site for the construction of knowledge (Kvale, 2012). It is at this site of knowledge where two or more people have a conversation about an agreed upon topic. Throughout this conversation the interviewer will address key issues of

interest with the hopes of eliciting insightful and meaningful answers from the interviewee. As the interviewer makes these inquiries about the past and what is remembered, they are creating a rapport with the interviewee. This relationship helps direct and develop the process such that what is remembered is imbued with a context and is guided through the relationship developed by the interviewee and interviewer.

This understanding of the utility of interviews is limited because of the epistemological assumptions that are usually ascribed to interviewing and the data that is collected. The primary, and often false, assumption is that interviews are only useful at mining individual memory. This assumption undermines the key assumption of collective memory that memory is time bound and contextual (Halbwachs, 2001). Although individual memories do reside within the person, collective memory is contextualized not just within the period where these individual memories occurred, but also within the collective, contemporary, context in which they are being recalled and recollected. The pre-objective condition of each interview configures what is remembered and recollected.

STUDYING COLLECTIVE MEMORY THROUGH INTERVIEWS

We have established that interviews, especially collective, have significant utility for studying collective memory because this method allows researchers access and understand cultural processes that are necessary for studying collective memory. On one hand, conducting and drawing on interviews does not (necessarily) constitute methodological individualism. On the other hand, the relationality of collective memory, the collective nature of remembering, and the importance of context when remembering all indicate that collective memory is in fact present in interview situations, even when interviewing individuals. Below we suggest five practices to support the use of interviews in the study of collective memory: focusing on

collective memory in the present; using proper analytical techniques, combining different types of data, interviewing serially, and conducting collective interviews.

Focusing on the present

Archival research has been identified as the best available option for understanding how collective memory has evolved over time. We assert, instead, that interviewing has more utility for two reasons. The first is because it provides access to retrospective organizational memory that typically cannot be accessed through archives. The second is because interviews occur in the present and, thus, grant access to the collective memory of mnemonic communities in the present. Researchers who are interested in collective memory at the current moment can access these memories by focusing on individual and collective interviews. As such, devising an appropriate research design and corresponding research questions become key.

Ask questions that facilitate remembering relationally

To research collective memory using interviews requires the simple practice of asking the proper question(s). That is, the interviewer needs to ask interviewees questions pertaining to issues, events, processes, norms, and practices that are *shared* by members of the community. Questions about the interviewee's personal background can be a good practice to establish rapport and an open and conversational atmosphere. The bulk of the interview questions, nevertheless, should aim at uncovering the ways in which the interviewee relates to their community, its members and its past. For example, the researcher can ask questions to uncover how the interviewee thinks other members of the community relate to these shared issues. The researcher may also ask the interviewee for their view of the organization's founder of their workplace organization and how the interviewee thinks their colleagues might perceive the founder. Focusing on what is shared will facilitate the relational nature of remembering. The goal is to elicit, through the responses of

the interviewee, an explicit understanding of how the community constructs their perceptions of its past thus clarifying the discernible parts of the mnemonic framework they draw upon in their remembering.

It is worth mentioning that, as with any research process, it is useful to begin with familiarizing oneself with the research context. This could involve, for instance, using publicly available sources to research the focal organization. Doing so will help the researcher develop an understanding of the official history of the community in question. This will help the researcher identify pivotal events, important individuals, key premises, and other relevant issues that tend to have a bearing on collective memories.

Use supporting analytical techniques

The atomistic focus of the interview can be mitigated through diverse, analytical techniques, such as narrative analysis and thematic analysis. Narrative analysis – the examination of form, structure, and content of stories (Feldman et al., 2004) – has been noted for its usefulness in discerning meaning in texts and utterances (Rhodes & Brown, 2005). Narratives are considered crucial practices of memory. In fact, memory practices are considered by some to be narrative practices (Brockmeier, 2002). Assmann, for one, has noted how “narrative is articulated and dispersed through a culture’s countless discursive registers: from myth and fairy tales to literature, film, advertisement and everyday conversation” (Assmann, 1992, cited in Brockmeier, 2002, 27). Thus, Assmann highlights how collective memories are articulated through narratives, even when told by individuals. Similarly, Adorisio (2014) demonstrates how to access collective memory in organizations through interviewing their members and how narrative analysis can be deployed to make sense of the collective memories of bank employees about their workplace.

Another supporting technique is thematic analysis. This is a widely used, foundational method for qualitative analysis and is broadly used in connection with, for instance, narrative analysis, interview-based qualitative research, and the study of collective memory. It is commonly defined as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 80). The focus on patterns makes thematic analysis an effective method for identifying commonalities across interviews. Foroughi and Al-Amoudi (2020), for example, offer an example of combining thematic analysis with a form of narrative analysis in their study of collective forgetting in a charitable organization. From their analysis they identify important changes and narratives at the case organization. In so doing, they make sense of the broader collective memory processes at work in the organization without treating interviews, and the data they collected through this process, as an aggregation of collected memory.

In contemporary studies of organizations and management, thematic analysis typically requires extensive reporting of the coding process involved. One popular tool for this can be found in the so-called Gioia method (2013), which offers a step-by-step process for reporting the process of thematic analysis, based on informants’ views mostly generated through interviews. This method can be utilized in interview-based studies of collective memory as well.

Combine different types of data

Collective memory does not just reside in narratives (Brockmeier, 2002), but also in practices (Blagoev et al., 2018; Foroughi et al., 2020) and physical spaces (Cutcher et al., 2019; Decker, 2014; Sanfuentes & Acuña, 2014). A collective memory researcher can further their investigation beyond narratives by augmenting their study with other types of data or vice versa. For example, interviews can be a very useful complement to observations when studying how collective memories are carried in organizational practices because interviews grant more

detailed explanations, from the perspective of the members of the mnemonic community, regarding the observed practices. The collective memory researcher can, by observing the community, become sensitized to particular practices, rituals and turns of phrase that members of the community enact. In addition, the researcher may observe how their interviewees relate to the different people and objects they encounter. This may help unlock or identify previously unknown relationships and hierarchies in the community. These data may contain hints or insights of important issues about the community's past. Utilizing different types of data may thus enable the researcher to ask better questions in the interviews. In the same vein, conducting interviews *in situ* – as per the importance of the materiality of collective memory (Nora, 1989; Eisenman & Frenkel, 2021) – could generate important additional mnemonic insights.

Sanfuentes and Acuña (2014) provide an example of the value associated with augmenting interviews with other kinds of data. Their study of Chilean geriatric hospital undergoing a decades-long transformation helps explain how the past and the present combine to haunt the community within the physical premises. The backbone of the study is an eight-month, on-site ethnography. The authors also conducted interviews to gain understanding on how the organizational community related to the physical premises and the continuous changes in the past. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, for the authors to drill down on the meanings of the organization's and the physical site's past without the interviews. The interviews helped unlock and enhance the author's findings about collective memory and the impact this continues to have within the community.

Serial interviews

Interviews are, in our view, appropriate for studying collective memory in the present. Following from this logic, this also makes serial interviews suitable to study collective memory over time.

Serial interviews allow for the study of how perceptions of the mnemonic community change over time and how these communities construct narratives across different periods (Soulsby, 2020) thus making this approach very useful when the evolution of collective memory is the unit of analysis. Interviews also help develop deep understandings of a subject's life-history, their relationships with their communities and how these also change over time (Read, 2018). Serial interviewing is also a way to cultivate relationships between the researcher and the interviewees, enabling more open interview situations, which may yield richer, less scripted accounts. These are important outcomes for a reflexive qualitative researcher seeking to maximize their understanding of the research topic (Alvesson, 2003).

The serial interviews offer an excellent avenue for studying collective memory over time because they provide insight on the changing perceptions around studied phenomena and the potentially richer interview data. Opportunities can be found, for instance, where an organization is embroiled in a scandal, or in the middle of a significant change process. In these types of situations, perceptions about the past may change relatively rapidly as evaluations of the present evolve. When complemented with an analytical technique such as narrative analysis, the serial interview and studying collective memory may become a natural fit.

The drawback of serial interviews is that they tend to be quite work-intensive if there are many interviewees. For this reason, it may be necessary to limit the use of serial interviews to contexts with few participants. Examples of such contexts can be found in small to medium size organizations, regional offices, and organizational stakeholders of a limited size, among others. In larger organizations, or cases where the researcher needs to cover several contexts – such in studying the dynamics between several mnemonic communities (Foroughi et al., 2020) – interviewing groups may be a better option.

The collective conversation

The current approaches to interviews and collective memory research are limited and bounded by the idea that only collected memories can be obtained through the interview process. This position discounts the relational aspect of memory, the collective nature of remembering and the importance of context when remembering. As such, there have been missed opportunities to explore and investigate collective memory using interview data as the primary (and not secondary or support) data.

In particular, we advocate for further use of group interview and focus groups as two primary sources of data to investigate collective memory. These approaches have significant utility because the research design of both approaches can help enhance some of the core aspects of collective memory that have been dismissed because of the sense that interviews were not the appropriate tool for data collection.

For example, there is research that is emerging that demonstrates how group interviews can be used to explore and identify key aspects of a group's collective memory. Smith advocates for the use of group interview in his study of the post-war identities of women in the UK and suggests that "observing remembering in groups provides a means to investigate the capacity of individuals, in the small social groups they remember in, to engage critically with inherited ideologies. Thus, we can become more receptive to the creation of common accounts that draw on and build group solidarity as well oppositional accounts that challenge existing assumptions" (2007: 88). Similarly, Coupland, in her study of the collective memory of open pit miners from Blaenavon, Wales, demonstrated the usefulness of group interviews as a means to unpack the process of remembering and how this process contributes to the development of collective understanding of the past. Of note, however, is that it is important to understand that despite the

collective process of remembering that the miners did take different positions regarding the past. But, equally as important is the understanding that through the collective interview, there was evidence of negotiation and co-construction of the past through the interview. As such, notions of the past seemed more relational than what was once thought.

The collective interview opens new doors to the study of collective memory. Interviewing people with others present can lead to new memories being accessed and explored. This relational approach offers the potential for the iterative development of memory. That is, the collective frameworks of collective memory can, possibly, be further accessed and uncovered as the group co-constructs their memories of the past. Indeed, collective interviews such as focus groups are particularly suited to examine social interactions and processes of meaning-making (Morgan, 2012). When led by a skilled collective memory researcher, the group can build a rich texture of the past and explain how these memories are relevant to the group in the present. The result, is that the group interview offers unprecedented access to the collective memory of the mnemonic community in the present. Unlike previous research (e.g., Do et al, 2018) where the recollections of organizations were examined in silos, the group interview allows for the instantaneous access to a mnemonic community's memories.

CONCLUSION

In sum, this chapter outlines the potential for further discussions about (group) interviews and the potential possibility of examining the process of collective remembering. Current discussions tend to focus on the individual, atomized version of memory that is extracted from interview. In contrast we have identified reasons why interviews, especially group interviews, have the potential to further develop our understanding of processes of collective remembering. There are two specific examples that are particularly salient. First, the collective interview can be used to

identify sites where the past is remembered differently by different groups. This means that this method can be employed to understand not just how different people remember differ pasts, but how different groups remember the past. The value in this approach is that it might be possible to see why different groups see the past differently, such as ideology, organizational history, or circumstance. Second, another value of this approach is to see, in real time, how groups remember. The memories of past are not set and are an on-going accomplishments. There are few discussions about how groups remember and how specific memories become privileged over others. The collective interview offers an opportunity for management researchers to see the factors that contribute to one memory being accepted and remembered over other.

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The authors study how collective memory changes in the process of organizational change, drawing on both interview and ethnographic data. They find that organizational collective memories lose their practical foundations and the social relations that underpin them are reorganized. The study is a first-rate example of using the interview method to generate understanding of collective memories within and of an organization at a specific point of time. As such, this article is closely related to several main themes in our book chapter, including how to select interview questions to study collective memory, how to combine interviews with other types of qualitative data, and how understanding of collective memory can be generated using interviews.

Morgan, David L. (2012). Focus groups and social interaction. In Jaber F. Gubrium, James A. Holstein, Amir B. Marvasti, & Karyn D. McKinney, *The Sage handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (pp. 161–176). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Morgan (2012) examines interactions in focus groups based on symbolic interactionism, in close relation to the relational aspects of collective memory we discuss in our chapter. The author examines research design decisions that will generate focus group interactions geared towards the goal of the research project, echoing some of the guidelines we provide in our chapter. These decisions include focus group composition, interview questions, moderation style, as well as the role of the researcher/facilitator.

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