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**Title:** Neolithic personal memory: cognitive change and the scaffolded mind

**Abstract:** Cognitive archaeologists deploy increasingly precise evidence about changes in material culture, social organisation, technical skill, and symbolic activity to identify historical changes in cognition. Although memory is a natural domain for such enquiry, some views of its nature, functions, and evolution make it hard to find room for substantial cognitive change on the timescales in question. I explore a hypothesis about the emergence of richer personal memories around the larger stable settlements of the Neolithic Middle East like Çatalhöyük, c.7000-6000 BCE. I bring archaeological evidence into contact with two bodies of work on memory in cognitive theory: on the social and communicative role of episodic recall, and on the scaffolded or situated nature of remembering. Basic human capacities for remembering, imagining, and mental time travel, in place well before the Neolithic, are deployed or knitted together in specific, culturally-inflected ways. Children learn skills of and norms for autobiographical remembering in slow, multi-staged, variable processes of enculturation, involving diverse cognitive, affective, interpersonal, and narrative resources. The hypothesis that the Neolithic saw significant if uneven changes in these norms and practices, with new demands on tracking events and commitments over time, can help sharpen the requirements for assessing claims about cognitive change.

**Bio:** John Sutton is Professor of Cognitive Science at Macquarie University in Sydney. His recent work includes the coedited volume *Collaborative Remembering: theories, research, and applications* (OUP), and articles on distributed cognition, social memory, skill and expertise, music and dance cognition, and cognitive history.