

Suparna Rajaram Abstract

## **Social Transmission of Information and Emergence of Collective Memory: Influence of Cognitive Mechanisms and Network Structures**

As social animals, people spend a majority of their lives sharing and remembering experiences with others. Couples, friends, families, study groups, work teams, and even members within communities and societies develop shared memories to fulfill a variety of personal, social, educational, and political goals. The emergent collective memories - memories that people within such networks come to share about their past - have long been topics of interest in the domains of history, anthropology, sociology, and social psychology. In cognitive science, tracing back to Bartlett's seminal treatise in 1932, there has been a long-standing interest in the transmission of memory in social settings. However, a century of research on memory has almost exclusively focused on individuals working in isolation. The last decade marks a departure in this context, with a burgeoning focus on the study of how people remember in groups and how social sharing reciprocally shapes the post-collaborative memory of each group member. I will review data and theory from my lab to elucidate cognitive mechanisms that underlie memory enhancement as well as forgetting in shared remembering, the influence of the structure of the social network on memory propagation, and the cascading effects of these changes on the emergence of collective memory. Together, these empirical and theoretical advances provide a springboard for simultaneously exploring the underlying cognitive mechanisms, the wide-ranging influences of social transmission of memory, and the emergence of collective memory.