**Essay 3: Entering the academic conversation (research essay)**

In Essay 2, you wrote a literature review that analyzed the current state of scholarship on the topic of cultural representations of the Holocaust. Now, for your final essay, you will conduct original research in order to enter into that academic conversation.

Your assignment:

Identify and closely analyze a primary source that allows you to investigate a question, problem, issue, or debate that was raised by the sources discussed in your literature review. Write a 6 to 7 page essay that presents an argument about how this source contributes to our understanding of the question or problem at hand. Your essay should *enter the existing academic conversation* by making an argument about *how* we should interpret the primary source and *why* thisinterpretation is *significant* with regard to current scholarship.

To present this argument, you will need to:

* Introduce the topic at hand, briefly survey the existing scholarship, explain your research question, introduce the case your essay will examine, and state your thesis.
* Provide an assessment of the scholarly conversation most relevant to your argument. For example, if your literature review concluded that one methodological approach was more useful than others, and you aim to position your essay as contributing to this body of scholarship, it would be useful to analyze that segment of the literature in more depth to contextualize your research. (It may also make sense to introduce additional secondary works here.)
* Orient readers to your primary source and guide readers through your analysis of it by working closely with evidence.
* Draw conclusions. Explain how your findings affirm, extend, complicate, challenge, or otherwise contribute to the existing academic conversation.

Source requirements

The following source requirements are in addition to the assignment course readings discussed in your literature review:

* You should analyze **one primary source**, such as a film, memoir, novel, short story, historical event, or data set you create. This will serve as the focus of your analysis.
* You should integrate a minimum of **two additional academic secondary works** (books or journal articles that address your essay’s topic or your primary source) into your discussion. These sources must be sources of claims (not simply background information). In other words, you should use these sources to represent part of the existing conversation about the issue at take or about the case you are analyzing.
* You may use either APA or MLA citation style in this essay.