

Sites of Memory conferece and workshop

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The first *Sites of Memory* conference and interactive workshop, held n campus in February, was motivated by a desire to explore these crucial questions. Memory lurks within most academic research but is rarely actively considered with the care it deserves. The *Sites of Memory series aims to encourage researchers to realise the need to ask these questions rather than answer them definitively.*

Captured in 107 live tweets by organisers and doctoral researchers Tom Penfold and Rebecca Jones, the event (funded by the University's College of Arts and Law) had a profoundly larger, and longer-lasting, impact – creating memories of its own. Exploring memory through a variety of disciplines, Africanist Jan-Georg Deutsch (University of Oxford) began proceedings with a discussion of how remembrance works at three different sites of slave memory, insisting: 'It's never too late to have a happy childhood.' Contributions by 12 postgraduates from seven different institutions explained the way memory works at monuments, through film, in graffiti, language and even in the nostalgic practices of baking bread. Fascinating research was presented which shared surprising similarities in the relationships between memory and the future, silence, truth and forgetting.

The interactive workshop encouraged all attendees, both presenters and participants, to discuss the very practicalities of memory. DASA's Benedetta Rossi, Jonathon Reinarz from the department of History of Medicine and published author Joanna Rossiter, spoke about how memory affects and shapes the processes of research. Finally, Professor Philip Schwyzer, a memory researcher from the University of Exeter, put 'The Past in its Place' – showing how the role of time in memory is all too evident. Overall, the conference suggested that memory is more a comment on the future than the past. DASA is hosting two more *Sites of Memory* conferences in the coming months. The first will focus on 'the local' in African literature and the second event will be an invitation-only publication workshop. Authors of selected papers from the first two conferences will work with leading journal editors.

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