‘Timeless Memories’: Memory and Temporality in Histories of Education

Online conference hosted by the Domus Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Histories of Education and Childhood, University of Birmingham

5th – 7th November 2021

The Domus Centre is delighted to host the 2021 annual conference of the History of Education Society UK at the University of Birmingham. The conference theme this year will be ‘Timeless Memories’: Memory and Temporality in Histories of Education

Keynote speakers:

• Joyce Goodman, Professor of History of Education, University of Winchester
• Maria Grever, Professor of Theory and Methodology of History, University of Rotterdam
• Maria del Mar de Pozo Andrés, Professor of History of Education, University of Alcalá

Information relating to conference registration and the programme will appear here in due course.

Call for Papers:

The last decade or so has seen both a ‘temporal turn’ in historical research and a growth in memory studies, to the extent that as one historian has noted the discipline of history has refreshed itself. Historians have used public and private memories as a lens to observe and tell the stories of the past in the present. Memory is used to encode, process and save information. It gives meaning and legitimacy to the present. Of course, the concepts of time and memory in circulation are part of the Western episteme and there is an intimate connection between the imperial project and the imposition of Western temporalities and coercion to abandon indigenous temporalities. These processes not only fostered a ‘temporality of trauma’ but also had an impact on determining what and how moments and events were memorialised and by whom? What is forgotten and what is remembered is a political act, whether within the imperial project of colonial domination or under totalitarian regimes.

Time is not a neutral concept in which history ‘unfolds’ but as Christopher Clark notes in Time and Power (2019) it is ‘a contingent cultural construction whose shape, structure and texture have varied.’ The literature of the temporal turn has been particularly concerned with mapping a transition from pre-modern or traditional temporal orders to modern temporalities. So, how has this transition in temporality been experienced? Apprehending and experiencing time has been characterised by a sense of time accelerating and a consequent distancing from the past.
and its authority as a site of wisdom. Time has been experienced as discipline, as rhythm, as duration, as liminal. In the West the religious certainties associated with Christian beliefs about the future fractured because of the processes of cultural secularisation and consequently impacted on society’s ‘horizon of expectation.’ Time became a commodity that could be wasted. Such changes have contributed to a sense of nostalgia for what was perceived as lost including past imaginings of the future. At the same time History as a discipline has continued to be accommodated within a linear narrative of modernisation.

What is, and what can be the role of historians of education in addressing the temporal turn? How do we engage with memory and remembering in our field of study? How as historians do we see the past and our different but connected present? All these questions are what prompted the present call for papers.

The following is a list of indicative themes. It is far from being exhaustive or prescriptive and we welcome papers that address any aspect that broadly connects to issues of time and/or memory in the histories of education and childhood:

- Time, memory and affect in the classroom
- Silences and absences in the memory archive
- Historical memory and localised narratives of education
- Memory, historical justice and pedagogy
- Histories of Education futures
- The schooled body in memory and time
- Colonial education and counter memories
- Representations of educational pasts
- Memory, temporality and refugee education
- Public policy and memorialisation of the past
- Methodologies of narrating time and memory in in/formal education
- Public and community memories
- Collecting and/or (re)presenting memories in archives, museums or other heritage contexts
- Time perception and psychological time in periods of education crisis

Keynote speakers:

- Maria del Mar de Pozo Andrés, Professor of History of Education, University of Alcalá
- Joyce Goodman, Professor of History of Education, University of Winchester
- Maria Grever, Professor of Theory and Methodology of History, University of Rotterdam

Please submit abstracts of c. 300 words to s.roberts.2@bham.ac.uk by 31 July 2021.

Please see the separate Call for Papers for the conference postgraduate panel.

Further information: the History of Education Society (UK)