Revised Structural Map: US Holocaust Memorial Research Essay

**Introduction**

Par. 1 *–* Set up argument (use intro template)

-State thesis*:* While the construction of Holocaust memorials in the United States correlates with the increase in Holocaust consciousness described by Peter Novick, closer analysis suggests it was the initiative of local interest groups, rather than a general shift in public opinion, that drove the actual construction of memorials themselves.

**Literature review:**

Par. 2-Provide an overview of the issues at stake in the scholarly conversation on

how the Holocaust is represented in our culture and focus readers’ attention on issue of Holocaust memorials (Wiesel, Doneson; Bauer, Wiesel; Young)

-provide overview of Novick’s argument and use to set up research question about US Holocaust memorials

**Analysis of case:**

Part One: *Initial observations: US memorials construction correlates to Novick’s claim*

Par. 3 – provide overview of primary source (data set on US memorial creation) to

provide readers with necessary context

Par. 4 – explain timeline findings and show how it does generally correlate with

Novick’s claim

-incorporate counter-argument: there is not a spike until 1980s/90s, which is later than Novick suggests)

-refute counter-argument by pointing out that delayed spike in memorial creations may be accounted for by fact that initiatives begun in 1970s may not have come to fruition until 1980s

Part Two: *Adding complication: Limitations of initial interpretation + Sontag’s theory*

Par. 5 – connect my findings about general correlation to Novick’s claim with Pierre

Nora’s theory that in general there is an inverse relationship between “individual” memory and an increase in “external” memory (such as memorials), which he connects to the development of “collective memory.”

-Explain that for this reason it might *appear* that the construction of US memorials is evidence of increasing collective memory.

-Add complication by pointing out there is not evidence that shows these specific memorials are actually connected to increased awareness in a community.

 – Introduce Susan Sontag’s claim that there is no such thing as collective

memory, but only “individual” memory, and that things like memorials and museums are simply people in influence in society saying the history is important to know about.

 -Set up new question: does this concept provide a more useful lens to analyze

my primary source?

Part Three: *Arguing thesis: How the US Holocaust memorial data supports Sontag’s claim about individual/group initiative and values*

Par. 6 – Synthesize and incorporate evidence from data set to demonstrate that

evidence supports Sontag’s claim because have interest group(s) coming together to commemorate the Holocaust in their community

Par. 7 – Use close analysis of two memorials to develop argument further

**Conclusion**

Par. 8 -Use Trouillot to raise question of why communities remember some events

and not others, and what we believe is important to remember relates to our own community or national identity

 -connect this back to Sontag’s claim about how the way the US remembers

the Holocaust is in part a commentary on the US as “being exempt” from this kind of evil

-suggest avenue for future research: analysis of memorial designs could help us explore the actual message the memorials send and whether they, like the German memorials Young examines focus on absence and loss, or whether they connect to the idea Sontag raises of the US as rejecting this kind of hateful ideology

**Sources:**

All 6 course readings from literature review (all but Novick are sources of context; Novick is a source of a claim)

Academic secondary works:

Nora, P. (1989). Between memory and history: Les lieux de memoire. *Representations, 26,* 7-24. (source of concept)

Sontag, Susan. (2004) *Regarding the pain of others*. Picador. (source of claim)

Trouillot, M. R. (1995). *Silencing the past: Power and the production of history.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press. (source of concept)

Primary source: US Holocaust Memorial data set and timeline (source of information/evidence)