



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

**Psychology 377 – Autobiographical Memory & Reminiscence
Fall Term 2005**

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Blackboard address: <http://blackboard.davidson.edu>

Completed Class Projects at:

<http://www.davidson.edu/academic/psychology/multhaupsite/davrempro/davrempro.htm>

Class meetings: TTh 2:30-3:45, Watson 310 (see reading list RE meetings in the LRC)

Materials:

Delany, S. L., & Delany, A. E. (with Hearth, A. H.) (1993). *Having our say: The Delany sisters' first 100 years*. New York: Dell.

Baker, R. (1982). *Growing up*. New York: Signet.

Kimmel, H. (2001). *A girl named Zippy*. New York: Doubleday.

Thomas, A. (2000). *Safekeeping: Some true stories from a life*. New York: Anchor.

& readings on reserve in Little Library

Note: Mr. Koo will provide Dreamweaver instruction. If you are a person who prefers to have reference books for computer work, we recommend the following book that you will have to get online or from an area bookstore (it is NOT stocked in the College bookstore). The book is not, however, required for the course.

Evans, J. J. (2004). *Macromedia studio MX 2004 bible*. Indianapolis, IN: Wiley.

- Goals:**
- To explore what is known about how people remember their personal past
 - To develop skills in developing web pages
 - To further develop your written and oral communications skills
 - To enjoy ourselves as we study autobiographical memory & reminiscence

Course Requirements:

- Papers & partner/group presentation
 - autobiographical memory
 - partner/group presentation group score 5 points
 - partner/group presentation individual score 5 points
 - individual's paper on presentation topic 10 points
 - reminiscence paper 10 points
- Web-page
 - exercises to prepare for web page development 10 points

- journal reflections on older adult partner meetings 5 points
- older adult partner's evaluation of his/her experience 5 points
- final web page 20 points
- Discussion
 - written responses to discussion questions 10 points
 - participation (graded by your classmates) 10 points
 - discussion leading (pass/fail) 10 points

Papers & partner/group presentation:

Presentation: In the **autobiographical memory** section students will work together to present a sample of the literature in an area of autobiographical memory that we will not otherwise explore together (e.g., gender differences, the influence of language & culture [we touch on this 10/4 but that's about it], flashbulb memories, false memories). In groups of 2 or 3, students will lecture on material and lead any relevant discussion. Groups may choose to use PowerPoint to present information, to have the class read brief excerpts from articles and respond by writing a few sentences that are then used as a basis of discussion, to combine these and/or other presentation techniques...let your imagination be your limit. **Your job** is to make the material come alive for the class. You're welcome to talk over your ideas with Dr. Multhaupt at any time. As the groups prepare, each student should keep a *brief* log about who did what for the presentation. Students will be graded with a **partner/group presentation score** based on the final presentation, and on an **individual score** based on the logs.

Individual student paper on autobiographical memory: Each student will write his or her own paper on the topic covered in the presentation. The paper should involve more reflection than the presentation will likely allow. Students should select a minimum of 4 journal articles for their paper. No more than 1 of the journal articles can be a **review paper** (authors summarize the research in a certain area, but do not provide their own new data), the others should be **empirical papers** (i.e., the authors report their own research with sections describing the motivation for the research, participants, methods, results, and a discussion of the findings) **from peer-reviewed journals** (if you get the journal from Little Library, you should be fine; see me with any questions). Critique the methods used in those studies, and discuss ideas about what the "holes" are in the literature that you read. **You will likely have read more than four articles to select the best ones for your presentation and may not have room for a detailed discussion of all of them in the presentation so some of those may be discussed in this paper.** The paper should be **5-7 pages**, double-spaced, printed on one side rather than on both sides of each piece of paper, and have 1-inch margins; note that the reference page is not included in the page requirement. Papers are DUE 11/4 by 5pm.

Groups will be put together based on student interest no later than 9/2. **Please use the first few weeks of class when your Thurs prep time is minimal to get going on this project!**

Reminiscence paper: The reminiscence paper will be a **5-7 page** paper that reflects on your older adult partner's autobiographical experiences, your own autobiographical experiences,

and relation of these to some of the readings we've done this semester. This will be described in more detail later in the semester. It will be posted under the Assignments button on Blackboard no later than 5pm on 11/22. Papers are DUE no later than **12/15** by 12:15pm (end of finals).

Web-page assignments: In order to ensure that each student has the basic skills required to develop a web page, we will have a tutorial with Mr. Koo. Students will complete two review **exercises** for evaluation (one due 9/15 & the other 9/22). These are open book exercises (you can use any notes you take from Mr. Koo's presentation, any handouts he may offer, and any reference books you find), but students may *not* ask for technical assistance to complete them (as long as your questions are answered as you go through the tutorial Mr. Koo provides, you should have no trouble with the review exercises). In addition, we will have a workshop in class on 8/25 on creating sound and picture files that you can include on your web pages. *Students will be expected to use the skills covered in their **final web pages**.* Students with extensive web page development experience will be encouraged to further their skills, but the grading will be based on the skills covered in the workshops and exercises. The web site will convey an older adult's autobiographical experiences that were shared in response to your interview questions (there will be a workshop on interview questions in class on 9/1). After each meeting with their older adult partner, students will **reflect** in a **journal**, including their ideas about how to make the material from the interview come alive on the web. The journal will be turned in with the web skeleton, web draft, and after the 6th interview with the older adult partner (see course schedule). After the web project is complete, Dr. Multhaup will contact each **older adult partner** for their **evaluation** of their experience. *Older adult partners will also have the final say in how public the web pages are* (we will discuss this in detail in class). As long as students are appropriately respectful of their partners, they will likely receive full credit. Specific requirements for the journal and procedures that **MUST** be used during the interview will be provided in handouts at the appropriate times. See the course schedule for web **due dates** (we may do some revising as the semester progresses).

Discussions: Prior to class meetings you should have read the assigned material. Some days there will be no assigned material because we will be working on Dreamweaver. On days when there are discussion questions, you are welcome to add questions and/or comments on other aspects of the material that you would also like to discuss (always subject to the editing of the discussion leader). The questions that I provide are meant to start your thinking—use them as a springboard! The goal of the discussion questions is to get you thinking critically about the material and the **written responses** will help the discussion leader to organize the class meeting. You will turn in your written responses to the discussion leader to me (discussion leader do this too) **AND** the discussion leaders by 5pm on the day preceding the discussion. *These may be*

turned in by email. This means that if your email address is not “first two letters of your first name and your last name@davidson.edu”, you need to contact Dr. Multhaup ASAP with an email message from your account. The discussion leader will collate responses and guide discussion. **Participation** will be graded by your classmates 3 times during the semester. **Discussion leading** will be graded pass/fail and you can talk with Dr. Multhaup who will help you as needed in your preparation and in class. You will be assigned days to lead discussion, but you may make adjustments by switching with other students AND by emailing Dr. Multhaup & the class ASAP to ensure that everyone knows where to send discussion questions on which day. On days when we divide into groups and on several other days Dr. Multhaup will lead discussion.

Speak up! This is a seminar so your participation is vital for us all to have a good learning experience. There will be individual differences in your experience with the memory literature. Raise your questions as we go! You are NOT expected to have all of the answers by the time we start the discussion—if you did, what would be the point of having the discussion? You are expected to have the material read and to be ready to talk about it with your classmates.

Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty of any form will not be tolerated. As always, you are expected to follow the Honor Code. *Students are encouraged* to discuss the course material before they write their responses to discussion questions—have fun with this very interesting material! Written material must be **pledged** as being your own work (an email sent to me will constitute your pledge for the discussion question assignments).

Grading: Grades will be based on the percentage of points that you accumulate over the course. The anticipated grades are 90 points and above is *A* range; 80-89 points is *B* range, etc. Thus 82 points may be a *B-* rather than a *B*, for example. By the same token, 88 points may be a *B+* rather than a *B*.

Schedule of Topics

(Abio = Autobiographical Memory)

(OAP = older adult partner)

Getting Started

8/23: Welcome/Class Abio

8/25: Introduction to Dreamweaver

The Phenomenon

8/30: Centenarian Abio

9/1: Interview Prep & telling stories on web

OAP: introduction

9/6: Middle-aged Abio

9/8: making audio/visual files for web pages

OAP: 1st meeting

9/13: *Discuss 1st OAP meeting*

9/15: *Review 1 due & scan/edit images, copyright*

OAP: 2nd meeting

9/20: Young Adult Abio

9/22: *Review 2 due & in-class work on web*

web skeleton by 9/23

9/27: Children's Abio

Lifespan Availability & Development of Autobiographical Memory

Please schedule an individual meeting w/ Mr. Koo for 10/12, 10/13, or 10/14

9/29: Availability over Lifespan

OAP: 3rd meeting

10/4: Childhood Amnesia

10/6: "Getting a life"

OAP: 4th meeting

10/11: **FALL BREAK—NO CLASS** **10/13:** **no class: individual meetings (see above)**

web draft by 10/14

How is Autobiography Represented in Memory?

10/18: Organization of Abio

10/20: Organization of Abio II: Self-study

OAP: 5th meeting

10/25: Point of view in Abio

10/27: Abio model

OAP: 6th meeting

11/1: Presentations (paper due 11/4)

11/3: Presentations (paper due 11/4)

continued web work

11/8: Impaired/Altered Abio

11/10: **PSYCHONOMICS—NO CLASS**

continued web work

Functions of Autobiographical Memory/Reminiscence

11/15: Definitions & Measurement

11/17: Individual Differences

show web to OAP*

11/22: Variety of functions

11/24: **THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS**

any needed web fixes

11/29: Variety of functions II

Wrapping Up

12/1: Editing Your Memories?

any needed web fixes

12/6: Life Stories & final wrap-up

Webs due 12/5

Reminiscence paper due by the end of finals (12/15)

*if you need to borrow a laptop to show your OAP the web pages, see KM (if you have a browser like Internet Explorer on your laptop, you can show the files you made with Dreamweaver)

Psy 377 (Fall 2005) Reading List & Discussion Questions

8/23: Welcome & discussing college student (your) autobiographical memories

8/25: meet in the Language Resource Center (LRC) in Chambers South Basement to get started with skills needed to record material for web pages

The Phenomenon

Before we start to explore what psychologists have researched and written about autobiographical memory, let's get some common ground on several sets of autobiographical memories. We'll begin with autobiographical memories of people who have progressed relatively far in their life spans to be more comparable to the people you will soon interview. We'll then move on to expand our exposure to young adult and children's autobiographical memories. As we do this we'll also be working on your audio/visual equipment and Dreamweaver skills so that you'll be ready to start incorporating those skills as you translate your interviews into web pages.

8/30: Autobiographical memories of centenarians

Reading

Delany, S. L., & Delany, A. E. (with Hearth, A. H.) (1993). *Having our say: The Delany sisters' first 100 years*. New York: Dell.

Questions:

1. What topics were covered that were of particular interest to you? If you could add ask Sadie an additional question, what would it be? If you could ask Bessie an additional question, what would it be?
2. First, note a passage from the book that you think would be easy to highlight on a web page. Note the page # and briefly describe how you might present the information. Second, note a passage from the book that you think would be hard to highlight on a web page. Note the page # and briefly describe why you think it would not be the best choice for a web page.
3. Does autobiographical memory include family history (e.g., the beginning of this book)? Explain your answer. How do you define *autobiographical memory*?

9/1: Discussing interviews with older adult partners & telling stories on the web

Dr. Multhaupt will discuss ground rules and share interview questions. This is a mandatory meeting to prepare you to work with your older adult partner.

Questions

1. What are you looking forward to as you interview your older adult partner? What concerns do you have (if any)?
2. Find two examples of web sites that you think convey information very well. List the web address and state which aspects of the web design you like and how you can use those ideas to develop your own web pages.

9/6: Autobiographical memories of a middle-aged adult

Reading

Baker, R. (1982). *Growing up*. New York: Signet.

Questions

1. Autobiographical memories may not be accurate. For example, Baker may attribute some comments to his mother when his Aunt Pat was actually the person who made those comments,

or he may have the order of events wrong. From an evolutionary point of view, why might the autobiographical memory system have evolved with such openness to errors?

2. What are your thoughts about how autobiographical memory is organized? For example, do you think it is largely organized by temporal order? Are there any other ways it seems to be organized? Note passages from Baker's book (with page numbers) that support your position. Give one example of how you might test your idea. I'm not looking for a "right answer." I'm challenging you to think about what you have observed and make some hypotheses about what cognitive structure may be behind the behavior that you've observed.

9/8: meet in the LRC to work with Dreamweaver

Mr. Koo will give us an introduction to working with Dreamweaver.

9/13: Talking over the first meeting with your older adult partner

Give Dr. Multhaup a copy of your notes by 5 pm on 9/12 from your first meeting with your older adult partner, along with any concerns or questions that you have.

*Be prepared to discuss what went well (or not so well).

We will also be discussing some recorded interviews that Dr. Multhaup will bring to class.

9/15: meet in the LRC (Chambers South Basement) to further our scanning & editing skills

You must have completed Review 1 by 2:30pm.

Mr. Koo will talk about scanning & editing images so you can use those skills to develop your web pages. We will also be discussing copyright issues—critical information for building your web pages!

9/20: Autobiographical memories of a young adult

Reading

Kimmel, H. (2001). *A girl named Zippy*. New York: Doubleday.

Questions

1. What is different about the memories reported by Kimmel, Baker, and the Delanys? What do you think might account for those differences?

2. What is similar about the memories reported by Kimmel, Baker, the Delanys, and our seminar group on the first day of class? What patterns do you think are important clues about how autobiographical memory is organized, how it works, and/or the role of reminiscence in our lives?

9/22: meet in the LRC to work on web skills

You must have completed Review 2 by 2:30pm.

This will be an opportunity to improve your web skills & ask questions that have arisen for you. Remember your WEB SKELETON is due 9/23.

9/27: Autobiographical memories of kids

Readings

Selections from Gac-Artigas, A. (2000). *Yo, Alejandro: The story of a young Latino boy struggling through life*. New Jersey: Ediciones Nuevo Espacio.

Peterson, C., & Rideout, R. (1998). Memory for medical emergencies experienced by 1- and 2-year-olds. *Developmental Psychology*, 34, 1059-1072.

Hudson, J. A., & Fivush, R. (1991). As time goes by: Sixth graders remember a kindergarten experience. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 5, 347-360.

Questions

1. Report the first memory that you can remember.

2. Does the experience of remembering one's life seem different for kids than it does for you as a young adult? Explain your answer.
3. Briefly state one strength and one weakness of EACH of the two research studies.

Lifespan Availability & Development of Autobiographical Memory

Now that you've had a taste of autobiographical memory experiences from people of different ages, we'll look at several questions that cognitive and developmental psychologists have explored. Although we have experiences every day of our lives, are the events that we remember recalled equally from all age periods? Why don't we remember experiences from our very early lives? We will conclude this section by discussing what 'true autobiographical memory' is and how that influences when we would say that it develops.

9/29: Availability of autobiographical memories over the lifespan

Readings

Group A (decided 8/30) read Jansari, A., & Parkin, A. J. (1996). Things that go bump in your life: Explaining the reminiscence bump in autobiographical memory. *Psychology and Aging, 11*, 85-91.

Group B (decided 8/30) read Fitzgerald, J. M. (1996). The distribution of self-narrative memories in younger and older adults: Elaborating the self-narrative hypothesis. *Aging, Neuropsychology, and Cognition, 3*, 229-236.

ALL read Rubin, D. C., & Schulkind, M. D. (1997). Distribution of important and word-cued autobiographical memories in 20-, 35-, and 70-year-old adults. *Psychology and Aging, 12*, 524-535.

Questions

1. Which of Rubin and Schulkind's seven hypotheses is your group's (A or B) article exploring? BRIEFLY state why the data from your article fit or do not fit with Rubin and Schulkind's conclusion about that hypothesis.

2. Based on what you've read, BRIEFLY state which of the hypotheses regarding "the bump" put forth by Rubin and Schulkind (1997) is most viable.

*Be prepared to describe the evidence for the hypothesis in your group's reading to the other group. This will be a group effort so feel free to meet ahead of time to talk it over.

10/4: Childhood Amnesia

Readings

ALL Multhaup, K. S., Johnson, M. D., & Tetirick, J. C. (2005). The wane of childhood amnesia for autobiographical and public event memories. *Memory, 13*, 161-173.

Group X (decided 8/30)

Harpaz-Rotem, I., & Hirst, W. (2005). The earliest memory in individuals raised in either traditional and reformed kibbutz or outside the kibbutz. *Memory, 13*, 51-62.

Simcock, G., & Hayne, H. (2002). Breaking the barrier? Children fail to translate their preverbal memories into language. *Psychological Science, 13*, 225-231.

Group Y (decided 8/30)

Howe, M. L., & Courage, M. L. (1997). The emergence and early development of autobiographical memory. *Psychological Review, 104*, 499-525. ****READ ONLY pp. 505 (STARTING with the bottom second column section "The Emergence of the Cognitive Self...") – 510 (STOP in first column BEFORE the section on "The Accumulation...")****

MacDonald, S., Uesiliana, K., & Hayne, H. (2000). Cross-cultural and gender differences in childhood amnesia. *Memory*, 8, 365-376.

Question

BRIEFLY answer ALL of the following questions. Because you will have read more about some aspects of questions 2 and 3 than others, you will have to do some speculating—don't worry about that because speculations are often good jumping-off points for discussion.

1. To what extent does the study of the offset of childhood amnesia with adult participants lead us to similar or different conclusions than the study of the offset of childhood amnesia with child participants? Refer to specific findings from the readings in your answer.

2. Is the only effect of culture on the offset of childhood amnesia the degree to which parents interact with their kids or is there something more to the effect of culture on the onset of autobiographical memory?

3. Simcock and Hayne (2002) conclude, “the inability to translate early, preverbal experiences into language prevents these experiences from becoming a part of autobiographical memory...language development may be the rate-limiting step in the offset of childhood amnesia” (p.230). Howe and Courage (1997) state, “just as comprehension precedes production in language development in general, comprehension...of the sense of self...precedes its production in spoken language about the self by several months” (p.509). Do you think autobiographical memory is possible before one “has” language?

*Be prepared to describe the explanations for childhood amnesia in your group's readings and to explain the empirical article(s) that your group read to the other group. This will be a group effort so feel free to meet ahead of time to talk it over.

10/6: “Getting a life”

Reading

Habermas, T., & Bluck, S. (2000). Getting a life: The emergence of the life story in adolescence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 748-769.

Questions

1. Briefly state at least one strength of the Habermas and Bluck view (e.g., compelling empirical evidence). Briefly state what you see as their weakest point. For both, be specific and cite the relevant page numbers.

2. In an article that you did NOT read for class (Bluck & Habermas, 2000, The life story schema, *Motivation & Emotion*, 24, 121-147), the authors stated, “We do, however, think that the use of the term *autobiographical* in *autobiographical memory* should be given more weightage. We adopt a more literal view of [autobiographical memory] by using the life story...it focuses on personal memories that are highly meaningful to the individual...and thus truly autobiographical, and it strings them together such that events are considered as part of the entire life.” Briefly respond with your own view of whether only personal memories that are highly meaningful to the individual are ‘truly autobiographical.’ Incorporate your belief about when you believe autobiographical memory and/or a life story is first possible (e.g., around age 2 or in adolescence). [I realize we touched on this issue when we discussed the Delany sisters' book, but let's revisit the issue now that you have read more about autobiographical memory.]

10/11: FALL BREAK – ENJOY!

10/13: Individual meetings with Mr. Koo must be scheduled 10/12, 10/13, or 10/14 so we will *not* meet as a group on 10/13. Remember your WEB DRAFT is due 10/14.

How is Autobiography Represented in Memory?

Cognitive psychologists have long struggled with questions about how information is represented in memory. We will sample a few of these ideas in the next couple meetings. We will then examine a current theory of how autobiographical memory is represented and consider whether that theory can account for various autobiographical memory impairments/alterations. Toward the end of this section you will make your presentations.

10/18: Organization of autobiographical memory

Readings

Group Red (decided 8/30) read Berntsen, D., & Rubin, D. C. (2004). Cultural life scripts structure recall from autobiographical memory. *Memory & Cognition*, 32, 427-442.

Group Black (decided 8/30) read Barclay, C. R., & Wellman, H. M. (1986). Accuracies and inaccuracies in autobiographical memories. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 25, 93-103.

ALL read Brown, N. R., & Schopflocher, D. (1998). Event clusters: An organization of personal events in autobiographical memory. *Psychological Science*, 9, 470-475.

Question

Briefly comment on how you see Brown and Schopflocher's (1998) ideas about how autobiographical memory is organized as similar or different from your group's reading suggests.

*Be prepared to describe the main findings and arguments in your group's reading to the other group. This will be a group effort so feel free to meet ahead of time to talk it over.

10/20: Organization of autobiographical memory II: Self-study

Readings

Group 1 (decided 8/30) read Linton, M. (1975). Memory for real-world events. In D. A. Norman, & D. E. Rumelhart (Eds.), *Explorations in cognition* (pp. 376-404). San Francisco: Freeman.

Group 2 (decided 8/30) read Wagenaar, W. A. (1986). My memory: A study of autobiographical memory over six years. *Cognitive Psychology*, 18, 225-252.

Question

List what you believe are the main points about autobiographical memory that the author makes. Briefly state your thoughts about the method of self-study (e.g., Is it useful for the field at all? If there are limits to its usefulness, note the limits).

*Be prepared to describe the highlights of the paper you read to the other group. This will be a group effort so feel free to meet ahead of time to talk it over.

10/25: Point of view in autobiographical memory

Readings

Nigro, G., & Neisser, U. (1983). Point of view in personal memories. *Cognitive Psychology*, 15, 467-482.

Thomas, A. (2000). *Safekeeping: Some true stories from a life*. New York: Anchor.

Libby, L. K., & Eibach, R. P. (2002). Looking back in time: Self-concept change affects visual perspective in autobiographical memory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 167-179.

Questions

1. Indicate whether or not you experience observer and/or field of view memories, as defined by Nigro and Neisser (1983). (You don't have to share the memories themselves, but you are welcome to do so if you wish.) Locate at least one example of each type of memory in Thomas' book and record the page #s for each.

2. What aspect of the Libby and Eibach data is the most interesting to you and why? Refer to specific pages numbers and/or Tables/Figures to support your point.

*Be prepared to talk about how this autobiography differed from the others and whether you think it is more or less representative of how autobiography is organized in our memories.

10/27: A model of autobiographical memory**Reading**

Conway, M. A., & Pleydell-Pearce, C. W. (2000). The construction of autobiographical memories in the self-memory system. *Psychological Review*, 107, 261-288.

Question

Type out one quote from each of the 5 parts that you think is interesting and worthy of further discussion. You may pick a quote for a variety of reasons (e.g., you disagree with it, you think it's the purest of truths, you have no idea what they are saying and would like to talk about it to figure it out, etc.) so be sure to state the reason you picked each quote (1-2 sentences is fine).

11/1: Student presentation topic(s): _____

11/3: Student presentation topic(s): _____

11/8: Impaired/Altered autobiographical memory**Readings**

Group C (decided 8/30) read Williams, J. M. G. (1995). Depression and the specificity of autobiographical memory. In D. C. Rubin (Ed.) *Remembering our past: Studies in autobiographical memory* (pp.244-267). New York: Cambridge.

Group D (decided 8/30) read Rubin, D. C., Feldman, M. E., & Beckham, J. C. (2004). Reliving, emotions, and fragmentation in the autobiographical memories of veterans diagnosed with PTSD. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 18, 17-35.

ALL read selected pages from Conway, M. A. (1996). Autobiographical memory. In E. L. Bjork, and R. A. Bjork (Eds.) *Memory*. New York: Academic.

Questions

1. Briefly comment on how well you believe Conway and Pleydell-Pearce's (2000) model of autobiographical memory can handle the data in your group's reading.

2. Pick one of the cases on Conway (1996) and briefly describe how Conway and Pleydell-Pearce would explain the data, or why their theory is unable to do so.

*Be prepared to describe the main findings/arguments in your group's reading to the other group, and to compare and contrast what the groups' articles say about PTSD. This will be a group effort so feel free to meet ahead of time to talk it over.

11/10: KM at PSYCHONOMICS CONFERENCE – NO CLASS

Function of Autobiographical Memory/Reminiscence

Reminiscence and life review are based in the aging (and clinical) literature more than in the cognitive literature. Note that the terms *life review* and *reminiscence* are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes life review is discussed as a type of reminiscence.

11/15: Definitions and measurement of reminiscence

Part 1: PLEASE DO PART 1 BEFORE EVEN GLANCING AT PART 2!!

Readings

Wong, P. T. P. (1995). The process of adaptive reminiscence. In B. K. Haight, & J. D. Webster (Eds.) *The art and science of reminiscing* (pp. 23-35). Washington, D.C.: Taylor & Francis.

Webster, J. D. (2002). Reminiscence functions in adulthood: Age, race, and family dynamics correlates. In J. D. Webster, & B. K. Haight (Eds.), *Critical advances in reminiscence work: From theory to application* (pp.140-152). New York: Springer.

Questions

1. Which kinds of reminiscence, in terms of Wong's taxonomy, have you seen your older adult partner do? Which have you done?
2. How would you match up Wong's taxonomy and Webster's eight factors? Explain your reasoning. If you don't see a way to do match them up, explain why.

Part 2: DO NOT CHANGE YOUR ANSWER FROM PART 1 AFTER READING PART 2!!

Reading

Cappeliez, P., & Lavallée, R. (2001). Functions of reminiscence in later life as viewed by young and old adults. *Canadian Journal on Aging, 20*, 577-589.

Question

If you could ask Cappeliez and Lavallée a question about their findings and conclusions, or make a comment about their study and/or conclusions, what would you say? NOTE that I'm hoping for questions or comments that we can discuss as a group as we try to put ourselves in the authors' shoes and reply to your questions and comments.

11/17: Individual differences in reminiscence

Readings

Group 3 (decided 8/30) read Cully, J. A., LaVoie, D., & Gfeller, J. D. (2001).

Reminiscence, personality, and psychological functioning in older adults. *The Gerontologist, 41*, 89-95.

Group 4 (decided 8/30) read Cappeliez, P., & O'Rourke, N. (2002). Personality traits and existential concerns as predictors of the functions of reminiscence in older adults.

Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences, 57B, P116-P123.

ALL review this paper from our 11/15 discussion: Webster, J. D. (2002).

Questions

1. When do you find yourself reviewing your life? If you don't find yourself doing so, why do you think that is the case?
 2. Cite one strength and one weakness of the study your group read.
 3. Cite any of the age or race effects in the Webster (2002) data that surprise or confuse you in some way and explain why those data puzzle you. If you find none of the group differences surprising or confusing, explain why the data make perfect sense to you.
- *Be prepared to describe the main findings and arguments in your group's reading to the other group so you can compare and contrast findings.

11/22: Variety of Functions**Reading**

Bluck, S., Alea, N., Habermas, T., & Rubin, D. C. (2005). A tale of three functions: The self-reported uses of autobiographical memory. *Social Cognition, 23*, 91-117.

Wilson, A. E., & Ross, M. (2003). The identity function of autobiographical memory: Time is on our side. *Memory, 11*, 137-149.

Questions

1. Think about the readings from the past few meetings together with the Bluck et al. reading. How are the autobiographical memory and reminiscence literatures similar and how do they differ?

2. Cite a part of Wilson and Ross's argument (include page number) that you agree or disagree with. Explain why you agree or disagree.

11/24: THANKSGIVING BREAK – ENJOY!

*****NOTE that you might want to do question 0 for 11/29 over break....**

11/29: Variety of Functions II: Focus on the Social Function

****BEFORE you look at the abstract or the details of the Marsh and Tversky paper, please answer question 0.**

1. Do NOT look at the abstract for Marsh and Tversky. Go to the retellings data form on page 503 and make TWO copies. For each of TWO occasions on which you tell someone about an experience you have had, fill out the sheet sometime after that retelling.

Reading

Alea, N., & Bluck, S. (2003). Why are you telling me that? A conceptual model of the social function of autobiographical memory. *Memory, 11*, 165-178.

Marsh, E. J., & Tversky, B. (2004). Spinning the stories of our lives. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 18*, 491-503.

Questions

1. Cite a part of Alea and Bluck's argument (include page number) that you agree or disagree with. Explain why you agree or disagree.

2. Cite one strength of the Marsh and Tversky study and one weakness.

Wrapping Up

We've covered a lot of ground this semester! In a few places we have touched on accuracy of autobiographical memories. Let's focus on that more closely and then we'll wrap it all up.

12/1: Editing Your Memories?**Part 1: PLEASE DO PART 1 BEFORE EVEN GLANCING AT PART 2!!**

The following is quoted from Johnson, M. K. (1985). The origin of memories. In P. C. Kendall (Ed.), *Advances in cognitive-behavioral research and therapy* (Volume 4, pp 1 –27).

I was a first-year college student and I took a couple of friends to my parent's house for dinner. The conversation turned to droughts and I thought of an incident that happened when I was about 5 years old, and proceeded to tell the story:

My family was driving through the San Joaquin Valley in California when we had a flat tire.

We didn't have a spare, so my father took the tire off the car and hitchhiked up the road to a gas station to get the tire patched. My mother, brother, sister, and I waited in the car. The temperature was over 100 degrees, extremely uncomfortable, and we got very thirsty. Finally,

my sister took a couple of empty pop bottles and walked up the road to a farmhouse. The woman who lived there explained to her that the valley was suffering from a drought and she only had a little bottled-water left. She set aside a glass of water for her little boy, who would be home from school soon, and filled up my sister's pop bottles with the rest. My sister brought the water back to the car and we drank it all. I also remembered feeling guilty that we didn't save any for my father, who would probably be thirsty when he got back with the repaired tire.

As I finished my story, my parents laughed and pointed out that the incident had not happened that way at all. We did, in fact, drive through the San Joaquin Valley during a drought and have a flat tire. My father did have to hitchhike to a gas station to have it fixed and the rest of us waited a very long time in the hot car. My sister complained a great deal about the heat, but nobody went anywhere for water and we did not have anything to drink until after my father came back and fixed the tire, and we drove on.

Question

Briefly write a memory of when you had your memory corrected or when you corrected someone else's memory, just as Dr. Johnson's parents corrected hers.

Part 2:

Readings

Group Z1 (decided 8/30) read Heaps, C. M., & Nash, M. (2001). Comparing recollective experience in true and false autobiographical memories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 27, 920-930.

Group Z2 (decided 8/30) read Niedźwieńska, A. (2003). Distortion of autobiographical memories. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 17, 81-91.

All read Walker, W. R., Skowronski, J. J., & Thompson, C. P. (2003). Life is pleasant—and memory helps to keep it that way! *Review of General Psychology*, 7, 203-210.

Questions

1. To what extent would cognitive psychologists studying autobiographical memory agree or disagree with the following statement? “*What is important about autobiographical memory is what people believe is true as opposed to what is ‘objectively’ true.*” To what extent would researchers studying reminiscence and life review agree or disagree?

2. Cite an aspect of the Walker et al. paper that you would like to discuss (include the page number).

*Be prepared to describe the main findings/arguments in your group's reading to the other group. This will be a group effort so feel free to meet ahead of time to talk it over.

12/6: Life Stories & wrap up

Reading

McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, 5, 100-122.

Questions

1. To what extent do you agree with McAdams that “the life story does not encompass all of the vast storehouse that makes up autobiographical memory, and it contains material that would not explicitly exist in the autobiographical knowledge base, such as the individual's imagined future” (p.110)? Explain why.

2. Cite an aspect of the McAdams paper that you would like to discuss (include the page number).