

# The Politics of Remembering: The Economics of Forgetting



**Popular Music of Vietnam: The Politics of Remembering, the Economics of Forgetting (Routledge Studies in Ethnomusicology)** by Dale A. Olsen

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

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## By Jennifer Healey

Memory and forgetting are essential to the human experience. We remember the past to make sense of the present and to plan for the future. We forget the past to move on from painful experiences and to make room for new ones. However, memory and forgetting are not simply individual processes. They are also social and political processes that are shaped by economic factors.

In this book, I explore the political economy of memory and forgetting. I examine how economic factors shape the ways in which we remember and forget the past. I argue that memory and forgetting are used to justify and legitimize economic policies, and that they can be used to promote or hinder social and economic change.

## **Chapter 1: The Political Economy of Memory**

In the first chapter, I provide a theoretical overview of the political economy of memory. I draw on the work of scholars in a variety of disciplines, including economics, sociology, history, and political science, to develop a framework for understanding how economic factors shape memory and forgetting.

I argue that economic factors shape memory and forgetting in three main ways. First, economic factors can determine what is remembered and what is forgotten. For example, the memories of the poor and working class are often marginalized in history, while the memories of the wealthy and powerful are more likely to be preserved.

Second, economic factors can shape the ways in which memories are interpreted. For example, the memories of economic crises are often used to justify austerity policies, while the memories of economic booms are used to justify tax cuts for the wealthy.

Third, economic factors can shape the ways in which memories are used. For example, the memories of past injustices can be used to mobilize social movements for change, while the memories of past victories can be used to legitimize the status quo.

## **Chapter 2: The Economics of Forgetting**

In the second chapter, I focus on the economics of forgetting. I argue that forgetting is not simply the opposite of remembering. Rather, forgetting is an active process that is shaped by economic factors.

I identify three main economic factors that shape forgetting. First, forgetting can be used to reduce cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance is the discomfort that we feel when we hold two or more contradictory beliefs. For example, we may believe that we are good people, but we may also have memories of things that we are not proud of. Forgetting these memories can help to reduce the cognitive dissonance that we feel.

Second, forgetting can be used to reduce the risk of punishment. For example, we may forget the memories of crimes that we have committed in order to avoid being punished.

Third, forgetting can be used to increase the likelihood of reward. For example, we may forget the memories of past failures in order to increase our chances of success in the future.

### **Chapter 3: The Politics of Memory and Forgetting in the United States**

In the third chapter, I provide a case study of the politics of memory and forgetting in the United States. I examine how economic factors have shaped the ways in which Americans remember and forget the past.

I focus on two specific examples: the memory of slavery and the memory of the Great Depression. I argue that the memory of slavery has been used to justify racial discrimination and inequality, while the memory of the Great Depression has been used to justify austerity policies.

### **Chapter 4: The Future of Memory and Forgetting**

In the fourth and final chapter, I discuss the future of memory and forgetting. I argue that the political economy of memory and forgetting is changing in the 21st century. New technologies, such as social media and

the internet, are making it easier for people to remember and share their memories. This is creating new challenges and opportunities for the politics of memory and forgetting.

I conclude by arguing that we need to develop a new politics of memory and forgetting that is based on the principles of justice and equality. We need to remember the past in order to learn from our mistakes and to avoid repeating them. We also need to forget the past in order to move on from painful experiences and to make room for new ones.

The politics of remembering and forgetting is a complex and ever-changing field. Economic factors play a significant role in shaping the ways in which we remember and forget the past. We need to be aware of these factors in order to understand how they are used to justify and legitimize economic policies. We also need to be aware of the ways in which memory and forgetting can be used to promote or hinder social and economic change.



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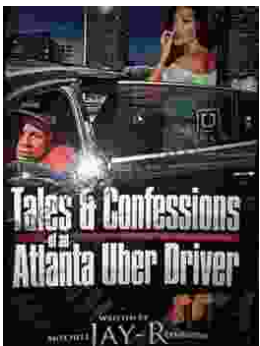
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