
AHR Forum
History and Memory

*Over the last decade, memory in its many guises has become a critical and widely used means of examining the past. This AHR Forum analyzes the growing importance of one particularly significant form that this work has taken, studies of collective memory. It does so by offering two thoughtful critiques of the emerging historical literature. The articles by **Susan A. Crane** and **Alon Confino** express a common concern about the theoretical underpinnings of current historical approaches to collective memory. However, they highlight different issues and propose different solutions. Crane focuses on issues of historical consciousness and the roles that historians play as witnesses of the past. Confino highlights the issue of contextualization and the place of cultural history in studies of collective memory. **Daniel James's** commentary pulls these issues together by drawing on his own studies of labor history in Argentina to suggest some of the specific challenges facing historians who use memory as a means of trying to recover the past. Taken together, the articles and commentary suggest why collective memory has become such a compelling form of historical analysis.*