



Memory Matters

*Contexts for Understanding
Sexual Abuse Recollections*

Edited by Janice Haaken and Paula Reavey

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1 Why memory still matters

Disturbing recollections

Janice Haaken and Paula Reavey

The capacity to generate mental representations of past events – to remember – remains one of the most mystifying aspects of human consciousness. Although research has advanced on the neurological side of memory processes, scientific understanding of how and why particular recollections come to matter to people remains more elusive. Memories may or may not matter, depending on the emotional and social investments attached to particular versions of the past.

This book grew out of a heated debate that raged in the 1980s and 1990s over recollections of childhood sexual abuse (CSA), and specifically recollections that emerged in the context of psychotherapy, mainly in Europe and the United States. The feminist movement of the 1970s opened up a cultural space for women to speak publicly about intimate forms of violence, from incest and domestic violence to sexual harassment and date rape. By the late 1980s, however, many women (and some men) who had no prior knowledge of having been sexually abused as children began to recall such experiences, typically with the assistance of therapists schooled in techniques for uncovering traumatic memory. Clinical symptoms from eating disorders to depression were identified as disguised indicators of abuse, as therapists advanced what many felt to be a moral mandate to expose hidden histories of sexual abuse, and particularly those behind the everyday maladies of women.

These ‘recovered’ recollections of abuse – which often departed from a prior autobiographical record – captured centre stage in the media, from television, films, and chat shows to newspaper articles and the tabloids. Celebrities and everyday people recounted increasingly lurid stories of incestuous abuse to rapt audiences. As increasing numbers of young women began to identify as child sexual abuse survivors based on the uncovering of such memories, a backlash set in. Researchers and critics also seized the stage, asserting that over-zealous therapists unwittingly found the very sexual scenes that they were seeking in the dark visages of memory. More than any other issue in the late twentieth century, the recovered memory debate polarized the mental health field and legal community, with feminists – both in academia and in service work – heavily aligned with the recovered memory side of the controversy.

2 *Haaken and Reavey*

In looking back on this battlefield of recollections, *Memory Matters* takes up questions about memory, sexuality, and childhood that have lingered, even as the embers have cooled in most quarters of academia and popular culture. Not unlike other passionate situations of conflict, the subsiding of open conflict may register weariness over fighting as much as it does resolution of basic differences. But the reduced emotional intensity may create possibilities for moving beyond old stalemates and for re-assessing the cultural ground that has been both won and lost. This book grew out of an effort to collectively reflect on this period of controversy, and to sort through the issues from the vantage point of some historical distance.

In this book we argue that neither of the dominant positions in the ‘war’ over memory – the true versus false memory positions – decisively prevailed in public or academic discourse over childhood memory. Although some softened hardline positions, others turned away entirely from the issues because of the bitter acrimony generated by moral claims on both sides. We began this collection of papers with the premise that memory may ‘matter’ more or less, given a specific context, and that there are many ‘matters’ concerning everyday contexts shaping processes of remembering that have yet to be addressed (Campbell, 2003; Haaken, 2003; Motzkau, 2007; Reavey and Brown, 2006).

The politics of remembering

A primary aim of this volume is to bring into focus key historical dynamics and contests over power that shape the terms of storied forms of remembering, and particularly in matters concerning sexuality and childhood. Of the various campaigns of the women’s movement of the 1970s, childhood sexual abuse garnered the most passionate support as a collective form of storytelling. Unlike other insults and injuries girls suffered in the course of development, child sexual abuse, and particularly incest, drew political strength from the very revulsion that had kept the issue so shrouded in secrecy. By the late 1980s, mandatory child abuse reporting laws were passed throughout the United States and Canada as well as Europe and the United Kingdom, with most enforcement efforts focused on reported cases of sexual abuse. More than physical assaults or neglect of children, sexual violations emerged as the paradigmatic trauma of childhood.

Much of the heat of the recovered memory controversy centred on the question of why growing numbers of female patients were identifying as sexual abuse survivors. Armies of experts offered scientific explanations for how important events in childhood could be forgotten and later remembered. In response, experts on the other side of the battle zone insisted that memory was highly malleable and that many therapists were unwittingly implanting memories of abuse in vulnerable patients. By the early 1990s an organization formed in the United States, the False Memory Syndrome Foundation, which mounted a campaign to establish the role of suggestibility in producing

evidence of ‘false’ memories. Research on memory – often carried out in controlled and dry laboratory conditions – aroused passionate interest as groups on both sides of the controversy sought scientific findings to support their positions.

For feminist-informed therapists and academics, the political mandate to ‘believe women’ and to ‘validate’ recovered memories acquired a palpable moral urgency. Questions concerning the scientific and forensic evidence in support of recovered memory claims were often dismissed as forms of colluding with perpetrators. Most critics of recovered memory therapy, an approach that centred on the uncovering of childhood trauma, drew a line between incest survivors who had continuous knowledge of having been abused (cases thought to be non-problematic), and those women who ‘found’ their memory through therapy or a recovery group experience. The scientific critiques generally focused on these latter cases, where hypnosis or other social influences were thought to account for the emergence of memories of abuse.

Just as the recovered memory campaign erupted on the cultural stage with fierce intensity, so, too, did the crisis drop precipitously from public view. If there was repression and recovery of memory about childhood sexual abuse operating on a social level, the process of repression reasserted itself as the recovered memory debate receded from public consciousness.

Memory Matters represents an effort on the part of contributing scholars to resist such forces of social repression – and to hold onto the important lessons of this contentious era that divided families and communities. We are in no way nostalgic for the era prior to the feminist movement of the 1970s, when cultural silence around child sexual abuse was pervasive, nor for a time when incest was thought to be a problem primarily associated with working class and poor families. The mass mobilization of women during this period presented a fundamental challenge to the social order and to the terms under which women negotiated their fates under patriarchy. But we do lament the hardline position that fused feminism with literalist views of memory, and a feminist politics based on rallying around the utterances of women, without regard to the source of those utterances. The literalist position on memory stripped women’s recollections of complexity and reduced exploratory space for understanding why sexual abuse emerged as the dominant story of childhood distress for many women in the late twentieth century. In recovering terrain for exploring the social symbolic loadings of recovered scenes of sexual abuse, we take the view that the debate itself was symptomatic of broader crises in the Western world over sexuality, gender, and authority – crises that will be taken up throughout this volume.

Contributors to *Memory Matters* provide frameworks for looking back on the memory wars, aided by the vantage point of historical distance. In our effort to understand what was at stake for various participants in the recovered memory debate, we rework emotionally charged accounts of the past. Although some critics of recovered memory characterize the climate of the debate as one of social hysteria (e.g. Loftus & Ketcham, 1994; Showalter,

1997), this ‘diagnosis’ of the irrationality that prevailed may readily obscure key issues. The concept of social hysteria may be descriptive of the emotionally charged tenor of embattled participants, and how group anxieties may overtake capacities to reason. But inevitably there are historical and cultural variations in the available social space for thoughtful discussion on charged social topics.

Contributors here share an interest in how power dynamics shape the versions of the past that survive and are transmitted. Narrative forms of remembering, whether through stories of sacrifice, heroic tales of courageous deeds, or testimonials of traumatic suffering, bind each generation to the next. While stories vary in content and form, all human cultures create them as a means of binding individuals to the social order, both emotionally and cognitively. Periods of social change and transformation always involve contests over how the past is preserved and the moral lessons to be drawn from the dramas that shape individual and collective life.

Women’s recovered memories of child sexual abuse called into question the sanctity of culturally valued institutions, such as the church and family, in that many of the perpetrators were respected members of institutions that claimed to protect women. Testimonials based on recovered memories also precipitated longstanding tensions between disciplines guided by different procedural approaches to evaluating truth claims. The courts and the broader legal arena, for example, are based on the premise of a juridical truth – the extent to which available physical or other material evidence supports specific claims. Although motives and states of mind enter into legal reasoning, the primary aim is to establish whether available facts support assertions concerning alleged events.

Feminist scholars have identified how patriarchal representations of femininity shape legal judgements of women – as passive, suggestible and unreliable as witnesses – and how these stereotypes contribute to the extremely low rate of abuse convictions among accused male sex offenders (Smart, 1992). Yet this critical point side-steps the many uncertainties that arise when legitimate arguments are made concerning the capacities of witnesses, such as cases involving retraction (where a person changes their mind about a claim), or cases where the capacities of the testifier are limited or impaired in some way, or cases involving children’s testimonies in courts.

Feminism and psychotherapeutic culture

The feminist movement of the 1970s subverted the dominant cultural romance that cast women as dependents and men as benevolent protectors. Refusing the seductive fairy tales of childhood, where the princess secures her fate by finding the right prince, feminists insisted on more truthful accounts of female experiences in the patriarchal family. Rather than cautionary tales of sexual threats lurking in dark alleys, a new genre of riveting stories centred on the dangers to girls under the covers of their own beds.

It is not surprising that many feminists aligned themselves with the recovered memory movement in that women have themselves been hidden behind a veil of silence in patriarchal societies. Sigmund Freud brought childhood sexuality into public consciousness, introducing as well through his early clinical work links between forgotten sexual events in childhood and neurotic symptoms in adulthood, particularly symptoms associated with hysteria. Freud later abandoned his early 'seduction theory' that traced hysteria in women to early sexual violations, moving to the position that sexual repression played a larger role in adult neurosis than did sexual abuse (see Masson, 1990; Herman, 2001).

Although he has been critiqued by feminists for abandoning the seduction theory of hysteria, Freud did shift to a more complex view of the relationship between anxiety, prohibitions and early sexual experience (see Haaken, 1998). Further, Freud placed gender and sexuality at the centre of a theory of development that emphasized the dynamic complexity of subjective experience. In patriarchal societies, girls confront different obstacles than do boys in becoming aware of and making use of active desires. Normative heterosexuality also positions girls and women as passive receptors for male desire – a position that contributes to the sexual victimization of women, but also to female discomfort with genital sexuality in general (Benjamin, 1988; Rose, 1986).

Much of the work of therapy centres on reworking memory, and on achieving new insights into past events. Clinical listening involves attending to the recurring motifs and subtexts of memory and to the emotional investments attached to particular childhood experiences. For psychodynamic therapists, particularly, stories about various protagonists in childhood are, in part, stories about the self. Objects in the schemata of memory may emerge as symbolic markers of zones of conflict, or they may concretize more elusive aspects of mind. The therapeutic process of understanding how the patient invokes the past – how a scene from memory may acquire a range of meanings over time – runs counter to forensic reasoning. Because the therapeutic process involves moving beyond the literal content of memory to identify underlying motifs, this process can be mystifying.

The therapeutic structuring of stories about the past are shaped by the convergence of the individual life experience of the patient and the theoretical orientation of the clinician. But the narratives of the self that emerge in therapy also are shaped by the wider socio-cultural worlds that both the patient and therapist inhabit.

Memory matters across the social sciences

The problem of traumatic memories – those registers of past events that potentially impair human capacities – has been taken up across a range of disciplines, including anthropology (Antze and Lambek, 1996; Douglass and Vogler, 2003), feminist studies (Campbell, 2003; Champagne, 1996), sociology (Misztal, 2003), philosophy (Hacking, 1995; Margalit, 2002), and

psychology (Conway, 1997; Haaken, 1998; MacMartin, 1999; Reavey and Warner, 2003). As psychologists and co-editors of this volume, we are concerned with how our own discipline intervened in the debate, and particularly with the dominance of scientific procedures that equate empirical inquiry with quantitative methods. Hypothesis-testing has typically involved behavioural observations under conditions not conducive to the therapeutic conditions of many of the recovered memory accounts. Further, psychologists trained in this experimental tradition tend to evaluate the credibility of a perception or belief by seeking its direct correspondence to an external phenomenon or objectifiable reality.

While differing in key areas, many psychoanalytic, feminist and social constructionist psychologists share a critique of this over-objectifying approach to a science of mind. These psychologists insist that memory and other aspects of mental life are fluid and dynamic. Further, the 'truth' of a memory is continually open to negotiation, questioning and reconstruction, depending on the context of its use (Haaken, 1998; Conway, 1997; Campbell, 2003; Reavey and Brown, 2006).

There are important areas of widening agreement, however, among researchers and clinicians concerning memory processes. First, there is a shift from memory as a faculty of mind that produces discrete imprints of past events to a concern with remembering as a socially structured human activity. Contemporary practitioners and researchers are more apt to emphasize the social contexts that shape the construction of memories. Personal recollections may be co-constructed and undergo elaboration as they are transmitted through a social field of experience. Second, there is widening recognition that representations of the past are open to an array of interpretations. Power dynamics – on interpersonal and societal levels – do shape the stories that come to constitute personal identity. Contemporary dilemmas also shape the areas of the past that are remembered and the social uses of memories. As a result, the accuracy of recollections may be less crucial than are the social contexts in which such recollections circulate. Third, there is broad awareness in the field of memory studies of the ethical aspects of both remembering and forgetting, from the call to bystanders to 'bear witness' to traumatic suffering to testimonials and memorials that preserve accounts of past suffering and address questions of responsibility, accountability, and demands for reparation.

In this volume, we bring qualitative research on memory – and specifically, on recollections of sexual abuse – into our analysis of lingering issues in the recovered memory debate. We also extend the boundaries of psychology to include interdisciplinary perspectives on memory, and foreground social psychology as a key site for bridging disciplines that take up the *collective* or *social* aspects of representations of the past. Even as there are areas of agreement among contributors concerning the fluid boundaries between 'true' and 'false' memories, *Memory Matters* takes up the knotty questions that remain over how to go about assessing degrees of truth or falsehood, as well as how to assign responsibility for injurious experiences in the past.

Organization of the volume

Although the era of ‘post-conflict’ in the recovered memory debate allows for the *co-existence* of true and false memories, this volume makes visible the ethical, social, and cultural issues that remain. The contributors address how memories of abuse are received and scrutinized in a range of practice-based and interpersonal settings – from therapy, the media, legal settings, and everyday life – and explain how understandings of memory operate within these diverse arenas of practice. The sources of data are primarily qualitative, rather than quantitative. Contributors combine empirical qualitative data, gathered through interviews, case histories, focus groups and video recordings, published media, legal, autobiographical material, and clinical case studies. They also work in disciplines across the social sciences and humanities, including critical social psychology, literary theory, psychoanalysis, media studies, social work, sociology, and psychology, and draw upon a wide range of theories to inform their interpretations of data.

While they offer a diversity of perspectives, the contributors share a focus on how notions of truth or accuracy of memory are produced in particular locales. They also share traditions of critical inquiry that make use of multiple perspectives on a given social phenomenon. This attentiveness to multiple perspectives on the past and contexts for remembering need not imply relativism, nor does it suggest a disregard for factual claims. Our aim here, rather, is to unpack the range of social investments in versions of the past and to make clearer where and when factual claims do come into play.

Memory Matters is organized into two sections. The first section returns to the more riveting scenes of the recovered memory controversy, revisiting troubling questions that linger far after the debate subsided. The section retraces key discursive moves in the claims and counter-claims that circulated in North America and Europe, from legal settings, psychotherapy, self-help groups to popular culture. The contributors work closely with the stories that took centre stage and offer new readings of those stories. The second section of the book takes a step back from the heat of the debate and attends to cultural influences beyond the immediate heat of the controversy. In working with the broader social context that set many of the claims and counter-claims in motion, contributors suggest that memories of sexual abuse in childhood may be deployed for a wide range of reasons – for rememberers and translators of memories alike – and register broader cultural forces shaping everyday thinking about links between present and past.

Section 1. Looking back on the recovered memory debate: claims and counter-claims

A contentious area of the recovered memory debate concerns cases of retraction, where individuals reversed positions and came to the conclusion that

previously ‘recovered’ memories of sexual abuse were false. In the recovered memory/false memory controversy, ‘retractors’ gained considerable prominence, even as they stirred palpable uneasiness on both sides. Malcolm Ashmore and Steven Brown introduce Section 1 of the book with a discursive analysis of an interview with the mother of a retractor and also of a video recording produced on behalf of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF) featuring a retractor and members of her family. Retractors’ stories captured media interest late in the memory debate, as some retractors emerged as the ‘prodigal daughters’ of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation. The principal deployment of such star retractors appears to be epistemic: they embody a convincing refutation of the reality of repressed memory and of the legitimacy of therapeutic techniques designed to elicit such memories. The sources of the credibility of retractors’ accounts include personal experience and the power of conversion. Ashmore and Brown suggest, however, that the credibility of retractors confronts various challenges in securing social legitimacy. In comparing survivors’ and retractors’ accounts of conflicting memory reports and attending to their differing logical strategies, the authors show how changing one’s mind may either weaken or strengthen the case for credibility.

In Chapter 3, James Ost and Karl Nunkoosing turn to the vexing problem of retraction of therapeutically recovered memories of abuse by discussing the case of Nicola, a woman who remembered sexual abuse with her father after a period of severe mental illness and later came to believe this to be a false memory. Drawing on the theory of social remembering rooted in the work of Frederic Charles Bartlett, the authors present a range of contexts for understanding the shifting versions of Nicola’s memory. The authors present a discursive analysis of interviews with Nicola to illustrate how she attempts to make sense of a range of competing claims to truth, both in the context of psychiatric treatment and in periods of her recovery where she seeks reconciliation with her parents. Ost and Nunkoosing enlist Bartlett’s social theory of remembering to foreground key motivational dynamics associated with remembering, and particularly how making sense of the *past* is rooted in the *present*. This approach suggests that retractors themselves must continually rethink their memories within a contemporary context. The authors attempt to move beyond the truth or falsehood of retractors’ reports to describe how these fluctuating accounts register a more general tendency in human processes of remembering.

Johanna Motzkau examines in Chapter 4 the status of children’s testimony – another area of troubling uncertainty – and shows how professionals who assessed children’s memories in court cases have managed questions over their capacities to testify. As a result of increased awareness of child sexual abuse in the late twentieth century, children were increasingly admitted to court as witnesses, while wariness persisted over the reliability of their memories and their ability to provide accurate testimony in legal proceedings. Motzkau examines the complex dilemmas surrounding the credibility of

children's memories as they emerge at the intersection of legal and psychological discourses in England and Wales. Drawing on interviews conducted with police officers, prosecutors, lawyers, judges, and psychological experts in these two countries, Motzkau traces the personal and political rationales, instruments, and practices employed to negotiate the accuracy and credibility of children's legal testimonies concerning sexual abuse. Her analysis suggests how dilemmas surrounding child testimony in courts register broader social anxieties concerning sexuality, the protection of children, and memory credibility. For children to qualify as dependents who require protection from the state, their testimony must meet conventional criteria as virtuous victims. This child protection discourse forecloses, Motzkau concludes, possibilities for understanding the multiple social meanings and uses of child witnesses in the courtroom.

The media represents yet another contested site for competing claims over dramatic revelations of childhood sexual abuse. From tabloids and broadsheets to fictional and non-fictional television programmes and films, the media produced countless reports and programmes that shaped public perceptions and individual experiences of memory and child sexual abuse. In Chapter 5, Jenny Kitzinger introduces a range of media representations of sexual abuse in Britain and the United States during the 1980s and 1990s, when the topic migrated from obscurity to widespread public recognition. She examines how women in survivor groups and other social settings enlisted media representations in naming past experiences as sexual abuse. Her study centres on understanding how the media creates as well as reflects processes of social change. Through an analysis of interviews with women survivors of sexual abuse, she explores how individuals used media knowledge to interpret their memories and to formulate agentic versions of selfhood. Kitzinger notes, however, that the survivor literature's recurring claims of authenticity run the risk of reducing the complexity of memory in its implicit emphasis on straightforward connections between the past and present.

Jo Woodiwiss concludes this section with her analysis of how women survivors of child sexual abuse make use of the self-help recovery literature in complex and conflictual ways. Chapter 6 begins with claims that child sexual abuse inevitably results in long-term psychological damage or trauma, and that healing centres on recovering memory of the abuse, often in the form of 'body memories.' For many women who enter adulthood with no memory of early sexual abuse, this process of recovery relies on accessing non-cognitive memories, such as imagistic memory, body memory, feeling memory, and acting-out memory. Woodiwiss explores the role of these alternative memories for women who came to believe that they were sexually abused in childhood, and how these alternative memories shaped the narratives or life stories they came to tell. She explains how and why some women endorse this explanation for their symptoms, while others came to reject memories that they once believed to be true. Woodiwiss locates recollections of childhood

sexual abuse in the context of an increasingly pervasive therapeutic culture, where ideas about healing, recovery, the inner child, and recovered memories inform many aspects of everyday life.

Section 2. Widening the lens: cultural contexts for remembering child sexual abuse

Paula Reavey begins Section 2 by exploring frameworks for remembering, attending to how cultural contexts, specifically everyday spatial locales, register as sites for creative uses of the past. Drawing on her analysis of interviews of women survivors, she attempts to go beyond the relational motifs that dominate the recovered memory literature to focus on the broader imagistic field of these motifs. Reavey offers a corrective to the tendency in the clinical literature, particularly, to focus on traumatic events rather than on the everyday material contexts of memory that structure forms of recall. These material spaces, she argues, contribute to the organization of memory, and in particular as it relates to a personal sense of agency. This focus on how women survivors make use of the material contexts of memory invites richly textured and complex readings of abuse stories, including how feelings of agency and victimization often co-mingle. Attending to how women make use of physical spaces in their memory reports, Reavey contends, creates an opportunity for women to discuss memories that do not conform to conventional notions of (feminine) victimhood.

In Chapter 8 Kathryn Robson continues this exploration of the cultural terrain by analysing two quite different autobiographical accounts widely cited in the recovered memory literature: Sylvia Fraser's *My Father's House* and Janice Williamson's *Crybaby!* Robson offers readings of the two memoirs that move beyond the conventions of the memoir as confessional, with its trope of revealing a disturbing and pathogenic secret. Rather, testifying to child sexual abuse means renegotiating (invoking and also challenging) the very notion of a singular 'truth' about the past. Robson also unpacks these autobiographical texts to show how the absolute demands of the true/false memory debate suture over areas of genuine uncertainty – between narrative and bodily memory, between the present and the past, and between private and public testimonials. Her readings of *My Father's House* and *Crybaby!* locate key sites where links between the past (childhood abuse) and the present (the self-positioning of the narrator as she remembers and writes) take gendered and sexualized forms.

Rachel Fyson and John Cromby in Chapter 9 take up the neglected topic of recollections of sexual abuse among persons with intellectual disabilities and the implications of their own research in this area for working in forensic, therapeutic, and welfare service fields. The authors begin with data on rates of child sexual abuse in learning disability communities and key factors that contribute to this association, including issues of social status and power. In exploring power dynamics related to disability, including how definitions of

disability circulate culturally and politically, Fyson and Cromby show how sexually abused individuals with disabilities are often silenced. In the absence of supports for recollecting abuse, expressions of anger that are commonly recognized as sequelae to abuse are often interpreted as symptoms of their disabilities. Further, such behaviours come to be managed through the lens of their disability rather than explored as possible indicators of a history of abuse. Fyson and Cromby also explain how institutional dynamics blunt opportunities for people with disabilities to make sense of their memories or to disclose and work through recollections of abuse.

Widening the lens on childhood memory also invites revisiting ethical dilemmas associated with reports of childhood sexual abuse of uncertain social origins or contested validity. In Chapter 10 Sue Campbell takes up the ethical challenges that remain in the wake of the recovered memory debate. She begins with the argument that any concept of 'truth' is bound up in social relationships and cultural frameworks, but contends that a concretely grounded conception of truth remains vital to preserving cultural space for the credibility of sexual abuse survivors and their sense of personal identity. The empirical basis of memory has special relevance for oppressed groups, she argues, whose recollections are more often scrutinized or discredited. Campbell's central argument is that we need to attend to how the procedures of science and the professions narrow conceptions of truth, and how the literal aspects of memory *do* matter, without reducing memory to forensic accuracy.

In Chapter 11, Erica Burman draws on psychoanalytic social theory to discuss therapeutic constructions of the past and professional practices in the UK in response to the recovered memory controversy. The public scrutiny of memory-making in therapy, Burman suggests, is overdetermined by historical anxieties over the role of professional authority in late capitalism. In response to various assaults on therapeutic expertise, clinical trainees become overly anxious and professional organizations have adopted procedures that translate this anxiety into obsessive guidelines, often counter to what good psychotherapy requires. Burman argues that the movement to tighten professional guidelines fails in its aim of reducing the indeterminacies surrounding therapeutic exploration of memory. Burman also reorients this scrutiny toward attending more carefully to assumptions underlying how psychological knowledge about the past is produced. Drawing on recent (including feminist) analyses of memory as a social practice, Burman concludes that self-reflection and multiple perspectives on the past are what matter most to feminist-informed clinical practices.

In the final chapter, Janice Haaken seeks a rapprochement between recovered memory adherents and their critics by offering a culturally informed approach to understanding therapeutic exploration of sexual scenes from childhood. Enlisting feminist theory as a critical lens for a psychoanalytic reading of memory, she shows how the cultural materials available to both therapist and client shape the versions of the past recovered. As the client

recounts his or her personal history, particular events also emerge as prototypical of later conflicts. Haaken explains how scenes of child sexual abuse, and particularly father/daughter incest, acquired social symbolic loadings in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in the context of shifting gender roles, as they allowed women to give voice to less readily articulated female grievances. Haaken introduces the concept of *transformative remembering* to illustrate the creative side of therapeutic exploration of the past and how the organization of the self and the organization of memory are intertwined. Her focus on *remembering* rather than *memory* – on the verb rather than the noun – foregrounds the search for representations in childhood that support emerging capacities in female development, including resistances to patriarchal control. Haaken also applies the concept of transformative remembering to a case from her clinical practice. Haaken concludes, much as do the other contributors to this section, that literal readings of memory inhibit exploration of the dynamics of remembering, and of the shifting uses of scenes from childhood over time, particularly as new scenes of struggle emerge on the psychological and social horizons to permit new forms of remembering.

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