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Kimberly A. Longfellow
Gettysburg College

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Kimberly Longfellow

Kimberly Longfellow is a 2016 graduate of Gettysburg College. She graduated as the Valedictorian of her class with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and German Studies. She conducted the research for this paper as part of her coursework during the fall of her junior year, working closely with Professor VoonChin Phua.

We often think of our memories as extremely private and personal; however, research indicates a collective component to the formation of memories. While memories may be stored in individuals' minds, the memories individuals recall as important are often the result of a complex *social* negotiation with the past. Recent research into the process of memory formation (Schuman and Scott 1985; Schuman and Rodgers 2004; Corning 2010) has specifically studied the importance of age in determining what events are deemed memorable by the individual; other studies (Larson and Lizardo 2007; Griffin 2004) have indicated that the process of memory formation is far more complex, and can be influenced by race, region, and education. These demographic factors may be of increased significance when discussing the memories of social movements, as a smaller, more specific demographic group may participate in these movements.

For my study, I will analyze Schuman and Scott's (1985) and Schuman and Rodgers' (2004) datasets, in which respondents were asked to name two events that have occurred since 1930 that they believe to be the most significant to American history. While previous research has focused specifically on the age of the respondent as an independent variable, education may increase in significance as time from the event increases and as the event is incorporated into a larger historical narrative. Specifically studying those who recalled the Women's Movement as one of the two most significant events in American history since 1930 in both the earlier and later surveys, I will study the following questions: (1)When certain demographic factors such as gender, race, and region of residence are considered, do age and education have a significant effect on who recalled the Women's Movement as one of the most important events of recent decades? (2)Does the influence of these variables change as the chronological distance from the event increases?

PAST LITERATURE ON COLLECTIVE MEMORIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Founding Theories of Collective Memory and the Critical Period of Adolescence

While the study of collective memory and memory formation has captured international interest beginning especially during the "Memory Boom" of the 1970s, the process of memory has been studied since the early 1900s. Theorists such as Maurice Halbwachs (1950) asserted that although memories appear to exist within individual's minds, they are, in actuality, the results of micro- and macro-level discourse that reaffirms and reinterprets specific narratives, leading to similarities in what is deemed significant across groups and within a population.

Karl Mannheim (1952) discussed specifically the transmission and reinterpretation of memories through time and across generations. As Mannheim (1952:292) notes, society is characterized by the constant disappearance of older generations and the exposure of new generations to previously gathered knowledge. Mannheim (1952:300-301) thus posits that the most important time for memory formation is during these moments of fresh contact, which he predicted to occur during the "critical period" of an individual's adolescence, specifically between the ages of 17 and 25. That is to say, events experienced during this period will be recalled by the individual as more significant than events that occurred before or after the individual's critical period.

Quantitative memory studies (Schuman and Scott 1965; Schuman and Rodgers 2004; Corning 2010; Larson and Lizardo 2007) have tested if Mannheim's idea of the "critical period" holds true. This involved surveying a large group of individuals, asking demographic questions, and then asking them to name two events they believed to be of historical significance within a specific time range/location. Many times, events were more likely to be named by people who experienced them during their critical period than by those who did not experience them during

their critical period (Schuman and Scott 1985; Schuman and Rodgers 2004; Corning 2010; Jennings 1996).

The Influence of Factors Beyond Age

Throughout their critical periods a person experiences infinite moments that could be considered "memorable." A process must exist through which some memories emerge as more noteworthy than others. It is unlikely that age alone singularly determines which memories are formed and viewed as significant; rather, demographic factors such as race, region of residence, and education may also have a noteworthy influence.

Research has indicated that for specific events that were highly racialized (meaning that they specifically dealt with race or tended to include members of one race more than another), race was an influential factor in who recalled the particular event as the most important event of the given time period (Schuman and Rodgers 2004; Griffin 2004). Similarly, if events were heavily tied to specific regions, people from that region would be more likely to recall that event as the most important of the given time period (Griffin 2004). Lastly, research studies have shown in situations where the event has become historicized and continues to play an active role in society (such as historical figures who have later become popularized), the educational level of the respondent does influence who is more or less likely to recall the event or figure as the most important of a given time period (Larson and Lizardo 2007; Griffin 2004).

Social Movements and Collective Memory

Recollections of social movements are particularly interesting to study because they, unlike events such as assassinations or terrorist attacks, do not occur in single, dramatic points of time, and as such, may be less tied to one specific point in history, and as such, may be less tied to people of a specific age. Also, social movements often involve a more specific segment of the

population (for example, women were more likely to participate in the Women's Movement than men); therefore, demographic factors such as gender, race, region, and education may have increased influence. Focusing specifically on the Women's Movement, I will observe the influence of age when other demographic factors are considered.

Memory over Time

While past research has certainly researched the relationship between specific demographic variables and the recollection of specific events, fewer studies have studied whether and how the influence of these demographic variables changes over time (Corning 2013). As time increases from an event, there will eventually come a time when no respondents were alive to experience a particular event during their critical periods of adolescence, and they rely entirely upon their historical memories. Historical memory may be more strongly influenced by education, region of residence, and gender, and how the event is portrayed and consumed through public commemoration and media (Corning and Schuman 2013), as these factors may shape and alter the way the person encounters and learns about this event. By using two surveys conducted about fifteen years apart, I will also observe the influence of age over time, and whether other factors such as education become more important as the chronological distance from the event increases.

DATA AND METHODS

For this study, I analyzed the longitudinal data collected by Schuman and Rodgers (2004), which merged the data originally collected by Schuman and Scott (1985) and their own replication of the survey fifteen years later, between 2000 and 2001. Although the data spans two time periods, respondents were asked the same question with the same wording and time frame of American history. Respondents were asked about demographic information, including their

year of birth, gender, race, region, and level of education in terms of years. Lastly, they were asked to name two events that occurred in America since 1930 that they believed were the most important. As a matter of clarification, it is important to note that by not stating a particular event is the most important, it does not imply that all other events are unimportant; rather it simply means that it was not regarded as one of the top two significant events named by the respondent.

The first survey in 1985 had an N-size of 1,410 and the second survey in 2000-2001 had an N-size of 3,884. Together, the merged dataset has an N-size of 5,294. Excluding cases where there was missing information in one or more of the independent variables, 5,082 cases were included within the regressions. The respondents were asked the following question: "There have been a lot of national and world events and changes over the past (50/70) or so years – say, from about 1930 right up until today. Would you mention one or two such events or changes that seem to you to have been especially important?" (Schuman and Rodgers 2004:219).

Memory is incredibly abstract and intangible, and it is not unreasonable to question the idea of quantifiably studying memory in favor of qualitative research, such as interviews. However, memory is often communicative, and the process of conversing could prompt respondents to consider events or memories they otherwise would not have considered initially. By utilizing an open-ended survey rather than verbally prompting respondents or having respondents select events from a list of 10-20 pre-selected options, Schuman and Scott (2004) and Schuman and Rodger's (2004) encourage the respondent to explore their thoughts independently, without specific prompting by a researcher. A survey also standardizes the process, there is less of a chance of bias from the researcher influencing the respondent's answer.

Dependent and Independent Variables

The dependent variable in this study was whether the Women's Movement was one of the two important events named by the respondent or not at all. To avoid selection bias, responses in the data marked as "missing" for the Women's Movement were recoded and included with respondents that did not recall the event as significant.

In order to compare the influence of factors over time, the data was separated and coded into groups of when the survey was completed (1985 or 2000-2001). By splitting the file in the logistic regressions, one could see how the influence of specific variables changed between the two surveys.

Independent variables included age/cohort, gender, race, region, and level of education. While it would have been optimal to include variables such as income and political orientation, such variables were not included within the original surveys, and thus is a limitation of the data. For a full description of how variables were coded, see Appendix 1.

RESULTS

Initial Investigation of Variables

After cases with missing values were excluded, the total N-Size of cases included in the logistic regressions was 5,082. No variables had a large enough number of missing cases to threaten the quality of the variable as a tool for measurement. For a complete description of the univariate results, see Appendix 2.

Logistic Regression Models

In order to test the influence of age and education on the recollections of the Women's Movement, multiple logistic regressions were run. Each model included variables such as gender, race, and region, and one at a time, variables measuring education and variations of age were added. See Table 1 for all models.

Model 1 was included to serve as a control model, where neither education nor any variation of age was included. This model shows how demographic factors such as gender, region, and race influenced who did and did not recall the Women's Movement. In 1985, gender had the largest and most significant impact, with women being more likely to recall the Women's Movement by a factor of 5.425 as compared to men. This finding is significant at $p<0.001$. In 2000-2001, gender was still a highly influential variable but by a smaller factor, with women being more likely to recall the Women's Movement by a factor of 3.456 as compared to men. This finding is also significant at $p<0.001$.

In Model 2, the variable, "education" was introduced. Education was coded into an ordinal variable with five values indicating different ranges of years of education (with "1" being the fewest years of education, and "5" being the highest number of years of education). In the 1985 data, education was *not* significant even at $p<0.10$. However, in the 2000-2001 data, education did have an effect. For every 1 unit increase in the level of education, the odds of recalling the Women's Movement as a significant event increased by a factor of 1.271. These findings are significant at $p<0.10$. Education continued to be significant at $p<0.10$ for the 2000-2001 data through the rest of the models, even after the inclusion of age.

In Model 3, the first variation on the variable "age" was introduced. This variable was simply a scale variable that recorded the age of the respondent when he or she took the survey. In both the 1985 and the 2000-2001 data, the variable "age" was not significant at $p<0.10$.

In Model 4, the second variation on the variable "age" was introduced. This variation on the "age" variable was a scale variable that recorded the birth year of the respondent. While this variable is, in theory, extremely similar to the "age" variable, it is slightly different. Because the survey was completed at two different points in time, a respondent in 1985 could have the same

age as a respondent in 2000-2001, yet they could have different birth years. For example, a respondent who is recorded as 25 in the 1985 survey would have been born in 1960, whereas a respondent who is recorded as 25 in the 2000-2001 survey would have been born in 1975-1976. Including both of these variables examines whether people who happen to be around the same age (regardless of the time period) are interested in the same events. In both the 1985 and the 2000-2001 data, however, the variable "cohort" was not significant at $p<0.10$.

In Model 5, a third variation of age was introduced. In this variable, the birth year of the respondent was subtracted from the year 1970 (the approximate mid-point of the Women's Movement, which spanned the 1960s and 1970s). This would give the age of the respondent during the Women's Movement. These ages were then grouped into "before," "during," and "after" Mannheim's critical period (ages 17 through 25), with the reference group being those who experienced the Women's Movement during the critical period. In the 1985 data, people who were above Mannheim's critical period were less likely to recall the Women's Movement as significant by a factor of 0.359 as compared to those during their critical period. These findings were significant at $p<0.05$. However, in the 2000-2001 data, neither cohort group had a significant relationship to who recalled the Women's Movement, even at $p<0.10$.

In Model 6, an extended version of Mannheim's critical period was used to examine whether this would strengthen existing patterns. Corning (2010) used a slightly extended version of Mannheim's critical period, which went from the age of 12 to the age of 29. In the 1985 data, people who were above Mannheim's critical period during the Women's Movement were less likely to recall the Women's Movement by a factor of 0.395 as compared to those who were in the extended version of Mannheim's critical period during the Women's Movement. This result is significant at $p<0.05$. Similar to Model 10, in the 2000-2001 survey neither cohort group had a

significant relationship to who recalled the Women's Movement even at $p<0.10$. Together these findings indicate that in terms of the Women's Movement, age is not the only important factor in the formation of memories. More so, age becomes less influential as the chronological distance from the Women's Movement increases.

Table 1: Multivariate Logistic Regressions Predicting the Odds of Recalling the Women's Movement

Dependent Variable: Respondent Recalling the Women's Movement as a Significant Event								
Independent Variable			**Model 1**	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
1985 Data	**Gender** Ref: Male	Female=1	5.425***	5.583***	5.682***	5.682***	5.662***	5.666***
	Region Ref: Northcentral	West	0.342**	0.334**	0.339**	0.339**	0.356*	0.352**
		Northeast	0.500	0.496	0.541	0.541	0.547	0.566
		South	0.509	0.526	0.532	0.532	0.556	0.558
	Race Ref: White	Black	1.311	1.335	1.202	1.202	1.207	1.218
		Hispanic	3.213	3.210	2.944	2.944	3.102	2.757
		Asian	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		Indian	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Educational Level	(1-5)	----	1.149	1.100	1.100	1.064	1.070
	Age		----	----	0.982	----	----	----
	Cohort		----	----	----	1.018	----	----
	Cohort Groups (17-25) Ref: During Critical Period	Below	----	----	----	----	0.679	----
		Above	----	----	----	----	0.359**	----
	Cohort Groups (12-29) Ref: During Critical Period	Below	----	----	----	----	----	0.665
		Above	----	----	----	----	----	0.395**
			Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
	Gender Ref: Male	Female	3.456***	3.526***	3.485***	3.486***	3.468***	3.489***
	Region	West	0.631	0.591	0.587	0.586	0.585	0.584

2000-2001 Data	Ref: Northcentral	Northeast	0.685	0.649	0.581	0.581	0.578	0.582
		South	0.410**	0.405**	0.401**	0.401**	0.403**	0.404**
	Race	Black	2.267**	2.372**	2.369**	2.359**	2.435**	2.392**
	Ref: White	Hispanic	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		Asian	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		Indian	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Educational Level	(1-5)	----	1.271*	1.268*	1.267*	1.282*	1.280*
	Age		----	----	0.994	----	----	----
	Cohort		----	----	----	1.007	----	----
	Cohort Groups (17-25)	Below	----	----	----	----	1.437	----
	Ref: During Critical Period	Above	----	----	----	----	1.274	----
	Cohort Groups (12-29)	Below	----	----	----	----	----	1.579
	Ref: During Critical Period	Above	----	----	----	----	----	1.187

Coefficients are standardized

* p<0.10, ** p <0.05, *** p<.001 (two-tailed test)

Source: Schuman and Rodgers, 2004

DISCUSSION

Memory is indeed a complicated process, and it is unrealistic to expect to find a perfect formula for how memories are created and given value relative to other remembered events; however, the patterns in this study do reveal some insights to what factors affect memory formation, and perhaps more interestingly, how these factors change over time.

The Influence of Age and Education

Throughout these regressions, specific variables emerge as having stronger influences on who was more likely to recall the Women's Movement. The fact that the individual relationships between each independent variable and the likelihood of recalling the Women's Movement did

not change greatly when other variables were introduced indicates that each of these variables operated relatively independently from one another and there were no spurious relationships.

Despite findings by previous studies (Schuman and Scott 1985; Schuman and Rodgers 2004; Corning 2010), neither age nor birth year were significant for either the 1985 and 2000-2001 surveys when studying the group who recalled the Women's Movement as one of their two significant events. When respondents were grouped into "before," "during," and "after" Mannheim's critical period, some clearer relationships did emerge, especially in the 1985 data. However, these results only indicate that if a respondent was above the ages of 25-29, they were less likely to recall the event as compared to those during Mannheim's critical period. Even with this significant relationship, age in any form was far less important that one may have initially suspected, based on the previous literature. This may have occurred because of the nature of social movements. Previous events analyzed by Schuman and Scott (1985) and Schuman and Rodgers (2004) tended to focus on events that occurred at a particular moment or on a specific day, such as the JFK assassination. Social movements, however, have no clear start and stop date, and are more tied to longer time periods than moments. Therefore, events such as social movements may be less likely to imprint themselves at a specific moment in time, and as such, be less tied to age if/when it is recalled later.

While Schuman and Scott (1985) found that educational level had very little importance in terms of who recalled the events that they studied, results from this study show the significance of education increased between the two surveys. In 1985, the survey results indicated that there was no significant relationship between the educational level of the respondent and whether or not the person was likely to recall the Women's Movement as one of their significant events; however, in 2000-2001, results showed that the more educated a person

was, the more likely the person was to recall the Women's Movement. This change in the significance of education could be a result of the changing cultural framing of the Women's Movement itself, as Women Studies courses have increased in number in recent decades, and the Women's Movement may be becoming more of a topic of academic discourse. This could also potentially be reflective of the Women's Movement's general shift to historical knowledge as the chronological distance from the event increases. That is to say, as the event becomes a part of history classes, education increasingly influences who knows about it.

The Changing Population Recalling the Women's Movement

Especially interesting in these results are how the influence of different factors change over time, in that they indicate that the process of memory formation is dynamic. In 1985, results seemed to indicate that those who recalled the Women's Movement as the most important event seemed to be those who were more likely to have been involved in the Movement itself. It was only in 1985 that cohort groups had any relationship, as those who were in Mannheim's critical period during the Women's Movement were the most likely to recall the Movement as one of the most important events. Additionally, an indication that memories of the Women's Movement in 1985 were based more on participation or involvement was that education had no significant relationship. This indicates that knowledge was gained in a way other than education, which could be experience.

It is the change from 1985 to 2000-2001 that indicates some interesting patterns in the process of memory formation regarding the Women's Movement. Whereas education did not have a significant relationship in 1985, it was significant at $p<0.10$ in 2000-2001, and showed that people with higher educational levels were more likely to recall the Women's Movement as significant. This, combined with the fact that age *in any form* had no significant relationship in

the later survey indicates that memories of the Women's Movement have been shifting from the realm of experiential memories to the realm of historical knowledge.

CONCLUSION

It is clear memory is indeed a complicated and dynamic process, and there is no clear formula to infallibly calculate which events will be recalled as significant; however, the fact that trends do emerge from the demographic data indicates that there is indeed a social component to the process of memory formation, and that memory is not an entirely individual process.

This study leads to insights regarding the process of memory formation of social movements, and more so, the dynamic nature of the process of memory formation. While previous quantitative memory studies often focus only on the influence of age at one moment in time, my findings indicate that as chronological distance from the event increases, experiential factors such as the age in which the person experienced the event decrease in importance. Meanwhile, factors such as the educational level of the respondent increase in importance. That is to say, throughout time, the formation of memories of specific events depends less on who experienced the event, and more on who has more historical knowledge. If memory were only influenced by the age of the person at the time of the event, there would not be these relationships. Together, this indicates that memory formation is a process that changes over time as different generations engage, consume, and interpret the past.

We often assume that the past (and our relationship to it) is static. One cannot change what happened in the past. However, although the past itself doesn't change, these results indicate that the way society interacts with the past does change. While there is not a clear formula for the creation of memory, an understanding of the significant factors and processes at work in memory formation is critical, because our understanding of the past affects the view of

the present as well as personal and national identity. Understanding the way memories are created by generations that experienced the event and generations following the event can lead to more effective strategies for addressing the past. In a more dystopian way, an awareness of how memories are perceived, formed, and re-formed can make one more aware of attempts to manipulate or manage these collective memories. This knowledge can impact the way we approach the future in terms of the way events are discussed and narratives are socially constructed.

While this study did uncover some interesting aspects to the process of memory formation, future research could expand on this study. This dataset was useful in that it allowed the respondents to freely recall events rather than choosing from a list of events (thus functioning as a more valid simulation of the memory process); however, future studies can and should include a larger variety of demographic factors, to include more independent variables in the analysis. Because the dataset I used focused more on the importance of age in memory formation, it did not include a large range of potential independent variables. For example, in future replications of this survey method, it may be insightful to include political orientation and income as independent variables in order to examine if it has an impact on who is more or less likely to recall the specific event. Inclusion of more independent variables would allow for an even more nuanced understanding of what factors influence the social negotiation of memories of social movements as well as events in general. Future qualitative studies could continue to research acts of commemoration and the media presentation of the Women's Movement for a more nuanced understanding of how generations that did not experience it firsthand interact and engage with the Women's Movement through time.

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Appendix 1: Coding of Independent and Dependent Variables

Name of Variable	Description of Variable	Independent or Dependent	Coding	Dummy Coding
Women's Movement	Records whether the respondent recalled the Women's Movement as one of their two significant events.	Dependent	0 (did not recall) 1 (did recall)	N/A
Survey Year	Records whether the result was a part of the 1985 data or the 2000-2001 data.	Independent Variable (each regression is split by this variable)	0 (1985) 1 (2000-2001)	N/A
Cohort	Records the birth year of the respondent.	Independent Variable	Continuous Value	N/A
Age	Records the age of the respondent at the time of the completion of the survey.	Independent Variable	Continuous Value	N/A
Mannheim's Critical Period (17-25)	Records the age of the respondent in the year 1970 (the midpoint of the Women's Movement). This scale variable was then broken down into groups of "before," "during," and "after" Mannheim's critical period (ages 17-25)	Independent Variable	1 (Before Mannheim's Critical Period) 2 (During Mannheim's Critical Period) 3 (After Mannheim's Critical Period)	**agewomen17_before** 1 (before Critical Period) 0 (all else) **agewomen17_after** 1 (after Critical Period) 0 (all else) **Reference Group: during Critical period**
Mannheim's Critical Period (12-29)	Records the age of the respondent in the year 1970 (the midpoint of the Women's Movement). This scale variable was then broken down into groups of "before," "during," and "after" an extended form of Mannheim's critical period (ages 12-29) as had been done in previous surveys	Independent Variable	1 (Before Mannheim's Critical period) 2 (During Mannheim's Critical Period) 3 (After Mannheim's Critical Period)	**agewomen12_29_before** 1 (before Critical Period) 0 (all else) **agewomen12_29after** 1 (after Critical Period) 0 (all else) **Reference Group: during Critical period**
Gender	Records the gender of the respondent.	Independent Variable	0 (Male) 1 (Female)	N/A
Region	Records the region of the United States where the respondent identifies as living.	Independent Variable	1 (West) 2 (Northcentral) 3 (Northeast) 4 (South)	**west2** 1 (west) 0 (all else) **northeast2** 1 (northeast) 0 (all else) **south2** 1 (south) 0 (all else) **Reference Group: Northcentral**

Educational Level	Records the educational level of the respondent in terms of years.	Independent Variable	1 (0 to 11) 2 (12) 3 (13-15) 4 (16) 5 (17+)	N/A
Race	Records the race of the respondent, grouping them into five different categories.	Independent Variable	1 (white) 2 (black) 3 (Hispanic) 4 (Indian) 5 (Asian)	**black** 1 (black) 0 (all else) **hispanic** 1 (Hispanic) 0 (all else) **indian** 1 (Indian) 0 (all else) **asian** 1 (Asian) 0 (all else) **Reference Group: White**

Appendix 2: Univariate Analysis of Variables
Total N-Size: 5,294
N-Size (with no missing values in any variables): 5,082

Variable	Number of Missing	Category	Frequency
Survey	0	1985 2000-2001	1,410 3,884
Women's Movement	0	Did Recall as Significant Did Not Recall as Significant	88 5,206
Gender	2	Women Men	2,937 2,355
Region	0	West Northcentral Northeast South	1,127 1,385 988 1,794
Education Level	54	0 to 11 years 12 years 13-15 years 16 years 17+ years	573 1,590 1,534 833 710
Race	140	White Black Hispanic Indian Asian	4,251 465 280 71 87
Variable	**Number of Missing**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**
Cohort	48	1,888	1,983