

Remembering



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SCIENCE OF MEMORY: CONCEPTS

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Memory

Memory is an imprint of past experiences – the retention of experience-dependent internal representations and the capacity to reactivate such representations

Memory

- Memory is a form of **learning** - an organized knowledge that grows and becomes better organized.
- What we know changes, as our memories expand and are altered.
- This is some of our focus in the project – how can we change our minds/memories?

Memory

Memory is always about representation.

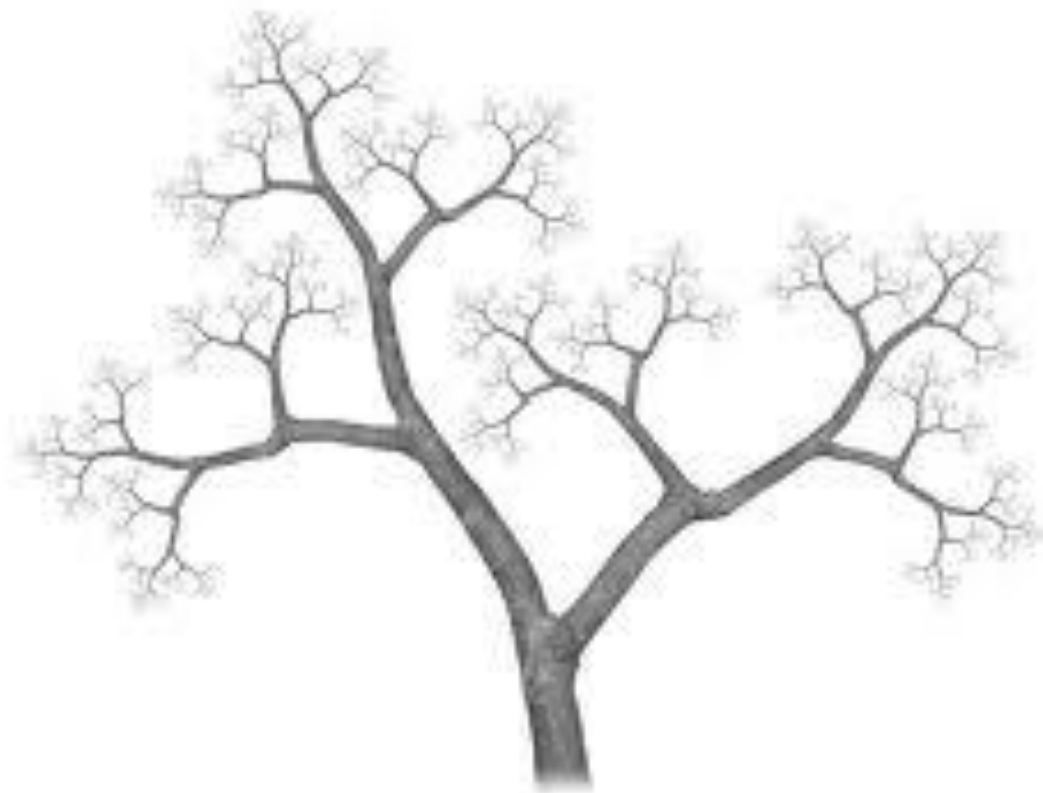
There is no thing that actually happened, or if there is, we can never know what it is. Memory and perception are about interpretation.

This connects memory and artistic practices such as ours.

Memories

- Memories are refreshed and consolidated by rehearsal.
- Memories are reanimated by retrieval cues.
- Memories are associative. Someone last week talked about trees.

Fractals



Types of memory

- Short term
- Long term

Short term memory

- Working memory – stuff that you need to know now, but can usefully forget, like the number of your hotel room.
- Stuff that you are thinking about now, or have taken out of the memory bank to use.

Long term memories

Memories that are not the focus of attention right now but can be retrieved.

Long term

- Procedural – stuff you just know how to do and don't think about. Not conscious.
 - Include most motor activities, like how to catch a ball
- Declarative – stuff you recall consciously
 - Falls into several categories
 - Semantic
 - Episodic/autobiographical

Declarative memory - Semantic

- Knowledge of facts out of context
 - Paris is the capital of France
 - Four plus four is eight

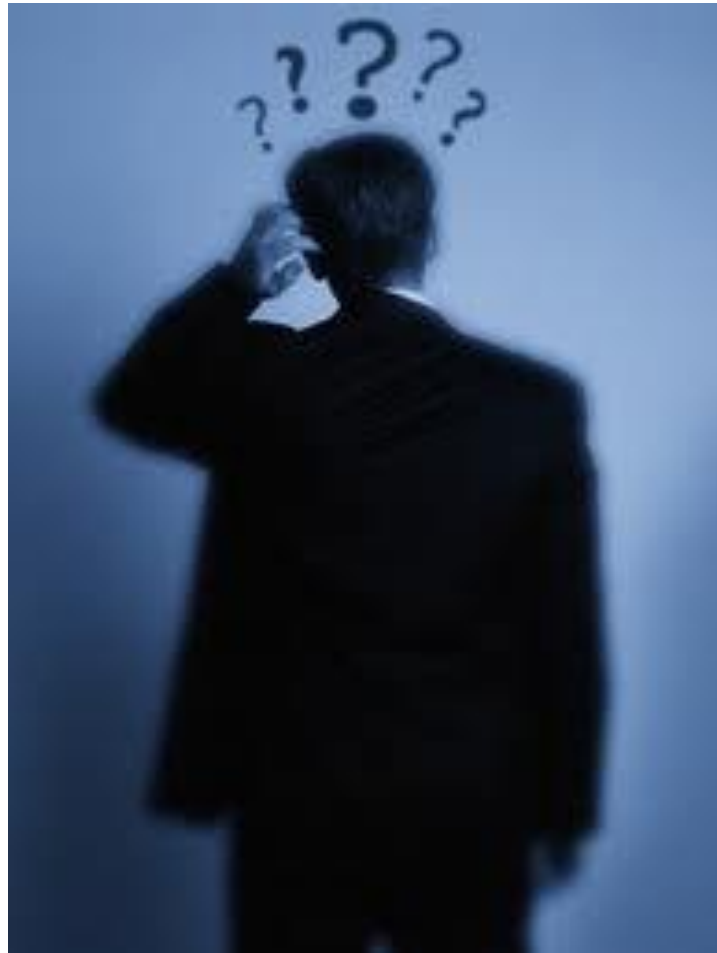
Declarative memory- autobiographical

- I am a teacher
- My name is Claire
- I live on Birney Avenue
- I don't smoke

Declarative memory – episodic

- Episodic – sometimes known as flashback memories
 - Memory of events
 - Self contained, but spread out into other memories
 - Lots of emotional charge
 - Physically located

Forgetting



Forgetting - definition

Forgetting is what happens when remembering does not occur

Why we forget

- Forgetting long term memories means that a retrieval cue that once worked doesn't work any more.
- Forgetting is not caused by time, but what occurs during the passage of time (like rust).
- Some argue that's it's impossible to tell whether or not something forgotten was ever 'really remembered.'

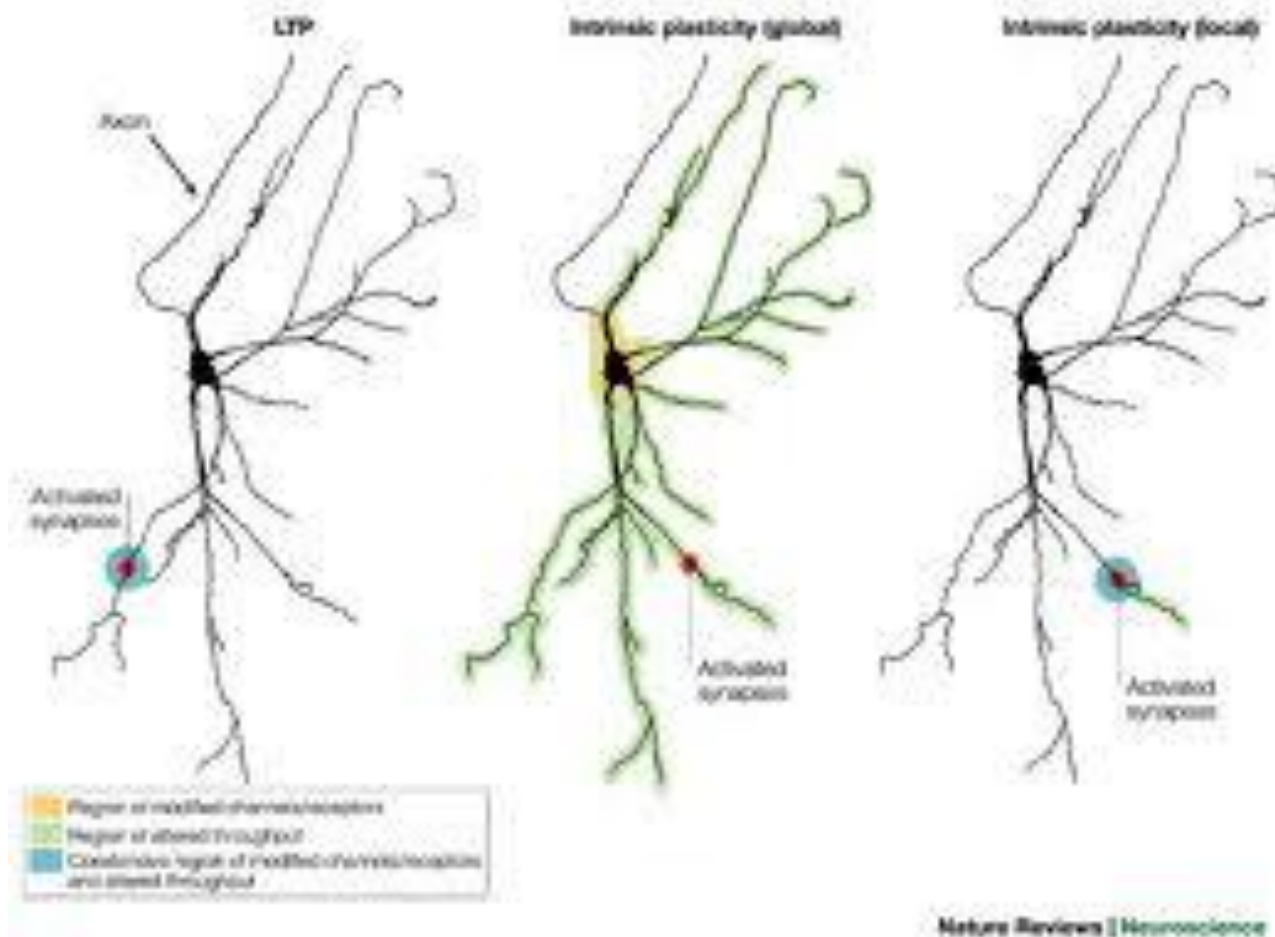
Things that make us forget

- Inhibition – including physical alterations.
- Interference – too much going on, confusing signals.
- Time course – we can't remember everything (nor would we want to).
- Motivated forgetting – denial, repression.

The Engram

- Traditional thinking in neuroscience is forgetting occurs when a memory trace (or engram) degrades

The Engram – a physical ‘thing’ in the brain

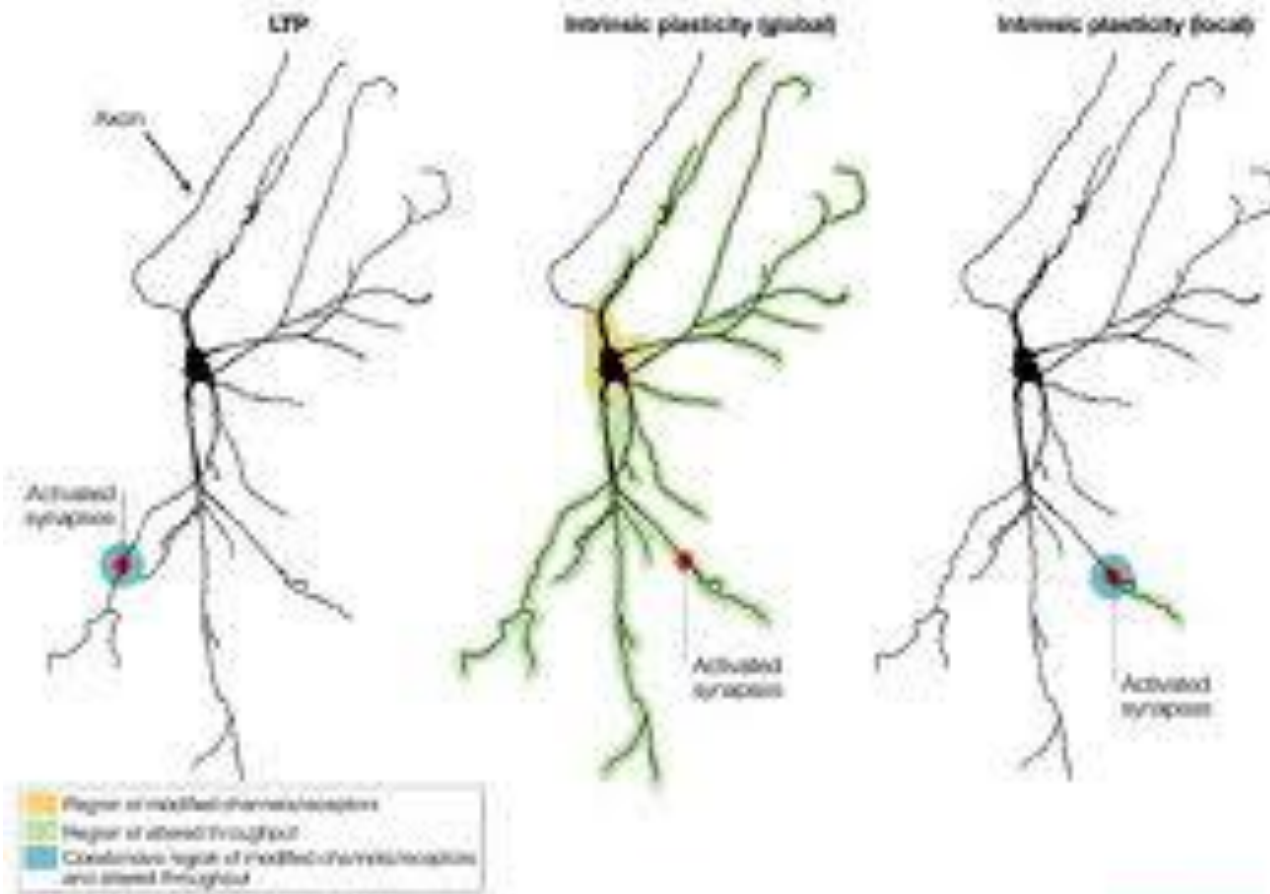


New theories

- Retrieval is not distinct from memory
- Memory is not one 'thing'
- The brain is much more plastic and adaptable than we thought – less like a computer and more like a tree



Less like this



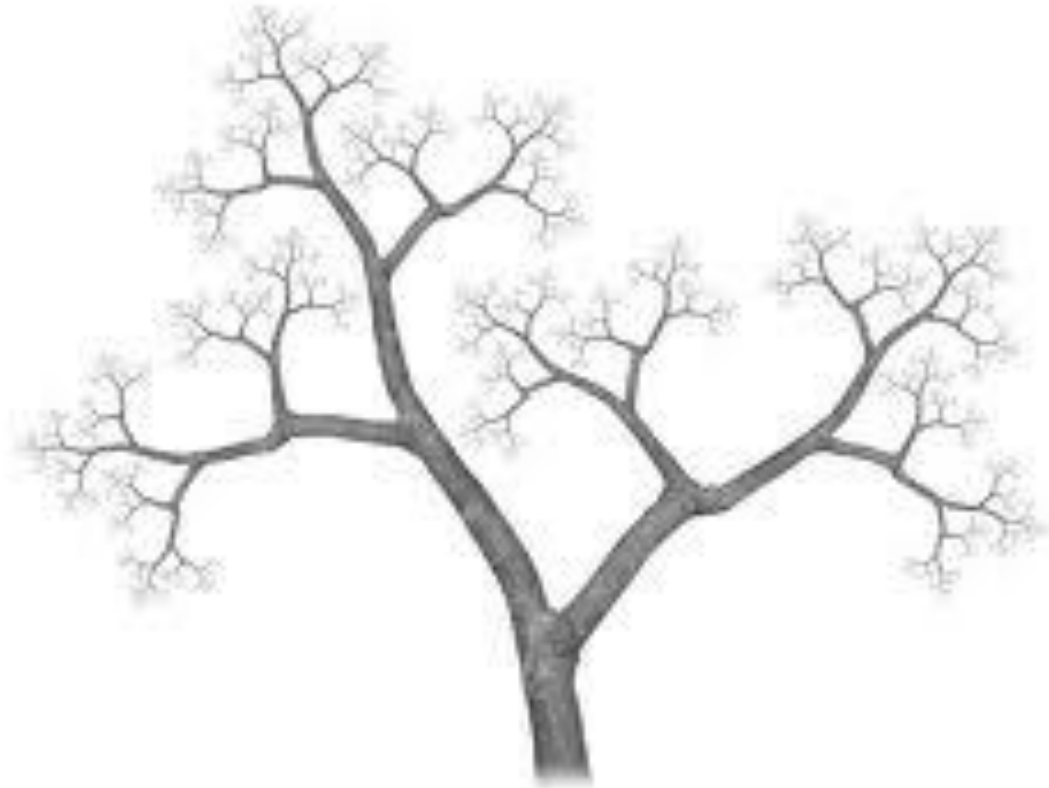
And more like this



New theories about memories

- Contextual and distributed
 - Context includes
 - Culture
 - Emotion
 - Physical location (and stuff)
 - Relationships
- To do with process – memories are assembled differently on different occasions

Memory is networked, distributed,
and relational



The Memory Project

- Year One – individual work
 - June Shows: Memory Collections
- Year Two – collective work
 - June Shows: Communities of Memory

Memory Box



Memory Box



Memory Box



Queering the Genre



The Immediate Plan

- We'll break from December 19th – Jan 9th
- This gives us ten meetings

We'll offer prompts each week

Weeks One and Two: Episodic memories

Weeks Three and Four: Cherished memories

Weeks Five and Six: Difficult Memories

Weeks Seven and Eight: Queer memories

Weeks Nine and Ten: Family memories

There'll be opportunities to share



And if you get on a roll, you can carry on writing and ignore the prompt



Write! Write! Write!

- An hour or a page a day
- Go off on tangents
- Keep the pen moving
- Be playful
- Don't edit in the early stages

10-15 minutes at the start of class

- To talk about memory
- To hear an interesting piece of work
- To suggest ideas