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*An Argument for Regenerative Shaming
Through Its use in Holocaust and American
Lynching Memorials*

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and that it is entirely my own work.

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ABSTRACT

An Argument for *Regenerative Shaming* Through Its use in Holocaust and American Lynching Memorials - Lindsay Christine Leach

There is a global memorial culture around the memorialization of victims of mass tragedies, but these people are dead, so then what is the goal of these radically expensive monuments? This research explores the means by in which periods of national shame are memorialized. It seeks to determine whether memory culture is important, and whether memorials to shameful or perhaps controversial collective memory are indeed beneficial. This is addressed by means of two case studies, analyzing the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* in Berlin, and *The National Memorial for Peace and Justice* in Alabama. These 2 monuments were chosen for their aesthetic and controversial similarities. The German monument is dedicated to the 6 million Jewish people who were exterminated by the National Socialists during the Second World War, while the American monument highlights the thousands of lynchings that occurred in the United States before and after the American Civil War. For the German monument, I conducted an interview with the monument's project manager and examined the existing literature from James E. Young, who was an advisor for the monument's location and style. For the American monument, I looked at existing literature, the monument's own published work, first-hand accounts from journalists who visited the monument, as well as current responses from social media. This work also considers the varying opinions which conflict in relation to these monuments from both sides of the political spectrum. All this research is viewed through the lens of *regenerative shaming* as the best practice which gives true value to any monument dedicated to a period of national shame. This is a process in which the offending party, or their descendants, recognize and publicly acknowledge their wrong doings. This recognition allows for the victims or their descendant to have their pain legitimized rather than minimized, which is the first step to the reintegration of communities. Therefore, the United States should seek to heal its ever-growing racial divide by use of *regenerative shaming* and look to the German memory culture as an example. Financial and educational resources must be put towards to remembering and honouring of those who were victims of the American slave trade and subsequent injustices, in order that the nation may never rewrite the horrors of slavery and racial segregation.

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1 Introduction

“First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a socialist.
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me”.

- Martin Niemöller

This quote serves as a sobering reminder, inscribed on many Holocaust memorial sites. It draws our immediate attention to the need for ordinary citizens to both stand up for those who are being mistreated, regardless of our connection to them, as well as remember and honour those who were victims of great tragedies. The idea that one group of people could be discriminated against is not a new idea, and it is a thought which has held its place in the post war collective consciousness of the European Union as is reflected within Article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights which includes the following protected categories of peoples; sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status. The notion alone that in an instance where one people group allows active mistreatment and injustice of another people group, which will eventually lead to a situation where there will be no one remaining to protect them constitutes a sobering thought experiment especially within both a post war and post segregation society. As nations we can see that the divides between communities are ever growing. Martin Niemöller reminds us that we cannot live in such divided groups which prevent us from lending a helping hand. However, the divides in countries such as the United States run deep and are rooted in painful histories which should be acknowledged and remembered so that the divided communities can reintegrate to support one another. This informs why the following case study and argument for the use of *regenerative shaming* is important and vital to the ongoing discussions of racism in the United States, which parallels well with discussion of antisemitism and Holocaust memory in Germany.

This dissertation will explore the ongoing conversations around the memorialization of periods of national shame. The *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* will serve as the main examples for the use of *regenerative shaming* in memorials. These monuments serve as important memory exercises for the people who witness them, forcing viewers to remember the horrors perpetuated by the

nation. However, there are both negative and critical views of both monuments related to the memory cultures of the countries in which they are located. Both the United States and Germany have documented the rise of *nationalist* groups with politically right-wing views who would critique the existence of the monuments altogether. Additionally, there are academics who would critique the artistic choices, specificity, and placement of historical context.

1.1 Definition of Terms

Any discussion around the topic of *nationalism* should first begin with a definition of the subject as it is often debated and used in different contexts. One of the most notable researchers of *nationalism*, Anderson, cited High Seton-Watson calling them “author of far the best and most comprehensive English-language text on nationalism” and heir to a vast tradition of liberal historiography and social science, sadly observes: “Thus I am driven to the conclusion that no “scientific definition” of the nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists” (Anderson, 2019). However, for the purpose of this dissertation I will use a definition proposed by Gellner and found in Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*: “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist” (Anderson, 2019). This definition is useful for the reason that it attempts to avoid the strong negative connotation that typically is associated with the term *nationalism*. Anderson goes on to define nation in order to give more explanation to the more vague definition of *nationalism*. He writes that “the nation: it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson, 2019). While this definition is useful, it brings out other questions, such as, “what is an imagined community?”. Anderson clarifies that an imagined community is “imagined because the members of the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members... yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. A nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves (or, in other words imagine themselves as to form a nation or behave as if they formed one)” (University of Calgary , n.d.). This series of definitions is valuable because it allows the reader to think about the nation as something different than borders on a map. This is key to any discussion about National Socialism or the views in the American South. It helps us understand the underlying thoughts to the mindsets which informed the horrors perpetuated by these communities.

So, while there are strong benefits to Anderson’s definitions, there is a lack of conciseness that is important and adds beneficially to research of this nature, where

nationalism is an important discussion and informative to the research but not the central theme. Therefore, the definition put forth by Geert Van Cleemput and Russell Nieli will be used from here on out. They wrote in *Clarifying Nationalism, Chauvinism, and Ethnic Imperialism* that “nationalism is the state of mind of a person who promotes the well-being of his or her people or nation as such and other peoples or nations as such through preserving and promoting the ethnic identity of his or her people and of other peoples” (Cleemput & Nieli, 1995). This definition is clearer and effectively shows the way that *nationalism* and quickly degrade into racial segregation and superiority without making this possibility an inherent part of the definition.

Other terms that are important to define prior to beginning a full discussion on the memory culture around the Holocaust and American slavery or racially motivated lynching are *ethnonationalism* and *chauvinism*. These two concepts start to address the sinister traits that are associated with the Nazi and white supremacist views which effect the memorials I will examine as case studies. *Chauvinism* is defined by Cleemput and Nieli as “the state of mind of a person who considers his people or nation to be of superior worth compared to other peoples” (Cleemput & Nieli, 1995). This leads to a creation of *ethnonationalist* groups so that they can “achieve goals that cannot be attained individually” and “violence is one of the options that ethnonationalist groups have to obtain their objectives” (Llobera, 2004).

In response to *ethnonationalism*, there is the concept of *regenerative shaming*. Which operates from the basis that shame is a positive bad feeling. This concept will be further addressed and applied to exercises in memorialization in the following work. *Regenerative shaming* is the key theory being tested in the following case studies.

1.2 Regenerative Shaming

Regenerative shaming is the idea that through intentional shaming, or awareness of a past injustice, to the perpetrators (or their descendants), a divide between perpetrator and victim can be bridged and a break between communities can be restored. Imagine an injury that is healed over the top but there is infection below. While on the surface things appear fine and cutting the healed flesh on top sounds more damaging. In the end, it is best practice to cut out the infection in order for proper and lasting healing to occur. However, this process is twofold, along the same lines as the practice of *regenerative shaming*. First you must cut into the healed skin and debride the wound. The you must treat the wound, wrapping and medicating it well, in order for it to heal properly. You should not wrap and medicate the wound without first debriding. You cannot also only debride the wound without treating it

well afterward. Failure to do both will render all your efforts useless. These same principles apply to the sociological process of regenerative shaming.

To explore the topic of *regenerative shaming* further I will be using Sara Ahmed's work which was chosen due to her expertise and valuable insights which apply well to the following case study on memorials. Her qualifications include a professorship at Goldsmiths, University of London, where she specialized in race and cultural studies and a PhD in critical and cultural theory from Cardiff University (Ahmed, 2021). Regenerative shaming, is defined by Sara Ahmed in her essay titled: *Politics of a Bad Feeling*, as

shame [which] 'makes' the nation in the very witnessing of past injustice, this witnessing [makes] the involved feel shame, as it exposes the failure of the nation to live up to its ideals. But this exposure is temporary and becomes the ground for a narrative of national recovery. *By witnessing what is shameful about the past, the nation can 'live up to' the ideals that secure its identity or being in the present.* In other words, our shame means that we mean well, and can work to reproduce the nation as an ideal (Ahmed, 2005).

Regenerative shaming takes the negative connotation of the action of *shaming* and puts it to good use. While generally humans work to avoid this feeling, Ahmed argues that it is beneficial, that shame is merely a byproduct of recognition of a past injustice. Therefore, avoiding the shame that comes with the recognition, we are unable to ever acknowledge the injustice, and without acknowledgement or acceptance of the wrongdoing, we can never heal from it. We cannot have one without the other, no matter how hard we may try in order to keep everyone happy. The descendants of oppressors must sit in their discomfort and shame in order to recognize the depth of the injustice and bring healing to a divided nation. "Recognition is also about saying that injustices did happen; this re-telling offers new insights into the present and how lives have been shaped not only by the past injustice, but also by the forgetting of those injustices" (Ahmed, 2005).

This idea is best understood from the context of a family. Sara Ahmed forms much of her discussion from the studies of John Braithwaite. Braithwaite is a world-renowned academic specializing in the field of criminology. He was a Distinguished Professor at the Australian National University, holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Queensland, and has countless awards for his research in the field of criminology and reintegration (Braithwaite, 2020). He writes about *regenerative shaming* and uses the family as an example of this practice at work because while parents may punish a child, it is done, ideally, out of love and a desire to teach their children right from wrong in order that they may become

better members of society. Braithwaite compares *regenerative shaming* to the family dynamic, he writes, and Ahmed cites:

offences, in a family, are normal, expected occurrences. Punishment is not something a child receives in isolation from the rest of his relationship to the family; nor is it something which presupposes or carries with it a change of status from 'child' to 'criminal child'. When a parent punishes his child, both parent and child know that afterward they will go on living together as before. The child gets his punishment, as a matter of course, within a continuum of love, after his dinner and during his toilet training and before bed-time story and in the middle of general family play, and he is punished in his own unchanged capacity as a child with failings (like all other children) rather than as some kind of distinct and dangerous outsider (Braithwaite, 2006).

This is a key understanding of *regenerative shaming* as occurring within a family, according to Ahmed, because “too much shame would be bad as it makes the relationships and social bonds impossible. Shame is only good if it can quickly be converted into a good feeling” (Ahmed, 2005). So as in the above comparison by Braithwaite, *regenerative shaming* is only used when the goal is for the society to continue of living together. This conversion is highly important and often missed in the conversation of shaming when it comes to injustice. It is also the key part that makes this practice of shaming truly *regenerative*.

As previously stated, Sara Ahmed’s work takes much from John Braithwaite’s *Crime, Shame, and Reintegration*. His work focuses on criminology and the goal of limiting repeat offenders through the use of *regenerative shaming* and *restorative justice*. As a society we must be held accountable for the crimes which built our nations, if we do not recognize them, we will not ever be able to reintegrate with those who were victimized. According to Braithwaite, “shaming as a process is construed as: ... a means of making citizens actively responsible, of informing them of how justifiably resentful their fellow citizens are towards criminal behavior which harms them” (Braithwaite, 2006). The goal of shaming is to make life as an “outcast” worse than life in the group, thus encouraging people to seek reconciliation. “Healing does not cover over but exposes the wound to others: *the recovery is a form of exposure*” (Ahmed, 2005). This is the key mindset that will be callback to continuously throughout the case study.

1.2.1 Critiques of *Regenerative Shaming*

The idea of *regenerative shaming* is not without its critics. Rodger Matthews, professor of Criminology at Kent University, critiqued the concept of *regenerative shaming* and restorative justice in 2006 in his study titled: *Reintegrative Shaming and Restorative Justice: Reconciliation or Divorce?* In the aforementioned paper Professor Matthews points out several concerns he and others have noted on the theory relating to cultural values on shame and the potential political implications accruing ancillary with legalized shaming. His critique focuses on the use of *regenerative shaming* in the context of crime and punishment, in keeping with Braithwaite's original theory.

Matthews defines *regenerative shaming* as "the public shaming of offenders followed by strategies for reintegration back into conventional society" (Matthews, 2006). His main critique of the practice is that it does not lead to restoration but rather stigmatization which forces the offenders even further away. Professor Matthews writes "that the reintegrative shaming thesis, rather than offering a benign and humane form of punishment, results in a moralizing approach that makes an untenable distinction between stigmatizing and reintegrative shaming" (Matthews, 2006). Matthews makes it clear that he views shame as a negative thing and that he believes that intentionally shaming the offender is a violation of the duty of care owed to offenders who are being punished already through the criminal justice system.

Professor Matthews cites James Whitman who also critiques the idea of *regenerative shaming*,

he argues that shaming involves an ugly and politically dangerous complicity between the state and the crowd... because they promote a spirit of public indecency and brutality. Third, the use of shaming sanctions have historically only been seen to apply to a strictly delimited range of offences and offenders – sexual offences, commercial offences and minor or first time offences. Fourth, in a rights-based society along the same lines as our own it is important to uphold the rights of offenders and to maintain dignity and respect. Shaming carries the likelihood of taking away the dignity of the offender as a result of humiliation. 'They involve a dangerous willingness, on the part of the government, to delegate part of its enforcement power to a fickle and uncontrolled general populace. Even in their mildest American form, shame sanctions amount to a kind of posse-raising legal politics, with all the risks that implies. They are at base a form of officially sponsored lynch justice, meted out by courts that have given up on the obligation of the

state both to define what is criminal and to administer criminal sanctions
itself” (Whitman 1998: 1088/9)’ (Matthews 8).

Matthews and Whitman make an interesting point which will apply most astutely to the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* using public shaming as a tool to disincentivize criminal behavior echoes the same history that led to state sponsored lynching mobs.

Professor Matthews also critiques *regenerative shaming* due to the difficulty in enforcing it and the challenges that arise when looking at shame amongst different cultures. “As Harry Blagg (1997) has noted in relation to Australian Aboriginal people they have a very different notion of shame than that which is promoted by the advocates of restorative justice, while the whole idea of ‘representation’ is highly contentious, particularly that contained within wholly exterior, adjudicatory structures such as courts and there is only limited scope for individuals to ‘speak for’ others. Given these different cultural, ethnic and class dimensions not only in relation to the meaning of shame but also in relation to its effects, it suggests that the mobilization of what is seen as a natural, universal and transhistorical concept of shame is both naïve and dangerous” (Matthews 9).

Beyond the academic critiques there are the less public criticisms which are made by *nationalist* right-wing groups, such as the AfD in Germany or the far right of the Republican party in the United States. Both groups would argue against *regenerative shaming* for its promotion and acceptance of periods of national shame which would stand in deep opposition to their foundational views of their nation, or imagined community as Benedict Anderson taught us, being superior. These views are more challenging to study as groups of such *nationalist* nature are unlikely to participate in these conversations. However, their views are made clear through the way their party members vote in regard to the funding of these memorial sites. For the purpose of brevity, the following case study will focus on the views of such *nationalist* groups only as informative to the background and memory cultures in which the memorials exist but will not examine their critiques further.

1.3 The Purpose of Monuments

James E Young, author of several text which will be examined in depth later asked several questions surrounding the creations of memorials to victim groups. He asked: “What are the national reasons for remembrance?” (Young, 2002). The purpose of memorials and monuments is twofold, either to recognize victims or honour heroes, either way, it is about remembrance and exaltation of an individual or a group who is known for a great act of courage. According to Cambridge University, a monument is “a structure or building that is

built to honour a special person or event” (Cambridge University, 2021). Debating this definition is not productive to the rest of this research as any other definition whether it be the Oxford, Brown, or Meriam-Webster definition was similar, therefore it will be used for the entirety of this case study.

1.3.1 The History of Monuments

When people speak about the history of monuments and memorials, several iconic ancient landmarks come to mind: Newgrange, The Great Pyramid, and Stonehenge. These sights are several thousand years old and have withstood the test of time, war, and the civilization collapse. Archeologists believe these sites and others similar to them were built as testaments to the power of the ruler of the society. According to the Smithsonian, “getting an entire society engaged in building a massive public work was a way for elites like kings, chieftains, pharaohs and priests to control the lower classes” (The Smithsonian, 2018). However, recent discoveries in Kenya and recent reinterpretations of other monuments have proven that ancient monuments were also built to bring communities together and bond people together through group work. The *Lothagam North Pillar Site* in Kenya shows this through the burial sites of people, with no discernable distinction for people with differing levels of wealth. This shows archeologists that it was not built to honour the wealthy ruling class but rather the society as a whole. The size of the monument also proves that it was also a massive time and energy investment which would have “involved the whole community” (The Smithsonian, 2018). According to the archeologist Elisabeth Hildebrand of Stony Brook University, the monument was built around the same time as the end of the African Humid Period which caused great change to the living, farming, and societal structure of the peoples living in the region. Hildebrand writes that this change

may have led the people to create something lasting, a place where they occasionally gathered to ritually bury their dead, exchange information about the changing landscape and re-establish bonds between far-flung clans or family groups... Hildebrand says: ‘it’s really fascinating that facing all this, people decided to come together and do something creative rather than get nasty with one another’ (The Smithsonian, 2018).

It turns out that in the modern era, we build monuments and memorial for many of the same reasons, to bring communities together, to heal divides, to honour leaders, and to show the power of the ruling class.

This purpose has remained relatively unchanged until recently when it became more popular to memorialize victims. There seems to be a shift from memorializing glory to honouring victims. This recent development in memorialization is made clear in the 2005 *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the 2018 *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*. Both memorials are dedicated to historically oppressed peoples and seek to educate through the promotion of heavy emotional responses which require visitors to think critically about their role in these negative histories.

1.4 *The Texture of Memory and Counter Monuments*

For this discussion it is important to understand the difference between traditional monuments and counter-monuments. When people hear the term “monument”, they might think of an obelisk, pyramid, or some statue which seeks to celebrate, commemorate, or memorialize a specific person or event. The typical connotation of a monument is positive, even if it seeks to honour the victims of a tragedy. This differs strongly from a counter monument which seeks not to honour anyone but rather start a conversation usually around a tragedy. In the words of James E. Young, “counter-monuments [are] brazen, painfully self-conscious memorial spaces conceived to challenge the very premises of their being” (Young, 1993) While counter monuments exist, their purpose is not to make space for a perpetrator of violence but rather to make a statement against monuments themselves. James E. Young gives an example of such a monument out of Germany:

Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev’s 1986 “Monument against Fascism” in Harburg-Hamburg, [was] a 12-meter -high, lead covered column [which] sunk into the ground as people inscribed their names and much else onto its surface; on its complete disappearance in 1994, the artists hoped that it would return the burden of memory on those who came looking for it. With audacious simplicity, their “counter-monument” thus flouted a number of memorial conventions: its aim was not to console but provoke; not to remain fixed but to change; not to be everlasting but to disappear; not to be ignored by its passersby but to demand interaction; not to remain pristine but to invite its own violation; not to accept graciously the burden of memory but to throw it back at the town’s feet (Young, 1993).

This monument is fascinating as it makes a statement against everything society thinks monuments are meant to be, and in doing so make a statement against fascism as well. Young again point this conundrum out quite well:

Contemporary German memory-artists [view] the didactic logic of monuments – their demagogical rigidity and certainty of history - continues to recall too closely traits associated with fascism itself. A monument against fascism, therefore, would have to be a monument against itself: against the traditionally didactic function of monuments, against their tendency to displace the past they would have us contemplate – and finally, against the authoritarian propensity on monumental spaces that reduces viewers to passive spectators (Young, 1993)

In this work, *the Texture of Memory*, Young goes into the art and aesthetics of the monuments, suggesting that holocaust or counter – monuments, in general, focus should not be on the artistry as that is not the goal, but to force viewers to remember and engage with the historical trauma.

But that does not mean it is not useful to examine the visual choices that artists make regarding these types of monuments. As Young points out there are many examples of unique monuments that in their structure make comments that are very important to memory culture, similar to the disappearing monument. Neither of the monuments examined in the following study have this type of unique factor to them, but they both invite interaction as the viewer must walk through the monument. This contrasts with many war memorials which ask the visitor to gaze up at it, in the cases of traditional busts or figures. With these monuments, the visual choices or height of the statue asks the viewer to literally “look up to” the individual being remembered or honoured. This would be inappropriate when memorializing a traumatic history. In the example above where the artist asked for viewers to write on the monument, it says something very different, in fact it says something irreverent. There is something to be said for this choice of asking for physical engagement from the viewer so that they are less passive and forced to make the mental act of remembrance into a physical action.

This study of counter monuments is important to the following case study on the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* for the reason that some people would try to list them as examples of counter-monuments. However, this is incorrect because they do not attempt to counter what a monument is itself but to utilize a rarely used function of monuments or memorials. That being the painful practice of remembrance from the side of the descendances of perpetrators. While

monuments are rarely thought of something that brings shame, the use of shame in a monument does not make it a counter-monument.

1.4.1 *The Texture of Memory* and Holocaust Monuments

In order to explore further background which informs any study of the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* especially, and adds beneficially to the discussion on *regenerative shaming*, we must look at one of the premier academics in the field of Holocaust memory studies, who has previously been mentioned in this work. Having written several essays and books on the topic, James E. Young offers a critical point of view and any study on this topic which omits his opinion and study would be severely lacking. James E. Young is a Professor Emeritus at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, teaching English and Judaic & Near Eastern Studies. He is also the founding director of the Institute for Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies at UMass Amherst (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2021). He is significant to this case study on the German monument because “in 1997, Professor Young was appointed by the Berlin Senate to the five-member Findungskommission for Germany's national *Memorial to Europe's Murdered Jews* (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2021). This means he was one of the five advisors chosen to decide on the artist and location of the memorial in Berlin, as well as analyzing the purpose and function of the memorial. His work is also relevant to the case study of the American monument for the reason that he is world renowned for his work on memorials and national memory cultures. He was a consultant on the Argentinian *Desaparacidos* project and the *National 9/11 Memorial*, and while neither of these works are related to the American memorial in Alabama, his expertise offers valuable insight (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2021). His essay titled *The Texture of Memory* offers important background to the rest of this research and, along with Sara Ahmed's *Politics of a Bad Feeling*, informs much this case study.

The *Texture of Memory* by James E Young was originally published in 1993 as an examination of Holocaust memorials around the world, including Germany, the United States, and Israel. In the book Young makes important insights into the world of memorialization, both critiquing current memory cultures and offering solutions. One note that stands out and will inform later discussion is the relationship between the state and the memorial site. Young writes “official agencies are in a position to shape memory explicitly as they see fit, memory that best serves a national interest. [But] once created, memorials take on lives of their own, often stubbornly resistant to the state's original intentions” (Young,

1993). This is an important reminder that memorials are more stagnant and therefore their interpretation and creation are both deeply affected by the time in which they are being viewed or were created.

1.5 Introduction to the Monuments

There are two monuments, one in Berlin (*Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*) and one in Montgomery, Alabama (*The National Memorial for Peace and Justice*) which are atheistically similar and both serve as reminders of some of their countries' greatest periods of shame. The German monument is in the heart of Berlin, it has been open since 2005. It is a large area of land filled in with grey, sharp rectangular columns that vary in height. While it is not expressly stated what they are supposed to mimic, many have said they remind them of tombstones, coffins or perhaps sarcophagi. The Berlin website describes the memorial as "consisting of an undulating field of 2711 concrete steles, which can be passed through from all sides. While walking between the columns of different heights and the labyrinthine corridors, visitors may experience a brief moment of disorientation, which should open up space for discussion" (Berlin.de). The website also reminds visitors that beneath the stones are several educational rooms. The monument in Alabama uses similar aesthetic and shaming technique. The main building of the memorial has hundreds of iron sharp rectangular columns hanging from the rafters, to symbolize the victims of racially motivated lynchings across the United States. These monuments are both large in scales, allowing visitors to walk through them and interact with the piece. Due to their similarities in topic and artistic choices, they were chosen to form the following case studies on the use of *regenerative shaming* in memorialization. In the text analyzed above, *The Texture of Memory*, James E. Young lists a series of questions which are important to remember throughout the following two cases studies and informed much of this research:

how does a state incorporate shame into its national memorial landscape?
How does a state recite, much less commemorate, the litany of its misdeeds, making them part of its reason for being? Under what memorial aegis, whose rules, does a nation remember its own barbarity? Where is the tradition for *mea culpa*? where are the national memorials to the genocide of the native Americans, to the millions of Africans enslaved and murdered by Americans? Unlike state-sponsored memorials built by victimized nations and peoples to themselves in Poland, holland, or Israel, those in Germany are necessarily those of the persecutor remembering its victims. In the face of this necessary breach in the conventional 'memorial code' it is little

wonder that German national memory of the holocaust remains so torn and convoluted. Germanys 'Jewish question' is now a two-pronged memorial question: how does a nation mourn the victims of a mass murder perpetuated in its name? how does a nation re-unite itself on the bedrock of memory of its horrendous crimes? (Young, 1993).

While Young asked these questions in 1993, they are still tremendously relevant today when looking at either monument in Germany or the United States, or in fact any future monument dedicated to the memory of a victimized people.

2 The German Memorial - *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*

2.1 Historical Analysis

The modern German memory culture which promotes the teaching of holocaust history and funding of holocaust memory sites is new as it was not “until the late 1980s and early 1990s for this new field to be embraced by German and non-German historians alike” (Schulze, 2004) . Since reunification the memory studies have become more complex as they must analyze two traumatic histories which emerged after the Second World War, that of “the communist totalitarian past in the eastern part” and the overriding national history of the sins of the National Socialists (Schulze, 2004). In this period there was also a shift in the way the experts approached memory, seeing as the population who experienced the horrors of the Nazi party first hand were no longer alive, so “the second half of the twentieth century was characterized by the attempt to remember genocides in the hope of preventing their recurrence” (Schulze, 2004). This also highlighted the difference between Holocaust memorials inside Germany and those outside, Schulze calls this internal remembrance: “negative remembrance” (Schulze, 2004). This idea is central to the purpose of the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* which intends to shame Germans, a goal for which it receives much criticism.

We cannot discuss the memory culture of Germany without also addressing the current growth of the Alternative fur Deutschland (AfD). This is a growing right *nationalist* political party in Germany which would see that the Holocaust memory is given less funding and importance because of the fact that it promotes national shame rather than pride. This party was founded in 2013 as a “soft Euroscepticism with economic liberalism and socially conservative policies” (Berning, 2019). However, since their creation they have shifted more and more towards right wing ideals as their origin was in a growing sense of dissatisfaction

with the other German political parties. It was in 2015 that their current identity began to really take shape. “After ousting the AfD founder in 2015, new leadership moved the party further toward a right-wing populist agenda, including proposals such as closing the border and shooting those seeking to enter without authorization” (Müller, 2016). Because the chancellor at the time, Angela Merkle, was pushing Germany to take on copious amounts of refugees, the AfD grew in popularity amongst German citizen who wished to limit migrants, especially from middle eastern countries. Since then, the AfD has become the catch all for those with ring wing opinions, including those who wish to alter Germany’s memory culture away from the practice of national shaming exemplified in the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*. However, while there is this resistance to promoting this negative memory, there is not a national desire to publicly support the national socialist, this is due to Germany’s strict laws.

Beyond the promotion of Holocaust memory in Germany, it is actually a criminal offense to deny the Holocaust, publish or spread pro-Nazi information, make statements supporting Hitler, wear an SS uniform, or share images of swastikas. Section 130 of the German criminal code bans such hate speech and persons who violate this face up to five years in prison. Section 130 has been used to criminalized pro-Nazi language since the 1950s when it was discovered that many West German bureaucrats had Nazi ties (PBS, 2021). Then in the 90s the law was extended to criminalize any language that denies the Holocaust. Chapter 14 of the German criminal codes is also used to criminalize Holocaust deniers, specifically “one element of the law [which is] a ban on defiling the memory of the dead” and the violation of this could land a person in prison for up to two years (PBS, 2021). Then sections 86 and 86a relate to online and offline bans against the distribution of pro-Nazi propaganda and has been famously used to limit videogames using Nazi insignias until 2018. And finally, the Network Enforcement Act of 2017 has been used to ensure that social networking sites limit hate speech. This was used “in 2019 [when] the German federal government fined Facebook €2 million (about \$2.3 million) for allegedly under-reporting the number of complaints it received” (PBS, 2021). In fact, “hate-speech laws were tightened last year, after three far-right terror attacks in 2019 and early 2020 prompted German authorities to warn of increasing extremism” (PBS, 2021). Sadly, since the pandemic there has been a continued rise in online hate speech according to Germany’s minister for justice. She stated that the content is “very often right-wing extremist, racist and misogynist” (PBS, 2021). Therefore, Germany has increased online hate speech regulations in 2021. This tightening of

laws has drawn severe criticism by the AfD who believe that these laws are a violation of free speech.

German's Holocaust Memorial Problem – and Mine by James E. Young outlines his involvement in the decision process of the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*. After the intention to create a monument honouring the victims of the Holocaust, was announced in 1994 there were over 528 designs presented. Some proposals included “Horst Hoheisel’s proposal to blow up the Brandenburger Tor, as well as Dani Caravan’s proposed field of yellow flowers in the shape of a Jewish Star” (Young, 2002). However, neither of these designs were chosen and in 1995 the fifteen member committee decided to pick up the proposals submitted by Christine Jacob-Marks and Simon Ungers, two artists with similar proposals. In the end it was Jacob Marks’ which would be finally chose to come to fruition in the heart of Berlin. His original design was dramatic and specific to the 4.5 million Jews who were murdered by the Nazis. It held significant symbolism to the Jewish faith as well, which sparked some heavy backlash. Young explains:

within hours of the winner’s announcement, the monument’s mixed memorial message of Jewish naming tradition and self-sacrifice generated an avalanche of criticism decrying this “tilted gravestone” as too big, too heavy-handed, too divisive, and finally just too German. Even the leader of Germany’s Jewish community, Ignatz Bubis, hated it and told Chancellor Kohl that the winning design was simply unacceptable (Young, 2002).

And with that debate, Jacob-Marks design was never built and a decade later, the memorial site was finally filled with a structure credited to Peter Eisenman. Young applauds this work because of its vagueness, in the way it gives one a slight sense of a cemetery, or maybe being fenced in, or perhaps trapped? Young appreciated this saying it does not “present to answer Germany’s memorial problem in a single, reassuring form, this design proposed multiple, collected forms arranged so that visitors have to find their own path to the memory of Europe’s murdered Jews” (Young, 2002).

2.2 Interview with the Memorial’s Site Manager

In order to learn more about the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*, I conducted an interview with the site’s project manager, Adam Kerpel-Fronius. The goal of this interview, rather than gathering information solely from secondary articles or other previously published material, was to gain primary source material. The interview also helped to avoid compounding biases that can naturally occur when only using secondary source material. The interview was a semi-structured format with a few prompting questions.

The intension of this less formal structure was to ensure that the interviewee, Adam Kerpel-Fronius, was able to speak freely about his experience of the monument. The interview was recorded in an audio file and through my own paraphrased notes. Both Mr. Kerpel-Fronius and I brought in our own forms of biases. Having visited and read extensively about the monument, with much of the journal articles focusing on the critiques of the monument. I must acknowledge that I was not able to perform the interview, nor structure the interview questions, without this previous reading influencing both. However, prior knowledge of the monument and the current opinions, or debates surrounding it, was of utmost importance, and performing this interview without prior research in order to avoid bias, would have been a further disservice to the research needed. The interviewee, Adam Kerpel-Fronius, was also not without bias. As he is employed by the monument and has regularly given tours, preformed educational workshops, and studied the debates around the monument, he has a strong opinion. While this bias is likely to have affected his answers, it is also important that he holds a role at the memorial site itself rather than be an uninvolved third party. In both cases, the bias that Adam Kerpel-Fronius and I brought into the interview was largely unavoidable, and in fact attempting to do so would have caused more harm than good.

Adam Kerpel-Fronius, the Project Manager for European Sites of Remembrance, offered deep insights into the purpose, creation, and function of the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*. Adam reminded that decades ago, as the German people began to recognize the importance of adopting a memory culture which promoted the remembering of the Holocaust, there was much discussion around what and how this should be done. In his words, “ in the 1980s, [the] goal was for Germany to take responsibility for the victims, then it was decided to put [a monument] in the heart of Berlin, not on outskirts. If you come to Berlin, you can’t miss it. The artistic concept is successful because it is recognizable, the photos for many articles is the monument, used to be the gates of Auschwitz.” This decision about the location of the monument being so close to the former seat of Nazi rule and in the heart of tourist Berlin, near the Brandenburg Gate, was intentional. This monument is intended to be abrasive and impossible to miss. The size of the monument also aids in this goal. Adam Kerpel-Fronius pointed out that the any small or inconsequential monument, either in size or location, would not be the exercises in memory and remorse that was initially intended when the monument was first commissioned. Adam highlighted that this monument was not for the Jewish people, but rather for the German people to be forced to come face to face with the reality of the horrors and scale of the Nazi’s extermination of the Jewish people.

This statement makes it abundantly clear that the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* seeks to be a work of *regenerative shaming*.

To understand the memorial further, I asked Adam Kerpel-Fronius about the funding for the monument and the educational aspects of it. It was very important to understand how the monument is able to be more than a physical artistic instillation but seeks to educate and further the mission of memorialization and *regenerative shaming* through education. In terms of financing, the project is state funded, originally, they thought it could be fully donations, but then decided on split financing with one third of the funds coming from the city of Berlin itself, one third from donations, and the final third from federal funds. However, this plan quickly changed. In 1998 the minister for was culture created and simultaneously there was a change in government when the Social Democrats came to power over Christian Democratic Party. Because of this shift, the final funding came from 100% federal funds. Adam Kerpel-Fronius pointed out that this makes a powerful statement and, in his opinion, makes those who work with the monument into public servants, rather than representing the donors or the city. Additionally, this source of funding makes it much more stable, as the federal government has said it will be funded forever essentially. It also allows the monument to be free, unless you want a guided tour, but those funds nearly 100% go to the guides not the monument. Again, Adam Kerpel-Fronius highlighted how important this is as it ensures the monument is not for profit but for education and remembrance.

From this we spoke about the educational element of the monument. Adam informed me that when the monument was built, they were only thinking of a building a lasting memorial, it was later that the parliament said they needed to educate and hold workshops. The project is limited in the amount of educational class or workshop they can offer because there are only two rooms allocated to education. They are below the monument with no windows. In terms of the style of educational classes, the site and its employees have workshops to educate about the Holocaust and the Nazi's extermination of the Jewish people, as well as other victim groups. Because this is a very difficult period of history to educate about, they host workshops for different age groups, but no one under 14. Because of the limitations of the site itself, they work with and in schools and have a specialized website that can be used for educators. Additionally, they have traveling exhibitions, to educate and memorialize mass shooting, Kristallnacht. These are traveling exhibitions because there is no space at the memorial for temporary exhibitions.

One key intention in interviewing someone who works with the memorial itself was to seek a response to the negative critique of the memorial. One major critique is that some

say the memorial is too vague, as there are no individual names written on the standing stones. To this Adam responded:

There are many different people walking through, some there intentionally and others not. In the summer there can be 1000s of people, some running and jumping on the stones. [With the] 5-year-olds playing hide and seek, [they are] not so bothered. [However], once you explain to these people, their behavior changes immediately. The exhibition changes peoples view, they are much more aware.

He went on to remind that there is an underground exhibition which details individual stories of the victims of the Holocaust. In this exhibition visitors can learn more about the individual Jewish people who were exterminated by the Nazis. Below the memorial there are “themed rooms such as the Room of Dimensions, the Room of Families, the Room of Names and the Room of Sites [which] deal with the fates of individuals... [and] biographies take the victims out of their anonymity” (VisitBerlin, n.d.). The underground exhibition also includes photographs and film which further bring the reality of the horrors of the “sites of persecution and extermination” to light for visitors (VisitBerlin, n.d.). It stands in stark contrast to the facelessness and abstract choices of the memorial a few feet above. Adam Kerpel-Fronius reminded that the memorial is incomplete without the education exhibition below.

This also answers another concern many have expressed around the monument, comparing it to another monument, *Stolpersteine*, which is very individualistic. *Stolpersteine* is a Europe wide memorial. The project uses small golden cobble stones, replacing the traditional grey stones of most European street, which are place outside the homes of Holocaust victims. They are inscribed with the former residence names, birth and death dates, and the camp in which they were killed. It reveals the transnational effects of the Holocaust and the Nazi party’s reach. It also humanizes the victims as individuals rather than one massive statistic. The memorial is praised for this. To commemorate the 75th anniversary of Reichkristallnacht, German chancellor Angela Merkel praised *Stolpersteine* saying, “the *Stolpersteine* tell us what happened on Reichkristallnacht on November 9, 1938. They tell us of the persecution of the Jews. *Stolpersteine* compel us to encounter – on the streets of our cities – the past. They compel us to remember. And I think that’s highly important” (Weinreich, n.d.). While *Stolpersteine* is obviously powerful, Adam’s response reminds why it is not the only memorial to the murdered Jewish population:

Stolpersteine is about individuals and tied to specific places, the holocaust memorial is for all the 6 million. Many of the other projects proposed had much more to do with names, or the sites of extermination. The exhibition

has a section of names and historical biographies. We wanted something abstract because it is about the murder of millions. The way you can immerse yourself into this monument. Problem was the monument was planned at the turn of the millennium, you will never know all the names of all the victims, so many would have been left out of the monument if it was a name specific monument. This would mainly leave out eastern European Jews who were shot at their homes. There are also issues with the names themselves as there are different alphabets in which the victim names were recorded. There is also a conversation about his not being religious enough. The argument is that keeping it secular helps keep the focus on the victims and not on the religious issues. It also helps to start a conversation about this being perpetrated and experienced by humans. This is intentionally not a Jewish monument; it is a German monument.

Here he points out many important features of the monument that many forget, mostly about the importance of honouring all victims, including those history will never be able to name individually. One horror of the holocaust was in the mass extermination and the treatment of a whole group of people as lacking any individual value. This monument speaks to that lack of individuality in a way that reminds Germans of the horrors perpetuated on their homeland. It is also key that this monument is about Germans remembering rather than something dedicated to the Jewish people. While it seems counterintuitive, this serves a very important purpose in the context of *regenerative shaming* which calls for the perpetrators of the violence to recognize and accept fault.

Another key critique of the monument is that it is only to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust and yet there were so many others including the Roma, LGBTQ, and disabled peoples. To which Adam responded:

The foundation also takes care of other memorials dedicated to the Roma, LGBTQ, and the euthanasia. Current debates about other memorials for prisoners of war. LGBTQ men were to be criminalized and not murdered, so the experience of Jews and gay men is different. However, the laws against gay men were still in effect till the 60s, some parts not fully abolished till the unifications. Some gay men released from the camps only to go back in prisons to finish their sentences.

Adam's response made it very clear that much of the critique, especially surrounding the lack of representation for other groups victimized by the National Socialists, is unfounded and due to a lack of research. He also makes it very clear that in his view, and the view of the foundation, it is important for the Jewish people to have a specifically designated memorial site, built by and for Germans. The criminalization of the Jewish people was also different

than that of homosexuality specifically, because as Adam points out, the euthanasian the Jewish people experienced was specific to the National Socialist party. Unfortunately, homosexuals were still considered criminals after the fall of the Third Reich. For this reason, the two groups should be memorialized different as they were victimized differently.

It is a practice in *regenerative shaming* as it holds even modern Germans accountable for the actions perpetuated by generations past.

2.3 Critiques

In 2012, Richard Brody, a journalist for *The New Yorker*, critiqued the memorial calling it inadequate. He makes a very interesting statement against the title of the memorial itself: *The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*. He stresses that the lack of any mention in the title of the “Holocaust” or “Shoah” or the Nazi Party or Hitler is too vague, and the lack of clarity assumes people are knowledgeable of the horrors faced by the Jewish population under the rule of the Third Reich. In his opinion, this assumption “separates the victims from their killers and leaches the moral element from the historical event, shunting it to the category of a natural catastrophe” (Brody, 2012). Brody continues saying that “the reduction of responsibility to an embarrassing, tacit fact that “everybody knows” is the first step on the road to forgetting” (Brody, 2012). Beyond his critiques of the name, Brody also expressed deep distain for the abstractness of the memorial itself and expresses concern over the wide number of interpretations which could be taken from the site. However from the interview with the site’s project manager, Adam Kerpel-Fronius, it becomes more clear why those choices were intentional.

Recently one journalist, Peter Kuras, made an interesting point about the monument, criticizing it for only being dedicated to the Jewish people. Kuras pointed out that the other monuments to the Nazi victims, which Adam Kerpel-Fronius believes solves the debate over any issue with the Jewish specific memorial, are largely forgotten. He writes “while the Jewish Holocaust memorial there is a standard tourist destination, the Porajmos, or Romani Holocaust, is largely forgotten, and Germany’s Sinti and Roma people face continuing discrimination” (Kuras, 2021). This sentiment is echoed in an extreme way by historian Reinhart Koselleck who stated that “the different colored triangles worn by internees at concentration camps are returning in the form of memorials” (Kuras, 2021). His statement here provides researchers with an important topic to study further.

Even James E. Young, an advisor on the committee who decided on the monument had his own critiques. In fact, he considers that maybe it is best for there to be no monument built at all, but not for the reason others believe. He writes:

Between the announcement of the winner and its subsequent rejection, the organizers showed all 528 designs in a grand memorial exhibition at Berlin's Stadtratshaus. Good, I wrote at the time. Better a thousand years of Holocaust memorial competitions and exhibitions in Germany than any single "final solution" to Germany's memorial problem. This way, I reasoned, instead of a fixed icon for Holocaust memory in Germany, the debate itself—perpetually unresolved amid ever-changing conditions—might now be enshrined... [Young publicly stated] 'You may have failed to produce a monument,' I said, "but if you count the sheer number of design-hours that 528 teams of artists and architects have already devoted to the memorial, it's clear that your process has already generated more individual memory-work than a finished monument will inspire in its first ten years' (Young, 2002).

It is a valid point to worry that a finished monument may lead people to feel the memory of those murdered under the Nazi regime is rightfully honoured and the chapter is closed. This is his great fear. He continues his critique by considering the funding of the memorial saying "better to take all these millions of Deutsch Marks and use them to preserve the great variety of Holocaust memorials already dotting the German landscape. Because no single site can speak for all the victims, much less for both victims and perpetrators, the state should be reminding its citizens to visit the many and diverse memorial and pedagogical sites that already exist" (Young, 2002). Here he makes an interesting point but it fails to recognize the value of the monument being, as Adam Kerpel-Fronius stated, a memorial by the Germans and for the Germans to recognize the depth of the horrors perpetrated under the German government. The fact that the German government put so much funding into the memorial, rather than using it to preserve former sites of Nazi power or extermination camps. The act of building this memorial and spending so much on it is a part of the practice of remembrance and the goal of the memorial to intentionally and regeneratively shame the German people on order that genocide will never be perpetrated again under their watch.

3 American Monument

The National Memorial to Peace and Justice is another memorial which seeks to use *regenerative shaming* in order to hold the descendants of the perpetrators accountable to the sins of their forefathers, it seeks to educate the nation and any international tourists about the

history of racial lynchings in the United States, most especially in the American South, and it is a place for the descendants of those who were enslaved or lynched to grieve their history.

3.1 History of the American Memory Culture around Slavery and the Confederacy

This monument is built in the heart of the American South and stands resolutely admit the debate around the memorialization of both the enslaved Black communities and the Confederacy. Hundreds if not thousands of monuments have been built to honour the men who fought for the Confederacy, and modern American memory culture is currently seeking to repurpose those statues, but there is a lack of national consensus on this issue. There is a struggle between those who wish to see the Civil War as a battle over states' rights as they resist any monument that would oppose that through its depiction of the horrors of American slavery, not to mention the idea of removing any existing statue. But what is the history which they think they are attempting to save from eradication?

Historically, there was a tradition in the late 1800s and early 1900s of building monuments to honour the Confederate generals and soldiers. Many of these statues and monuments were not built during the years that the Confederacy stood. These monuments were built after the Civil War and reinforced “the so-called ‘Lost Cause’ myth of the Civil War promoted by former Confederates... [showing] slavery as a benevolent system and argues that the Civil War was fought over states’ rights... [presenting] Confederate leaders and soldiers as emblems of traditional codes of honour, chivalry, and religiosity” (Forest & Johnson, 2019). It was this problematic view and lack of regret for their treason that built countless monuments which are “problematic not simply because they support White supremacy but also because they represent an oppressive form of forgetting” (Forest & Johnson, 2019). Supporters of the Confederate monuments argue that taking down these monuments is an attempt to erase the past and forget the history of the southern United States. However, with a deeper knowledge of the historical context in which these monuments were built, it becomes clear that they are an erasure of the past and sought to rewrite history by promoting the Lost Cause myth. As Ben Berliner put it so astutely, “not every public memorial is designed to transform or heal. Many of the statues raised to commemorate the Confederacy, for instance, were built long after the Civil War as part of a targeted effort to impede the emerging civil rights movement” (Berliner, 2018). Removal of these Confederate statues sends a powerful signal to the descendants of the oppressed. While it is less powerful than the erecting of a monument to the victims and a true recognition for

the sins of the past in a *regenerative shaming* sense, it does help to tear down the myth of the South as a place of tradition honour and glory.

As previously stated, the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* was opened amid a fierce debate that has been brewing since early 2015. This is the question of what to do with the monuments in the United States that stand to remember and honour the leaders of the Confederacy. The debate asked whether the statues should be removed and destroyed, rehomed in museums with accompanying historical context, or left in their original homes. Much of this debate was sparked by Donald Trump's presidential campaign and his eventual administration, both of which supported the upkeep of those monuments. In 2017, this debate became deadly on multiple occasions. That year "a neo-Nazi killed a counter-protester at a Virginia demonstration against the proposed removal of statues of Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas Jackson, and extremists issued death threats against contractors bidding for the work to remove Confederate statues in New Orleans" (Forest & Johnson, 2019). Because of the heightened tensions and the deadly outcomes of this debate, it is important to analyze the effects of the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*. The placement of this memorial in Alabama is thoughtful, its existence next to Confederate monuments brought each of them more into the public eye than ever before as the contrast of a monument to the victims of lynchings, which were perpetrated by those who supported the enslavement of Black Americans, next to monuments to the very people who fought to support their right to own other humans as slaves feels grotesque.

In contrast to the strict laws in Germany governing any speech or spreading of images which would support the Nazi party, there are no laws specific to limiting Confederate support. In fact, there is the opposite, the first amendment of the United States Constitution which protects freedom of speech is used to defend against any suggestion of suppression of the Confederate flag or iconography. This is closely related to the debate around the Confederate statues. Many white southerners chose to fly the flag of the Confederacy known as the "Stars and Bars". They adamantly defend this right despite the feeling of many Americans that it stands for white supremacy and represents a traumatic period in American history of treason and racism. While many in the US government would want to try and claim the flag and other public support of the Confederacy as hate speech, this is unlikely to be successful. This is "because of the difficulties in applying a definition of racist speech that is not unconstitutionally vague and overbroad... Under the First Amendment the government simply may not outlaw symbols of hate or bigotry, such as the swastika or the Confederate

battle flag” (Gonzales, 2015). This legal limitation profoundly shapes the memory culture of the United States.

3.2 A Brief History of Lynching

According to the NAACP, or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, “lynching is the public killing of an individual who has not received any due process. These executions were often carried out by lawless mobs, though police officers did participate, under the pretext of justice” (NAACP, 2021). These unlawful killings occurred mostly in the 1800s and 1900s in order to keep people of colour, mostly Black people, terrorized and controllable by those in power, namely white Americans. The crimes the victims were accused of were often fabricated and “were used to enforce segregation and advance stereotypes of Black men as violent, hypersexual aggressors” (NAACP, 2021). And these stereotypes still effect the Black community today. Horrifically, lynchings were public spectacles in which hundreds of people would gather and “photos of lynchings were often sold as souvenir postcards”, it was a celebration of white supremacy (NAACP, 2021). In order to fight against this racial oppression and unlawful murder of people of colour, people of all races began to speak up and fight back. It was in this fight for equality and to end the pandemic of lynching that the NAACP was born. They began to raise national awareness through the publication of research which document the number of lynchings followed by a powerful marketing campaign. In their own words,

from 1920 to 1938, we flew a flag from our national headquarters in New York that bore the words ‘A man was lynched yesterday.’ The campaign turned the tide of public opinion and even persuaded some southern newspapers to oppose lynching because it was damaging the South's economic prospects (NAACP, 2021).

Following the NAACP’s tireless work to advocate for anti-lynching laws they were able to sway the tide of public opinion, but it was not until 1952 that a full year without a single lynching would occur. This was a great victory, but it was not the end of racial segregation and inequality. It is this horrible history that the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* seeks to remember and utilize *regenerative shaming* in order to prevent history from repeating itself and honouring those who were wrongfully lynched.

3.3 Analysis of the Monument

In 2018 the monument was opened to the public in Alabama in the United States. This monument, the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*, is dedicated to the victims of racially motivated lynching across the United States and is the first of its kind. According to the foundation which funded the monument, the Equal Justice Initiative, or EJI, the memorial honours the “legacy of enslaved black people, people terrorized by lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow, and people of color burdened with contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence” (Anon., n.d.). The memorial cost 20 million dollars which was fundraised from private corporations and individuals, such as Google, the Ford Foundation, and the Stryker siblings (Miller, 2018). While it may seem counterintuitive that a national memorial does not stand in the nation’s capital, Washington D.C., the location chosen for this massive memorial is significant and important to the founder. Montgomery, Alabama is famous for Rosa Park’s refusal to move out of a seat on the city bus which required that black and white Americans sit segregated. In 1955, this refusal to move initiated the Civil Rights Movement. It is also home to the first church where Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke, and the “headquarters of the Southern Poverty Law Center, [which is] the civil rights legal firm which sues white supremacists and tracks hate groups” (Roberts, 2021). But then there is the flip side to this history of civil rights activism. The sight of the memorial is only a stone’s throw “from the [Alabama] state capitol building and a slew of statues commemorating the Confederacy, the collection of states that seceded from the US and started the bloodiest war in American history” (Sampathkumar, 2018). The founder of the memorial, Bryant Stevenson stated that he “really believe[s] it is important for Americans to make the journey, take the trip, and get proximate to the part of this country where this legacy was most intensely felt” (Sampathkumar, 2018). The journey itself is a significant act of remembering and honour the victims of this racial terror.

The memorial is made of hundreds of large, rusted metal rectangle columns hanging from the beams of the ceiling. The pillars vary in length and height above the viewer. To better detail the experience inside the monument, one eyewitness and journalist wrote:

More than 800 coffin-like columns are suspended from a canopy...Visitors walk a path with four right angles to view the large, oxidized steel pillars, which are engraved with the names of American counties and the number of African-Americans who were lynched there. As the New York Times described it: ‘The columns meet you first at eye level, like the headstones that lynching victims were rarely given. But as you walk, the floor steadily descends; by the end, the columns are all dangling above, leaving you in the

position of the callous spectators in old photographs of public lynchings' ...
Duplicates of the steel pillar-coffins are laid horizontally outside of the memorial as well, and [the founder] said he hoped the counties would come claim them and put them on display in their respective locations. Those that do not, would be left at the memorial for all to see (Sampathkumar, 2018).

On the bottom of each pillar are inscriptions of the names of those who were wrongly executed by mob and a description the crime they were accused of and the way they were murdered. Nearly 4000 names are written. For example, one reads: "Parks Banks, lynched in Mississippi in 1922 for carrying a photograph of a white woman". (Sampathkumar, 2018). Another is inscribed with "Mary Turner, who after denouncing her husband's lynching by a rampaging white mob, was hung upside down, burned and then sliced open so that her unborn child fell to the ground" (Sampathkumar, 2018). This memorial seeks to hold the counties where the lynching occurred responsible for memorializing their history. In that the memorial provides a piece for each country to take back with them and display, those that do not take this opportunity are called out in a way. Since their stone is left for all visitors to see. This is a great example of intentional *regenerative shaming* with the goal being that when responsibility for past crimes is taken, healing can begin.

The memorial is also not all about the darkness and trauma, there is a poem which reminds visitors that there is hope yet. It reads:

For the hanged and beaten.
For the shot, drowned, and burned.
For the tortured, tormented, and terrorized.
For those abandoned by the Rule of Law.
We will remember.
With hope because hopelessness is the enemy of justice.
With courage because peace requires bravery.
With persistence because justice is a constant struggle.
With faith because we shall overcome (Ater, 2018/2019).

This allows visitors to step out of the deep sense of shame that has washed over them for their walk through the pillars and think for a moment about all the heroes who have come before to pave the way for racial equality in the US. May of those people did so only a few miles away from the memorial site. The text above demonstrates yet another effective example of *regenerative shaming* within the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*.

In terms of educational outreach, the majority of the leg work is performed by the founding institution, the Equal Justice Initiative. They seek to educate and raise awareness about the history of slavery, the civil right movement, and the current racial inequalities that

continue to exist in the United States. This is important because it considers the caution from James E. Young about monuments being static and taking on a life of their own. It is also an important part of *regenerative shaming* as it helps to take the bad feeling and turn it into educated actions. This is key according to Sara Ahmed and John Braithwaite that the dark feelings of shame are not to be everlasting lest we outcast members of society which defeats the purpose of reintegration that is foundational to *regenerative shaming*.

3.4 Pop Culture Response

Because the memorial is so new, rather than examine further academic literature, I chose to look at the response to the memorial from the general public on social media. When examining social media there has been a very public outcry of support for the National Memorial to Peace and Justice. On Instagram, #NationalMemorialforPeaceandJustice has nearly 3000 tags. This means thousands of people have posted images on the social networking site and tagged the memorial site. When looking at a few of these posts individually we can see photos and videos from the memorial, along with selfies, journalist articles, and infographics. One woman wrote “my heart is heavy and my eyes are even more open” to accompany a photo of herself with the hanging pillars of metal behind her (Zenslayfu, 2018). Another visitor posted a close up of one of the pillars where the names inscribed are legible. They captioned this photo “this country has so much to atone for” (Chasinggarza, 2019). A more recent post shows the visitors feet next to an inscription on the memorial which reads “may we never forget all those who suffered and died because they asserted their basic human right to be free”, followed by the caption “this place rocked me to my core” (Ntdubb, 2021). These reactions all exemplify the powerful intentions of the memorial and prove the success of the memorial.

However, this is likely biased because those who are fervently against the monument would not be so public in this opinion. This is because the response to a negative public expression of the monument would not be well received on any public platform. Additionally, it is also less likely for those who do not support the memorial to take time to visit the memorial at all. For both reasons, research through Instagram is limited due to lack of access.

3.5 Negative Views

While for many this monument seems to be a step in the right direction towards the healing of deep wounds along racial lines, there are those who disagree. The Guardian sent

several journalists to Montgomery to report on the opening of the monument in 2018. One resident stated that: “It’s going to cause an uproar and open old wounds... it’s a waste of money, a waste of space and it’s bringing up bullshit” (Levin, 2018). Another resident added to the conversation saying “it keeps putting the emphasis on discrimination and cruelty” (Levin, 2018). However, their opinions are far from the most radical. There are many who hate the memorial for blatantly racist reasons.

Alabama is famous for its attempt to protect and defend its numerous Confederate monuments. One prominent defender of those statues and a member of the Alabama Sons of Confederate Veterans stated: “bring that stuff to light, and let it be there, but don’t dwell on it... We have moved past it ... You don’t want to entice them and feed any fuel to the fire” (Levin, 2018). The fire being further rioting from African Americans. Another critic questioned the legitimacy of the amount of lynchings portrayed at the monument, over 4000. He stated “That seems pretty incredible to me that there would be that many documented lynchings ... That was not the norm” (Levin, 2018). To which the author of the article reminded that the founding organization of the memorial, the Equal Justice Initiative “did six years of research and made extensive visits to southern sites” (Levin, 2018). Placing this novel memorial in the heart of what was historically the capital of the Confederacy has stirred up entrenched racism and fear, but it is also starting a conversation. This is what the founders intended. And let us not forget, that admit the racist history of Montgomery Alabama, there is the rich history of resistance which the memorial accompanies.

There are those who claim this monument is not successful in its attempt to use shame in a constructive way because there is a natural selection bias when it comes to those who visit the site. As previously mentioned, it is unlikely that those who could most benefit from the monument would choose to visit it, seeing as it would make them feel uncomfortable and challenge their beliefs. Those who subscribe to overt forms of white supremacy would not pay to visit the memorial or seek out the feelings of shame which come from visiting the monument.

There is also an emerging trend in the tourism industry known as Dark Tourism and this memorial plays a role. It is here that researchers Marouf Hasiana and Nicholas S. Paliewicz explore where the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* fits. They claim that “the NMPJ and Legacy Museum use absence, hauntology, and other space-based strategies to remind audiences of the systematic nature of the racialized violence that plagued America between 1877 and 1950” (Hasian & Paliewicz, 2021). This means the museums benefits from a growing trend of tourism which is hotly debated and seen as unethical due to its nature of

abusing the terrors and tragedies faced by victims for financial profit. They also propose that many who visit the memorial site are participating in “dark tourist activism” and they ask whether or not such places of haunting horror can “serve more redeeming, more uplifting purposes?” (Hasian & Paliewicz, 2021). They point out that “some American detractors have argued that [this site] simply invite white guilt, or dredge up dark American pasts that don’t help with post-racial healing in this century” (Hasian & Paliewicz, 2021). These critiques are all valid points which highlight the negative feelings that the memorial site intentionally arouses. However, it also makes it clear to me that this goal of shaming should be made explicitly clear.

4 The Two Monuments Comparison

4.1 Similarities

At first glance these two monuments, the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the National Memorial of Peace and Justice, look strikingly similar. To the point that one might initially assume that they were created by the same artist or founded by the same organization. However, we know that this is not the case. They both are imposingly large, covering several thousand square meters each, have hundreds of rectangular coffins similar to pillars, and represent horrible atrocities committed by the countries in which they are built. The visitor to either monument is asked to walk between these pillars, losing themselves in the massive walls of stone or metal that loom over them. In both monuments the visitor's vision is changed as the floor of the American monument does so that eventually the viewer is looking up at the hanging pillars. In the German monument, the height of the pillars slowly increases to create an undulating field of grey rectangles. The viewer in either monument barely notices the gradual change with each step, but as you look up and back along your path, it becomes clear with the field of vision in both changing so drastically. Through my study it becomes clear that this is purposeful. Along the same lines as the quote from Martin Niemöller, this parallels how these kinds of large-scale atrocities do not occur suddenly and obviously, it is through small incremental changes which shift society ever so slowly from its initial goals. These small changes eventually can add up and allow for the creation of an entire system of oppression. After the visual similarities, they share one very important goal, they both seek to use shame in a positive way and represent works of regenerative shaming. These memorials are dramatic in scale in order to demonstrate the massiveness of the extreme violence and large-scale murders of the victims they honour, whether Black or Jewish.

4.2 Differences

One key differentiation between these memorials is the memory culture variances between the Southern United States and Germany. Their memory cultures could not be more different nor could their laws that govern hate speech. As previously stated, the American monument is less than a mile away from monuments which stand to honour the Confederacy, a nation which perpetuated and benefited from the culture of racially motivated lynchings. For example, according to Google Maps, the Confederate Memorial Monument, which is outside the Alabama state capital, is 1.1 miles away, walkable in less than 30 minutes (Anon., 2021). This is a sobering reminder that while the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice* is a large step towards national recognition of the scale of lynchings in the American South, the racial divide is far from bridged. This is not the same in Germany at all. There is no memorial to the National Socialist party, any such monument is absolutely unthinkable according to modern German memory culture, and would be illegal. In the southern United States this is a hotly debated topic while in Germany there is no question. Susan Neiman, author of the award-winning text, *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil*, points out the differing memory cultures saying:

there are no Nazi sites in Germany in the sense that there are plantation sites in the United States. The only equivalent sites that now exist in Germany are concentration camps. On the site of Buchenwald, where as many as a quarter of a million inmates were held, a museum dispels any notion that the citizens of the nearby cultural capital Weimar were unaware of what was happening in their midst during World War II. The idea that tourists would visit such a place seeking smiling women in dirndls—much as some visit American plantations looking for ladies in hoop skirts—is obscene. Not even members of Germany’s right-wing Alternative for Germany party would suggest glorifying that part of the past (Neiman, 2019).

Any support of the Nazi party is not done so on a large public scale however in the United States one cannot walk through the deep south without seeing signs which read “the South will rise again”. However, as pointed out earlier, there are numerous laws in Germany which would prevent any nostalgic memory of the age of Nazism. This calls into question why the United States history and resulting memory culture is different, or really whether it is actually that different at all. There is this ideal that the American south and its traditions are good and can be separated from slavery, as it perpetuated by the Lost Cause myth. Some believe that the traditional values for which the “old South” stood, are something to be emulated.

However, there is no part of Nazi Germany that generates enough support from German people to make them feel it is worth upholding or remember as great and worth emulating.

This cultural difference between the social accepted views of the histories which these two memorials seek to remember that makes them strikingly different despite their aesthetic similarities. Everything about the American memorial, down to its existence at all is a hot button debate while the German seems an obvious choice, due to the history of Holocaust memory that has long been established in the region, only the purpose and artistic choices are debated. This cultural value of memory can also be seen in the sources of funding for the memorial sites. While the German memorial was funded by the federal government, the American memorial was funded privately. This calls to mind a proverb about “where your money is there also your heart will be”. It is clear that the German people have a culture which values these memorials, and the United States still has work to do here.

Another difference is that the American memorial is name and location specific while the German monument is not, at least on the above ground portion. For this, the German monument has received much disapproval. Additionally, the German monument does not have the element of asking that the places where Jewish people were murdered be asked to have their own smaller monument connected to the large one in Berlin. This is not a critique however, but important to note because there are places in the south that have shown no remorse for their history, and in fact still proudly display confederate monuments. This ask of the monument is important given the cultural difference around guilt over the holocaust vs the enslavement of African Americans.

A final notable difference is that the American one asks for active participation from the countries where lynchings occurred. The memorial site created pillars with names inscribed to be taken back to the cities and towns that have their own deadly and racist histories to recognize. The German memorial lacks this request for active participation and therefore holds visitors less accountable through public shaming. So while both sites use *regenerative shaming*, the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*, has a more visible platform on which it holds many counties in the United States accountable for the crimes of their past and even more it further shames the counties which have chosen not to engage.

5 Discussion

From a study of both monuments, it becomes clear that no matter how pure the intentions of a country to build a memorial to the memory of a people group who were historically oppressed and murdered by their nation, people will have unending critiques.

And these critics will come from both the left and the ring wing groups with varying degrees of severity. However, the practice of remembrance is not to be undervalued. The work that is done before, during, and after these monuments are built is influential in preventing our societies from forgetting the horrors of our pasts. To call back to the previously cited work of James E. Young, he points out that the work itself, of attempting to create the “perfect” monument, is a way of keeping the memory alive in perpetuity. He supposed that “instead of a fixed icon for Holocaust memory in Germany, the debate itself” is the perfect memorial (Young, 2002). This reminds us one of the purposes of monuments that are dedicated to victims, the goal of never forgetting what led to their tragic ends.

Then there is the goal of holding the perpetrators accountable, this study proves how challenging this purpose is to accomplish due to the historical contexts and differing political views which inform any national monument dedicated to remembering a period of national shame.

5.1 External Validity

This case study, comparing the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*, has implications beyond these two memorials. Because they are addressing two different histories, one on the Holocaust in Europe, and specifically the Jewish victims, and the other on racial lynching in the United States, any use of this research would be best applied to memorials dedicated to those same events. However, there is room to use this research and apply it to other atrocities committed by those in power over a victimized group. It would not however apply well to memorials which are dedicated to natural disasters, accidents, or violent offences committed by those outside of the nation in which the memorial is located. Because this is a work exploring the topic of *regenerative shaming*, it should not be applied to memorials which do not seek to use this practice.

There is a scale of validity to which this research can be applied. When looking at the specific attributes of the memorials which I examined, the scale can be ascertained. For the German and American memorials, both are located inside the countries within which the violence being memorialized was perpetrated. Second, they are both memorials to specific victim groups, whether that be lynching victims or Jewish victims of the holocaust. Both monuments also look at horrible histories in which *nationalism* was a key part of the ideologies which led to the lynchings or genocide. They are also both located in the western world and in more recent years. This is important as both monuments exist in a time where

many perpetrators of the violence have only recently passed away and their descendants likely still hold them closely in their memory. Both monuments are examining the effects of ideologies, racism and antisemitism, which continue to be felt today.

Beyond those similar characteristics, the memorials begin to differ. The German memorial looks at violence which was perpetrated by the people in power while the American one looks at violence perpetrated by vigilante groups, however many people in those groups would have been people of political power. The German memorial is dedicated to a very short time period in which the Jewish people were murdered while the American one examines a nearly 100-year period. Additionally, the American memorial looks at the unlawful murder of people, however supported by the government it was still technically illegal, the German memorial obviously differs.

Looking at these characteristics of the monuments used in this case study gives a good template for how to determine the external validity of this research. In order to apply this research well to other memorials, they should have similar features to the ones chosen here. This research would not be well fitted to monument that are built or are planned to be built outside the country in which the horrors occurred. This research would also not suit monuments dedicated to natural or accidental disasters. Additionally, it would be beyond the scope of this research to use this for monuments dedicated to individuals, as both are dedicated to large people groups who were considered subhuman by the perpetrators of the violence. By way of example, memorials to the Holocaust located in Israel would not benefit from this argument touting the benefits of *regenerative shaming* as shame would not be an effective tool in a country majorly built by survivors of the Holocaust.

5.2 Limitations

Examining the external validity of this study also reveals some of the limitations I encountered when performing this research. There are two limitations that proved insurmountable due to the nature and timing of my study. These being the number of monuments I examined and my inability to perform firsthand analysis of the sites due to the global pandemic. Without these limitations, this research would have more successfully examined the benefits of *regenerative shaming* within Holocaust and American lynching memorials.

Regarding the scale of this research, I intentionally chose two monuments for the case study. With a greater amount of time and resources, it would have been beneficial to examine, interview, and study more memorial sites, specifically looking at ones that stood in

contrast to the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*.

Were the world not presently operating in a global pandemic, this research would have also looked very different. I would have gone to each memorial site and conducted in person interviews and sought to interview visitors in order to learn about their reactions to the sites. It would have been very informative to speak to people who were descendants or felt connected to either the victims or the perpetrators of the violence. Through this I would have been better able to study initial reaction to the sites, and whether or not those who were related to the perpetrators felt shame and how overwhelming or not their sense of shame was. I would have liked to ask whether they felt any burden to respond or act after visiting the memorial site. For those related to the victims, I would have looked at whether they felt the site was a place they could safely mourn what was lost in their community or if the sense of shame was overwhelming even for them.

This study successfully looked at researchers Sara Ahmed and John Braithwaite to determine the usefulness of *regenerative shaming* in memorialization. In order to prove this on a wider scale, beyond the two memorials examined, further research should be conducted.

5.3 Further Research Recommendations

If there is any feeling which I have been left with following my research in writing the above it is this, further research is needed, and it is needed urgently. The research that is needed most pertains to the outcomes of these memorials will be and perhaps should be. Research should be conducted with visitors to these monuments in order to discern whether or not the shame felt during their visit has its intended outcomes. Individual studies about the long-term effects of the memorials will also be of utmost importance. Seeing as the Berlin memorial has been open to the public for 15 years and the American monument for less than five, they are not yet old enough to understand whether or not they use *regenerative shaming* successfully to prevent repeat offenses of the Holocaust or racial lynching. Over the following decades and centuries however, this will become more clear and researcher and government's will need to look at these memorials again.

As mentioned previously, researchers should also explore the critiques of the German monument, that it further ostracizes historically oppressed and outcasted people groups. Researchers should look at visitor rates and educational outreach programs to determine whether individual memorials to specific groups is useful or harmful. This is beyond the scope of this current research but will be important and informative for future monuments.

6 Conclusion

This deep examination of the *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*, along with accompanying responses and historical context demonstrates the use of *regenerative shaming* in memorials. While it seems counterintuitive to build a monument for the purpose of making a people group feel shame, it is clear that this is useful from a criminology perspective and ensuring that these histories are not repeated, per the research of John Braithwaite. In his words:

Reintegrative shaming prevents such offending; stigmatization increases the risk of crime for the stigmatized. Reintegrative shaming means communicating disapproval for the act with respect, with special efforts to avert outcast identities and to terminate disapproval with rituals of forgiveness and reconciliation. Stigmatization means communicating disapproval of a person with disrespect, where offenders are labeled with outcast identities (like ‘criminal’, ‘junkie’), where there are no rituals to terminate disapproval (Braithwaite and Braithwaite 2001:3)

While his original work does not apply *regenerative shaming* to memorials, the work of Sara Ahmed in *Politics of a Bad Feeling* makes this connection. This research proves that using an idea from criminology and scaling it up to mass violence perpetrated by the nation itself or under the guise of being in the defense of the nation, is effective. Here we can see that shame is a good thing and that it can be a tool harnessed to bring healing and restore a community that still feels the effects of the violence, or the ideologies which promoted the violence.

This study also explores the histories that effect the memorials and their places in public opinion. Looking at the history of the monuments themselves and other memorials in Germany and the US which are comparable or contrast well to *the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* and the *National Memorial for Peace and Justice*. Additionally, it reviews the current responses to the monuments, both positive and negative through academic, and pop culture reactions.

All this reminds us that the work of remembrance is never complete, and that one memorial cannot provide the solution or reparation for the traumas inflicted on minority groups. We must keep in mind the caution from James E. Young, that “once created, memorials take on lives of their own, often stubbornly resistant to the state’s original intentions” (Young, 1993). Therefore, dynamic education practices along with the memorials are deeply important. We should seek to use education to prevent continued stigmatization and trauma. This way when “new generations visit memorials under new circumstances and

invest them with new meanings. The result is an evolution in these memorials' significance, generated in the new times and company in which they find themselves" (Young, 1993). It is through the work of these national monuments and their careful use of *regenerative shaming* that we can seek to prevent repetition of such traumatic histories for future generations. One final reminder from Sara Ahmed, in order to heal, we cannot cover over but must "expose the wound to others: *the recovery is a form of exposure*" (Ahmed 83).

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