

This volume brings together contributions from a variety of anthropologists working in a variety of fields, including archaeology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, and ethnohistory, in order to reflect on the importance of memory and its public presentation. The intense interest surrounding the 400th anniversary of Jamestown in 2007 was the immediate occasion for this theme, and the volume has several chapters on issues devoted to memory in the U.S. South. While museums often present themselves as neutral settings for the interpretation of artifacts, they are deeply embedded in cultural, political, and social situations that anthropologists are in a unique position to evaluate. Moreover, the volume is noteworthy for including analyses of more informal sites of memory, including oral history, that connect local pasts and futures. A sophisticated, multilayered examination of a now trendy topic in anthropology, this work seeks to question widely held notions about collective memory, always reminding us that museums and monuments inform each of us of the past in some particular way and insist that we add it to our consciousness—that we remember it.

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