

Monumental refraction: Monuments, identity, and historical consciousness

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ABSTRACT: Over the past several years, controversies have emerged throughout the U.S. South over the future of monuments to Confederate leaders. The Confederacy was an attempt to create a new republic in the American South with enslavement as its cornerstone. Although Secession and the ensuing Civil War were disastrous for the South, many venerated those leaders and after the war they constructed monuments to promote a collective memory that promoted Southern nationalism and White supremacy. This article explores data in the form of letters a group of 10th-grade, mostly African American students wrote to the new mayor of their city, Richmond, Virginia. Richmond is the former capitol of the Confederacy and site of Monument Avenue where many Confederate statues stand to this day. It is also the site of previous controversies, such as when a monument of African American tennis champion, and Richmond native, Arthur Ashe was added to the avenue. Those letters are analyzed using Rösen's (2005) typology of historical consciousness. That framework has proven useful as a heuristic for describing historical arguments in the sphere of everyday life. However, it has also been critiqued for undertheorizing identity, compromising its utility as a tool to analyze the ways in which members of minority groups in heterogeneous and unequal societies make sense of the past, present, and future. Two emerging theories: King's (2019; 2018) theory of Black historical consciousness, and Zanazanian's (2012) dialogic framework for identity are also brought to bear on these data. Findings are discussed in two ways. First, as a cross case analysis based on relevant elements of the frameworks that focuses on patterns evident in the student work as a whole. Second, as three case-studies based on a sample of student work that exemplified three of Rösen's historical consciousness types. The article concludes with a discussion of how research on historical consciousness that uses Rösen's typology can better account for identity in heterogeneous societies.

KEYWORDS: Historical consciousness; monuments; race.

Introduction

Monuments were designed as *sites of memory* (Nora, 2001), pedagogical tools to teach young people a cultural curriculum, a set of beliefs that transcend time (Leib, 2002; Seixas & Clark, 2004). In her history of memorialization in public art in the United States, Doss (2010) explains that monuments "are archives of public affect," (p. 13) designed to create a strong emotional tie to a symbolic representation of an imagined past. Stone, metal and concrete are used to construct monuments because their function is to provide people with an unchanging symbol that survives historical flux and thus helps to reproduce identities with more continuity than change (Aruajo, 2014; Doss, 2010; Leib, 2002; Seixas & Clark, 2004; Wertsch, 2008; cf. Nietzsche, 1997/1874). Whether contemporary people perceive the intended message of such monuments or whether that message is refracted through the prism of people's own context, positionality, ideology, and identity is less clear. This article

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explores the intersection of controversial public monuments and historical consciousness in Richmond, Virginia, the former capital of the Confederate States of America, the breakaway republic dedicated to the perpetuation of enslavement.

The landscape of the United States is dotted with monuments that commemorate the U.S. Civil War. It was the bloodiest war in American history, and it changed the nation's economy, culture, and identity. Those with the most to gain from the Union victory in the Civil War were millions of African Americans, most of whom were enslaved before the war. African Americans were actively involved in the war effort and made up 10% of the Union military by its end (Foner, 2005). They earned full citizenship rights when the Confederacy was defeated, occupied by Federal troops, and the U.S. Constitution Amended (Foner, 2005). The period known as Reconstruction lasted from 1865-1877, and during that time there was revolutionary change in many parts of the South as African Americans organized institutions such as schools and churches, and attained political power through the federally protected vote (Du Bois, 2013/1935; Foner, 2005). It was also a time when a reactionary terror campaign to remove those rights began. That extra-legal campaign was later coupled with legal moves once Reconstruction ended, with the result being a denial of citizenship rights, a loss of political power, economic peonage, and the institutionalization of social inequality known as Jim Crow.

Confederate monuments began to be built in the last decade of the 19th century, when White southerners were experiencing political ascendance and improved economic circumstances, and when the rest of the nation had largely accepted or acceded to their historical narrative of the Civil War (Blight, 2001; Cobb, 2005; Lieb, 2002). That narrative, called the *Lost Cause*, framed the Southern position in the Civil War as a defense against the industrialized North who sought to unconstitutionally limit their sovereignty and way of life. In that narrative the issue of enslavement is diminished and the actual lives and aspirations of Black people are completely occluded. Confederate monuments were erected as a symbol of the reinstatement of White supremacy, and as a pedagogical device to teach that ideology to subsequent generations. African Americans resisted the erection of such monuments (Brown, 2004), as well as the pedagogical message they represented (Brown, 2010) at that time and ever after.

It should come as no surprise that Confederate monuments regularly become sites of public debate about how the Civil War should be remembered. That is because the Civil War is a *difficult history* (Gross & Terra, 2018), one of those “periods that reverberate in the present and surface fundamental disagreements over who we are and what values we hold” (p. 52). Such debates are a significant civic activity in which divided communities struggle over which historical narratives will be represented by their public art (Leib, 2002; Gibson & Reich, 2017). In such debates, history is evoked to support emotional and ethical arguments about who and what ought to represent the community, its identity and values, and is thus a highly relevant field for the study of historical consciousness (Seixas & Clarke, 2004; Wertsch, 2012).

This article considers arguments constructed by mostly African American 10th grade (~15 years of age) students ($n=10$) about Richmond's monuments in light of German philosopher Jörn Rüsen's (2005) theory of *historical consciousness*. Historical consciousness is a term that describes how people use history in everyday life to orient themselves with regard to identity, and ethics, and to inform their beliefs about what is likely to happen in the future. That theory has gained great popularity, particularly in Europe, and has been used heuristically to characterize the historical consciousness evident in students' reactions to controversial public art (Seixas & Clarke, 2004). The theory, however, has several problematic blind spots, particularly in relation to how historical consciousness and identity are related to each other in

unequal, heterogeneous societies. To address those blind spots, two additional theories of historical consciousness are juxtaposed with Rösen's: King's (2019; 2018) work on Black historical consciousness and Zanazanian's (2012) work on the dialogic nature of identity. Findings are described first as a set of descriptive features that appeared across the ten student letters, and then as exemplary case studies that go into greater detail about three student letters, each of which were categorized differently using Rösen's (2005) typology.

The work is guided by the following research questions: How can historical consciousness be characterized when the arguments of marginalized people in a heterogeneous and deeply unequal society are foregrounded?; To what extent is Rösen's theory of historical consciousness adequate for that task?; and ultimately, how can that theory be amended to be more useful in contexts such as the one described here?

Monuments and historical consciousness: Towards a theoretical framework

Previous studies have discussed public monuments as a tool to influence young peoples' historical consciousness (Seixas & Clark, 2004; Wertsch, 2008). Particularly relevant is Seixas and Clark's (2004) study of students' written reactions to a set of murals that hung in the Legislative Assembly building in Vancouver, in the Canadian province of British Columbia that celebrate White supremacy over the indigenous peoples who lived there for millennia. Data for that study included 553 essays written by grade 11 (~15-16 years old) students who voluntarily submitted their work to a provincial essay contest. Student demographic information was not recorded and the analysis was carried out without a consideration of identity. Rather, Seixas and Clark (2004) employed a framework developed by German philosopher Jörn Rösen (2005; 1989; cf. Nietzsche, 1997/1874) to focus solely on the way that student arguments considered ethics and epistemological issues related to the truth of the historical accounts represented in the murals. Central to that study were the following questions about anachronistic public art:

What is to be done with these artifacts of earlier power configurations, outdated modes of understanding, bygone identities? Destroy them? Maintain them but strip them of their monumental status? Erect alternative monuments to celebrate those who were excluded? (Seixas and Clark, 2004, p. 146).

Those questions are neither historical, nor empirical. They are asking the reader to use judgment in the present that is informed by a consideration of ethics and historical knowledge about what ought to be done in the future. Rösen (2005) calls exercises in such judgment historical consciousness. In other words, for Rösen (2005), historical consciousness is a reaction to something, particularly something that represents a change from patterns of life we expect to continue.

Rösen's theory of historical consciousness

Rösen (2005) uses the term *history* ecumenically to describe any use or reference to the past, regardless of how truthful or accurate that reference may be. Thus, history is not only the domain of historians with specialized preparation, nor is it differentiated from *collective memory* as it is in other frameworks (see Wertsch, 2002; Reich, & Corning, 2017). Rather, history is a cultural resource that everyone uses to make sense of their identity, and of continuity and change in the world around them. In Rösen's (2005) framework, collective memory is a form of historical knowledge that helps shape what seems possible or plausible in the course of human events. Historical consciousness is the cognitive activity of making use of that knowledge to make sense of the present and imagine what might be possible in the

future. That framing of history is particularly useful when examining young peoples' historical reasoning because it helps to minimize the tendency towards judging them using standards set by adults who have greater knowledge and disciplinary preparation.

When discussing historical consciousness, Rüsen was primarily concerned with those moments in which people are faced with a change or an ethical decision in which they draw upon their knowledge of the past and present to make sense of it and to construct a response. His typology of historical consciousness describes such responses as a developmental trajectory. The trajectory begins with little awareness of historical change to more abstract understandings of change, epistemology, ontology, and ethics. It consists of four types of historical consciousness—*traditional, exemplary, critical, and genetic*.

Traditional historical consciousness

Traditional historical consciousness does not perceive change between past, present and future. Time is essentially flat, and made up of repeating patterns of existence stretching out infinitely into the past and future. With regards to a moral stance, the repetition of patterns of meaning over time is its own moral justification. As applied to the monuments in question, Seixas and Clark (2004) identified traditional historical consciousness with the belief that the monuments should remain untouched because they have stood over a long period of time (see also Rüsen, 2012).

Exemplary historical consciousness

Exemplary historical consciousness is guided by the belief that abstract, generalizable, and eternal moral-truths govern the past, present and future. These moral-truths are manifest in historical narratives as the drivers of continuity and change over time. Seixas and Clark (2004) associate the exemplary orientation with a strong desire to build monuments to “extraordinary people” who exemplify, for example, the “collective historical trajectory, the founding and progress of the nation” (p. 154).

Critical historical consciousness

Critical historical consciousness holds all rules, maxims, traces and narratives of the past under scrutiny. Critical historical consciousness does not associate a warrant for truth with the continuity of interpreted meaning in an historical account. Instead, the critical stance seeks to scrutinize what is taken for granted, to criticize the hierarchical power relations inherent in the ways of being, doing, and thinking that traditional types take for granted and exemplary types hold up as natural, moral and good. As such, this stance is more open to change, even radical change in the future. Regarding monuments, the critical orientation is most likely to argue for the removal or destruction of monuments that symbolize oppression in order to destabilize and denaturalize the ideologies such monuments were designed to convey (Seixas & Clark, 2004).

Genetic historical consciousness

Genetic historical consciousness seeks meaning in the inter-related nature of change and continuity. In this sense, rather than destroy historical narratives that support White supremacy and replace them with narratives that restructure racial identity, the genetic stance seeks to historicize all categories as human constructions that change over time in response to dynamic and changeable social, political, cultural, economic and geographical contexts. Evidence of such a stance in the context of monuments is the belief that the monuments should stand, either where they are or in a museum, and be historicized. In other words,

plaques should be added that explain the political, ideological (for example, racial) context in which the monuments were erected (Seixas & Clark, 2004).

Rüsen's model of historical consciousness will be used to analyze the data because it is a heuristic that synthesizes a number of salient factors related to what Rüsen calls "narrative competence": an understanding of time, epistemology, historical significance, moral reasoning, and one's orientation towards the self and others. However, such use is not unproblematic. Rüsen's hierarchical arrangement places the historical consciousness of a well-educated cosmopolitan as the highest achievement in a developmental trajectory. That trajectory is largely defined by the adoption of a succession of epistemological positions that mirror the development of Western historiography (from the medieval to the post-modern). It is unclear to what extent Rüsen's arrangement is tied to the development of what Lee (2004) would call "historical understanding." Lee's work on student learning, as well as the works cited in subsequent sections below (for example, Bermudez, 2012) indicate that the positions students take in response to questions that link past, present, and future are mediated by complex relationships between context and historical content. In other words, it is possible that the same student might be judged to produce responses at different levels of historical consciousness depending on what content is being discussed. Identity is likely to be particularly salient in such situations, which presents us with the second caveat to the analysis using Rüsen's typology. Rüsen's theory is characterized by an understanding of identity that is informed by more homogeneous societies, such as the Scottish example he used to illustrate how each of the four forms of consciousness might manifest. In more diverse societies in which multiple identities exist and intersect in complex context-bound hierarchical relationships, and in which the process of assigning and defining identity is one that involves not just one's own social groups but other social groups as well, Rüsen's abstracted and simplified model may not be enough to account for the empirical data in this study.

King's Black historical consciousness

Currently, an effort is underway to theorize *Black historical consciousness* that emerges from the unique perspectives, historical contexts, and intellectual traditions of the African diaspora. In the field of history education, that project has been most recently taken up by LaGarrett King (2019; 2018). King's (2019; 2018) formulation draws on theories of historical consciousness that have emerged in history education and synthesized them with *diaspora literacy* (King, 1992), and *Black critical theory* (Dumas, 2016). King (2018) describes his aim as historicizing Blackness through "Black people's epistemologies, gazes, and imaginations" (p. 5), an aim that reaches back to the late 19th century in the fields of Black historiography and social studies (Brown, 2010). The urgency of that project emerges from the practical need to make sense of and confront "the psychic and material assault on Black flesh" (Dumas, 2016, p. 12), a phenomenon that began with enslavement and continues in the form of state violence (such as, mass incarceration, violent policing), social and financial disinvestment, and the persistent belief that the U.S. is a meritocracy in the face of those structural conditions.

The curricular end of King's project is the humanization of the Black subject as complex, and as having a "set of historical contexts independent of Western knowledge," (King, 2019, p. 164). It is through knowledge about the history of Black people, that one can gain a consciousness about the historicity (i.e. change and continuity over time) of Blackness. That commitment suggests an epistemological position that assumes human equality through time and calls for the voices of silenced historical actors of the African diaspora as a historiographical corrective (see for example, Trouillot, 1995). That position has implications

for the legitimacy, selection, and interpretation of historical sources, raising historiographical concerns that are less central in Rüsen's work.

King's theory is descriptive in the sense that he describes the centrality of race in the development of history and culture, particularly in the United States. He has identified three areas of empirical concern: *narrative*, *use of history*, and *historical culture* (cf. Thorp, 2014) that will help to shape the presentation of data below. King's concerns with narrative revolve around the use of archetypal forms that are associated with Black history in the popular culture (for example, victims or messiahs, see Woodson, 2016); the implications those archetypes have for how Black history is used to make social and political arguments in the present; and the treatment of ideologies such as race, racism, and anti-Blackness as individual beliefs, or as a central structural component of the historical culture.

Affect and the significant Other

Rüsen's and King's theories of historical consciousness are both centered on the idea of identity as a profound factor that helps people orient themselves in time and space. However, neither theory accounts for the dialogical construction of identity, nor do they account for the affective dimension of identity, particularly when it is invoked in the context of a difficult history. Both of those ideas are briefly sketched below, and similar to the treatment of King's work, will be used to enrich the analysis of student work.

Zanazanian's (2012) work on historical consciousness frames identity formation dialogically in contexts that are occupied by multiple others in a tense "rapport" (p. 218) with each other. Zanazanian (2012) highlights the role in such rapport of what he calls the "significant Other" (p. 216), another identity group with which one's own group vies for cultural, social, economic and political power. Zanazanian (2012) found that "'ethnic' individuals (implicitly) evaluate their ethical motives in order to bind their personal identity to that of their group and to orient their actions toward the out-group (p. 218)." If, as Rüsen (2005) claims, history is a moral argument in narrative form, and historical consciousness is the activation of a moral response to questions that implicate those narratives, then it stands to reason that in politically and culturally unequal and competitive milieus expressions of historical consciousness are affected by the meta-dialogue with the significant Other.

In a somewhat similar vein, W. E. B. Du Bois (1993/1903) described a phenomenon he called "dual consciousness," a metaphor that he described as measuring "your worth through the eyes of others" (Moore, 2005, p. 753). Although Du Bois's (1993/1903) original meaning is contested, the metaphor continues to be invoked because of its descriptive power with regard to the epistemic tension many African Americans and other minorities experience. That tension lies between an awareness of a culturally dominant perspective, e.g. the perspective of a significant Other, and a perspective that emerges from their own non-dominant experiences (Allen Jr., 2003; Ciccariello-Maher, 2009; Gooding-Williams, 1987; Moore, 2005). That tension affects not only how the world is perceived and described, but also how members of one's own group, and ultimately oneself, are perceived. Both Du Bois (1993/1903) and Zanazanian (2012) describe how identity groups attempt to manage the perception of their group by both insiders and outsiders alike, a concern that contrasts with Rüsen's (2005) framework for identity in which such ontological categories are rooted in historical memory and formed in isolation.

The concern for managing perceptions of one's group suggests that affect plays an important role in the relationship between identity and historical consciousness (Helmsing, 2014; Scribner, 2019). Affect describes the experience of heightened attention to particular subjects one might encounter. In the intersection of history and identity, people tend to be

both more interested in and more emotionally engaged with content that relates to their own identity. The Western cultural tradition frames affect and reason dichotomously, and valorizes the latter over the former. Helmsing (2014, cf. Ahmed, 2004) points out, however, that affect is central to the use of history as a way to orient oneself in time and space, and thus is integral to historical sense-making (see also Barton & McCully, 2005; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012; Reich, 2018; Scribner, 2019; Wertsch, 1998). Similarly, Bermudez (2012) reminds us that history is a discursive activity that people engage in with others. She urges scholars to consider the “discursive activities of negotiation, affirmation, recognition and contestation around competing social narratives, value conflicts, and power differences” (Bermudez, 2012, p. 207) that are at play when history is evoked (see also Anagnostopoulos, Everett, & Carey, 2013; Kollikant Pollack, 2015; Perkins, Chan-Frazier, & Roland, 2018; Wertsch, 2012; Zanzanian, 2012).

The data analyzed in this study consists of the productions of African American students in a largely African American school who considered controversies about monuments that evoke both their own identity and that of their significant Other in a racially contested space. The inclusion of the considerations suggested by King (2019; 2018), Zanzanian (2012) and others draws attention to the historical context of identity formation and the ongoing dialogical work of (re)constructing those identities when engaging in historical culture.

Monument Avenue: A recurring controversy

This study was conducted in Richmond Virginia, the former capitol of the Confederacy that became known as the “Mecca of the Lost Cause,” (Wilson, 1983, p. 29; as quoted in Leib, 2002, p. 286) in part because of the presence of Monument Avenue, a street of stately homes and larger-than-life monuments to Confederate soldiers and statesmen, such as Robert E. Lee, Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, and Jefferson Davis (Wilson, 1994). Confederate monuments were erected there between 1890 and 1929, but in 1996 a new monument to Richmond native, tennis champion, and human rights activist Arthur Ashe was added. The symbolism of placing a statue of an African American on Monument Avenue was not lost on Richmonders, and the plan to do so engendered significant public debate both between and within White and Black communities in Richmond (Leib, 2002; Gibson & Reich, 2017). Some Whites argued that Monument Avenue was not the appropriate location to place the Ashe statue because he was not a military hero (Moore, 1995). Some African Americans agreed that he should not be placed there, citing Ashe’s own wishes and discomfort that one of their own would be associated with an avenue whose icons represent White supremacy (Boone, 1995). Other African Americans, including then Governor Douglas Wilder, believed that placing Ashe on Monument Avenue would change the story that unfolds there, indicating that the Lost Cause interpretation is no longer taken as gospel in Virginia and that Virginia recognizes its African American heroes (Williams, 1995). The Ashe controversy was not the first regarding Monument Avenue, however. African Americans in Richmond spoke out against the deification of Confederates back in 1890 when the Lee statue was unveiled (Brown, 2004), and today debates continue about the future of Richmond’s iconic boulevard (Ferguson, 2017).

In 2015, a terror attack on Charleston’s Emanuel A.M.E. Church left nine African American parishioners dead at the hands of a White-nationalist who reveled in the iconography of the Confederacy. That attack rekindled debate about the display of such symbols on public property throughout the South. In Richmond, a citizen painted “Black Lives Matter” on the statue of Jefferson Davis (Moomaw, & Shuleeta, 2015), and a flurry of opinion pieces and public meetings appeared in which citizens discussed what should be done. In those discussions, opinions fell into several broad categories. Some believed that the

Confederate statues should be removed and placed in a museum (Williams, 2015). Others felt that the statues were legitimate expressions of southern heritage and should remain untouched (Virginia Flaggers, 2015). Still others believed that the statues should remain, but that historical placards should be added to provide context to visitors about what the statues symbolize and why they were erected (Zullo, 2017). In June 2017, six months after this study was conducted, the new Mayor of Richmond, Levar Stoney created a commission to consider these alternatives and produce a plan for addressing how the city's past is represented (Ferguson, 2017). The reader should note that the deadly encounter in Charlottesville Virginia sparked by controversy regarding the future of a statue to R. E. Lee there, had not yet



occurred when these data were collected, but the election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States had occurred.

Figure 1 Photos of the monuments to Confederate General R. E. Lee and tennis champion and human rights activist Arthur Ashe. (photos used by permission Buffington, M.)

Method

Sight, participants, and data source

The student work analyzed in this article was completed as part of a cross-curricular unit on the public art of Monument Avenue at Thurmond high school (a pseudonym). Data for this study consists of letters students wrote for the English teacher to the new mayor of Richmond about what they believed should be done with the statues on Monument Avenue. The English teacher, Ms. O'Shea (a pseudonym), discussed persuasive argumentation with the students and the genre of a formal letter to city officials. She engaged her students in a visual analysis of the Monuments and documents, mostly newspaper editorials about the controversy surrounding the Ashe monument in 1995. Her ultimate goal was for the students to understand

that the Confederate Monuments create a narrative of the Lost Cause and that the insertion of Arthur Ashe was a deliberate attempt to disrupt that narrative. Her second goal was to have students practice the art of civic argumentation in the form of letters to the mayor of the city.

Thurmond High School enrolled 902 students in the 2015-2016 school year (the year before these data were collected). Students who participated in this study come from a more selective *International Baccalaureate* program within Thurmond High that enrolls 71 (9.6%) of those 902 students. The school is 72% African American, 2% Asian, 4% Latinx, and 18% White, with less than 2% being Native American or mixed race. 51% receive free or reduced-price lunch. A total of 22 students from Ms. O'Shea's English class were eligible to participate in this study, and of those 10 elected to do so. All 10 completed the letter to the mayor. Eight of the ten participants were African-American, one was Latino and one was mixed White and Asian. Ms. O'Shea and the researcher are both White. The permissions secured for this study from the school did not allow interviews and questionnaires of students' backgrounds. The participating teacher was relied upon as an informant regarding students' ethnic/racial backgrounds. Such a method is problematic for a number of reasons: teachers may have developed incorrect impressions and are likely to have different amounts of knowledge about different students, and identities tend to be plural and fluid (Peck, 2019). The reader should take that lack of clarity into consideration when considering the evidence. However, the reader should also consider the ways in which forced choice categories on a questionnaire refract when people engage in in-depth interviews about their identities (Peck, 2019). Data were collected for this study in the Fall of the 2016-2017 school year. After securing permission from the participants, the letters were collected by the researcher from Ms. O'Shea.

Data analysis and presentation

The nature of the research questions, the data, and the use of three juxtaposed frameworks necessitated recursive analyses of both parts and whole. R usen's typology is holistic. It combines differences among a number of inter-related elements into a type. The elements of students' discourse most relevant to that holistic judgment were their theses regarding the future of the monuments, the support for the thesis(es), and the way in which participants discussed time. R usen's typology, however, undertheorizes issues of identity that are more central to Black historical consciousness (King, 2019; 2018), and the dialogic approach to identity in Zanzanian's (2012) work. In order to juxtapose those frameworks in the analysis and presentation of the data, several elements of participants' discourse were analyzed. Those included structural racism, narrative direction (progress or decline), explicit mentions of race, identity, and the connections made between identity and the controversy over the monuments. All analyses were conducted using the AtlasTi software package.

To assign each letter to one or more of R usen's historical consciousness types, three steps were taken. The first step was to identify the students' thesis (or theses) on what should be done with the Ashe statue and the Confederate monuments. Second, the reasons students gave to support the thesis(es) were identified. Third, the utterances in the letters that referenced a period in time were coded (Seixas & Clark, 2004). "Far past" was used if they referred to the period after Reconstruction when Confederate statues were installed. "Near past" was used for utterances about the addition of Ashe's statue in the mid-1990s. "Present" was used for utterances referring to events around the time of the study, and "future" was used for utterances about what they believed might occur after the present. The constant comparison method (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was used in order to construct an argument for categorizing the thesis(es) in the letters by the historical consciousness type (R usen, 2005; Seixas & Clark, 2004). The constant comparison in this instance is deductive. Each thesis and

the evidence used to support it were compared to the features of the ideal types developed by Rösen (2005) to ensure that categorizations were consistent. Out of the constant comparison method a series of codes were developed to describe the timeless principles that participants applied when making arguments in the exemplary register. Those coded principles were “Ashe doesn’t fit,” “build monuments to inspire,” “controversy is bad,” “progress is a break with the past,” “respect people’s wishes (regarding their likeness),” and “shared representation.”

Following that initial analysis, a secondary analysis was conducted that made use of insights on historical consciousness from King (2019; 2018), Du Bois (1993/1903), Helmsing, (2014), and Zanazanian (2012). The data were coded first for explicit mentions of “structural racism,” defined as mentions of disproportionality regarding who is represented (as historical structural racism), or mentions of Confederate racism, and/or segregation of the city and tennis courts in Ashe's youth. Second, the letters were coded with race if they mentioned “race,” “Black,” “African American,” “White,” and “Confederate.” Confederate was coded as an explicit mention of race because in the context of these letters it referred to statues and supporters of those statues who were clearly assumed to be White. Linguistic research on *race talk* has found that members of minority groups are reluctant to name the majority group particularly in mixed settings (Anagnostopoulos, et al., 2013; Perkins, et al., 2018). Mentions of Arthur Ashe were not coded as a mention of race because although students are conscious of his blackness, they treated him both as an individual and a representative member of the group. The letters were also coded for “identity,” defined here as a reference to in- and out-group, to personal identity, to Ashe as mismatched with Monument Avenue, and references to the identity of the city. After coding for explicit mention of race, the discourse employed for such mentions was organized into sub-categories that delineated common terms for African Americans and Whites from euphemistic ones, such as “Confederate Americans.” The AtlasTi query tool was used to look at co-occurrences of discussions of controversy and identity, as well as controversy and explicit mentions of race. When reviewing coded text in these categories, particular attention was paid to the emotional valence of the discourse, in particular around the intersections of controversy, race, and identity.

Data are presented in two ways in the findings below. First, each of the elements discussed above, are presented independently across all 10 cases to provide the reader with a clear description of them and to indicate how those elements were distributed across the sample. Second, data are presented holistically in the form of three case studies of letters categorized as exemplary, critical, and genetic according to Rösen’s typology. Case studies of individual letters were included because the form illustrates the inter-related nature of the three analytical lenses (Flyvbjerg, 2011; 2001). The case studies are *critical cases* with a strategic sample. Critical cases are those that “have strategic importance in relation to the general problem” (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 307). The general problem is to explore the ways in which Rösen’s typology works and does not work when characterizing the historical consciousness of young people from a marginalized group. Quotes from the participants’ letters are included without editing or indication of grammatical errors or inconsistency in regard to capitalization.

Findings

Responses categorized using Rösen’s typology

Student participants composed a variety of arguments about what should be done with the Ashe statue and Monument Avenue in general. The arguments that they made with regard to

the statues did not indicate the type of historical consciousness they employed (see figure 2). Of the ten participants in this study, eight wrote theses about what should be done with Arthur Ashe’s statue that can be classified as exemplary. Exemplary historical consciousness is characterized by the use of timeless principles that explain the past, present and future. These principles can be either ethical or temporal in nature, and the responses discussed here represent both. The three most common principles employed were that 1) there should be homogeneity to the art displayed public spaces (e.g., Ashe does not “fit” on Monument Avenue), 2) that people’s wishes should be respected (e.g., Ashe did not want his statue on Monument Avenue), and 3) that it is good to break with a “negative” past to progress to a “positive” future (e.g., add more diverse statues that represent an improved present). There were three participants, Amos, Naomi, and Daniel whose responses exemplified, at least in part, a critical historical consciousness. There was one response by Kehinde that was characterized as critical and genetic.

Participant and Race	Historical Consciousness Evident	Remove or Maintain Ashe Statue on Monument Avenue	Remove or Maintain Confederate Statues on Monument Avenue
Amos ¹ - African American	Critical	Maintain Ashe and add statues of the underrepresented	Maintain Confederate Statues
Ariella – African American	Exemplary	Move Ashe	Maintain Confederate Statues
Cassandra – Asian and White	Exemplary	Maintain Ashe and add statues of the underrepresented	Maintain Confederate Statues
Daniel – African American	Exemplary and Critical	Maintain Ashe and add statues of the underrepresented	Maintain Confederate Statues
Jabari – African American	Exemplary	Move Ashe	Maintain Confederate Statues
Jeané – African American	Exemplary	Move Ashe or add monuments of the underrepresented	Maintain Confederate Statues
Kehinde – African American	Critical and Genetic	Move Ashe	Maintain Confederate Statues
Marco – Latino	Exemplary	Move Ashe	Maintain Confederate Statues
Naomi – African American	Exemplary and Critical	Move Ashe	Replace Confederate Statues
Te’Anna – African American	Exemplary	Move Ashe	Maintain Confederate Statues

Figure 2 Historical consciousness and arguments about the monuments evident in participants’ letters

Most, but not all, of the respondents proposed that the Ashe statue be removed from Monument Avenue and placed somewhere the student deemed more appropriate. Cassandra and Daniel's exemplary responses argued that the Ashe statue should remain where it is and that further statues representing people of color and women should be added to Monument Avenue. Others, such as Ariella, Jeané, and Naomi argued that Ashe should be moved, but added a second thesis that argued that if he is going to stay, more statues be added. Curiously, only one student, Naomi, argued that the Confederate statues be removed. Other students, such as Amos, presented proposals that would diminish the iconic power of those monuments, but for many the idea of provoking a reaction from Whites was not attractive.

The presence of race, affect, and the significant Other

In King's (2019; 2018) work, a key component of Black historical consciousness is a recognition of racism as a central feature of American social structure and cultural matrixes. In these letters, 24 utterances were coded for structural racism, but three of the 10 (Marco, Jeané, and Naomi) made no such utterance at all. Of those who did describe structural racism in relation to Monument Avenue, they were clear that the presence of Confederate monuments, and the lack of representation of African Americans or members of other groups in Richmond, were evidence of structural racism (although that specific term was not used). Ariella wrote that "I agree that Monument avenue needs to showcase all the heroes of Richmond's history and not just confederate soldiers," and called for further redress, writing, "We have already successfully integrated the avenue, why not add an African American female as well?" Jabari wrote that "Currently the Ashe statue is located on monument avenue, blocks away from statues of men who wouldn't even approve his way of living and fought a bloody war in part for their beliefs that he shouldn't be able to become a famous tennis player." For these participants, Monument Avenue represents a fundamental unfairness in their city in which race—and also gender for at least one participant—determines who does and does not hold power.

Alongside the recognition of structural racism was the belief that, in America, progress unfolds over time. Discourse about the far past, near past, present, and future indicated a structural narrative of progress from a more racist past, in which one group hoarded power and recognition, to a future society in which respect for diversity replaces a racial hierarchy. Utterances referring to the distant past, specifically the time around and after the Civil War, tended to frame it negatively by describing the mistreatment of Black ancestors at that time. Daniel described the epoch in which the statues were erected as "a time in which Jim Crow laws were prevalent and racism was at its peak." In contrast, the near past—when Ashe's statue was added—and the present, were described as manifestations of positive change. Cassandra wrote of 1995 that "ever since then diversity and art have expanded in our amazing city." Included in those references to the future were their ideas about what might be done with Arthur Ashe's monument in order to end the controversy around it. Those future references expressed the belief that change was possible and that such change would be positive. Daniel asks "why not find a new solution to an old problem?" Jeané wrote that "The people of Richmond coming together and creating beautiful pieces of artwork would really make Richmond a better place to live." Kehinde blithely suggested that "I believe that, with a few tweaks here and there, these solutions could accommodate to all the people of Richmond who argue over the statue." Amos argued that the addition of Ashe should be accompanied by more monuments representing the diversity of the city in order to create a future for the avenue that has broken irrevocably with its past.

The presence of the significant Other, White Richmonders, is evident in the utterances about the controversies that surrounded the Ashe statue and in the discourse used to describe

that significant Other. Participants had diverse views about Ashe, Monument Avenue, and race, but they tended to connect identity and specifically race to the controversy. Seven of the 10 included explicit mentions of race when discussing the controversy, and eight of the 10 included identity in discussions of the controversy. Controversy was for most about the placement of the Ashe statue on Monument Avenue and the identity mismatch of an African American tennis champ and Confederate soldiers, but different students pointed blame in different directions. Cassandra connected the ideas of identity, mismatch, and controversy, but framed the placement of Ashe there as a way to move past the controversy. Kehinde described the controversy as emerging from “the people who support confederate statues”, but saw the salience of race in politics as a source of confusion that “muddle[s] the options” about what to do. Jabari described the Confederate statues as the cause of controversy, with Ashe’s presence diminishing divisiveness because his presence “shows growth in Richmond as a united city.”

While issues of racism were clearly connected to the controversies over monuments, participants were circumspect in how they described the significant Other. Text was coded for an explicit invocation of race when participants used words such as "race," "Black," "African American," "White," and "Confederate." That code was applied 64 times, and all 10 letters included at least two such mentions of race. As you can see in table 1, while participants freely used more common terms to describe African Americans, the word "White" was used only five times, and “Confederate” was used 21 times. Research on African American race talk using critical or historical discourse analysis has found that particularly in mixed settings, a strategy of using abstractions to refer to the dominant group is used to mitigate emotional response to the use of general categories that implicate others (in this case their White teacher) in historical or contemporary racist practices (Anagnostopoulos, et al., 2013; Perkins, et al., 2018).

“Black”/“African American”	22
Euphamisms for Black (e.g. “the community,” “brown bear”)	6
“White”	5
Euphamisms for White (e.g. “Confederates,” “polar bear”)	22
“Race”	6
Total Explicit Mentions of Race	61

Table 1 Participants’ Race Talk

The letters indicate that the presence of race and racism were salient to the participants when they discussed the controversies regarding Monument Avenue and the presence of the Arthur Ashe statue there. There was evidence that participants had an easier time discussing their in-group than they did the out-group: White Richmonders, a significant Other with disproportionate political and economic power in the city. In the following section, three case studies are presented that combine a description based on Rösen’s framework with elements that resonate with the other frameworks.

Case studies

Jeané's exemplary stance

Jeané framed Ashe's presence on Monument Avenue as a problem because its presence evoked strong reactions, particularly from some White Richmonders. Jeané proposed that Ashe's statue should be removed from Monument Avenue and placed elsewhere. She made a secondary proposal that if the Ashe statue remains on Monument Avenue, more statues of African American historical figures should be added. Consistent with an exemplary historical consciousness, Jeané supported both of these theses through "argumentation by judgment (*Urteilkraft*) by which rules are generated out of past cases and applied to situations in the present" (Rüsen, 2012, p. 53). The rules Jeané invoked were that a person's wishes about what is done with their likeness should be respected, and that it is dangerous to transgress traditional social arrangements, particularly if one does so alone.

Jeané's belief that a person's wishes about what is done with their likeness ought to be respected was supported by texts written by Ashe and his wife, Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe, that the students read in English class. As Jeané explained:

Arthur wanted his monument be so much more than just about him and [he] hated the idea of being on Monument [Avenue, as evident in] ... an article by Jeanne Ashe his wife makes me feel like he shouldn't be there.

She reiterated this point after introducing the counter-argument which she ascribed to Richmond's former mayor Dwight Jones. As Jeané explained, Jones believed that placing Ashe on Monument Avenue would change the meaning the avenue manifests. Jeané believed, however, that Jones should have prioritized Ashe's own desire not to be placed on Monument Avenue because Ashe was Jones's friend.

Jeané's second reason for placing the Ashe monument elsewhere is related to what she and others perceived as a mismatch between Ashe and a street known for over a century as the Mecca of the Lost Cause. She expressed this belief obliquely, by personifying the statue of Ashe and projecting emotions she might feel onto it. She wrote that "being the first black person to change something is a tough shoe to fill and I don't think his monument is getting as much love and admiration as it deserves." Jeané wrote sympathetically, even protectively, about how the geographic position of the Ashe monument crosses a line demarcating race and ideology that she perceived as perilous. The second part of the sentence spelled out the danger such crossing can engender in the form of negative attention rather than "love and admiration." Elsewhere, she explained that Ashe "already overcame that [desegregating a space] once so why not give him a break[?]" Jeané went further, personifying the statue and writing about its feelings by comparing its lonely existence among Confederates to "showing up to school ... and walking the hallways alone while everyone is going to look down on you." She explained further that "that is one of the worst feelings that someone could face"

These statements expressed anxiety that being the only African American in a White space can lead to disrespect and a devaluation of one's accomplishments or value. The implication of that anxiety, however, was an acceptance of the tradition of exclusively representing the Confederacy on Monument Avenue. At the end of the letter, however, Jeané added a second thesis "I think something I would like to see is more black heroes on Monument Ave. ... My theory is if Arthur Ashe has to be there then he should have some more allies around him." This concern for allies, for not being what another participant, Ariella, called "*the African American on monument avenue*" (emphasis added), is evidence that violating the ideological and racial homogeneity of public spaces is most wisely approached through collective action.

Jeané's argument about what ought to be manifested an exemplary historical consciousness. She expressed her ideas by referencing moral principles that connected past, present and future. Those principles upheld traditions, such as the neo-Confederate ideology represented on Monument Avenue, and perhaps a tradition of fear of the consequences of violating the established order. Arthur Ashe ought to be somewhere else, where he will not cause controversy and where he will likely be accorded more deference and respect.

Amos' critical stance

Only three students approached the questions posed by Ms. O'Shea with a critical historical consciousness, and only one of the three, Amos, did so consistently. Amos argued that the monument of Ashe is "fine in its current location." In contrast to Jeané, Amos was less anxious about the recurring controversies about the Ashe statue, writing that "the controversy has not grown enough to be an urgent issue in our city." Amos's main reason for leaving the Ashe statue in place was because its presence "slightly challenges the narrative of confederate monument avenue." He acknowledged that "juxtaposing an athlete with confederate soldiers" is a "political statement" and that "it seems difficult for Monument Avenue to remain a memorial for the Confederacy and its principles when there is an african-american athlete being honored alongside them." Amos went further when he explained that the "conventional confederate narrative of Monument Avenue would be nullified if the people honored on the statue[s] were more diverse" He addressed the anxiety that Ashe seemed out of place on the avenue by calling for,

the addition of more statues that either commemorate people of color or people who have different career paths [that] would diversify the avenue and make Arthur Ashe appear less misplaced, thus eradicating the confederate dominance.

Seixas and Clark (2004; and Rüsen, 2005) associated the critical stance with the destruction, not construction of monuments. They described this stance, in particular towards aspects of the past that violate contemporary moral positions, as in need of erasure "so that we can overcome the burden of the past" (p. 156). So why characterize Amos's letter as critical if he is arguing for the addition of more statues? The key feature of the critical stance (Rüsen, 2005; Seixas & Clark, 2004; cf. Nietzsche, 1997/1874) is negation—through a variety of intellectual and rhetorical devices—of historical continuity between past and present in order to create a different future. In other words, the critical stance is one in which "history functions as the tool by which such continuity is ruptured, deconstructed, decoded—so that it loses its power as a source for present-day orientation" (Rüsen, 2005, p. 32). That rupture does not come from posing a philosophical argument, but rather from presenting a counter narrative that disrupts the hegemonic one (Rüsen, 2005). Amos understood that by adding a more diverse set of statues to Monument Avenue, the deep connection of the avenue to the Lost Cause would be ruptured. As Amos explained,

We are no longer the capital of the Confederacy, so our city should be able to progress forward from those times. This city does not need to revolve around war memorials and regressive monument[s]; We must alter the connotation attached to the name Richmond and build a better place for generations to come.

Thus, through counternarrative, the moral power of monuments to reinforce a collective memory that sustains an identity of Richmond that is antagonistic to a plurality of its citizens is disrupted, allowing a new city to emerge.

Kehinde's genetic stance

Only Kehinde's response can be classified as representing a genetic historical consciousness. For those employing a genetic historical consciousness, change and continuity are both

perpetually unfolding. Thus, the present is "conceptualized as an intersection, ... a dynamic transition" (Rüsen, 2005, p. 33) from past to future. Seixas and Clark (2004) characterized this stance as "historicize the monument." As they describe it,

this type subverts the original intentions of monuments and memorials, not by destroying them, but by studying them as products of their time, by historicizing them. It achieves a connection with the past, not by preserving an unchanging continuity, but by studying and understanding change from a particular historical moment: the present. (Seixas & Clark, 2004, p. 158).

Kehinde began his letter by turning a critical eye towards the political tactics of African American civic leaders who supported the placement of the Ashe statue on Monument Avenue. He called the move a "cheap tactic" and admonished Black politicians to "stop constantly playing the victim race card" calling such a move "childish" and "cowardly" and explained that he feels "slightly embarrassed that that's how my people are represented." Like many of his fellow students, he argued that Ashe is "out of place" on "an avenue dedicated to war heros" and argued that this placement is disrespectful to "those war heroes" as well as to Arthur Ashe. Kehinde's explanation of the history of Ashe's placement was characteristic of a critical historical consciousness. Through his rather harsh words, he sought to negate the connections between past and present made by the politicians who placed Ashe on Monument Avenue. Doing so, he also distanced himself from the official leadership of his community, a further negation of historical continuity. It is when he described an alternative plan for public art in Richmond, however, that a genetic historical consciousness is evident.

Kehinde's resolution "revolves around the fact that Richmond is a city of art" and that public art "can do an amazing job at telling stories of time." He acknowledged the desire of many in Richmond to separate the identity of the city from its "racist history" but proposed that the way to do so is to "change the way people view monuments." His proposition was the following:

We could treat Richmond like a giant museum, and when people go through a museum it usually flows through time. For anyone who wants to learn about Richmond's history, they could start at Monument Avenue, and slowly work their way across the city to see how its people and culture has changed through the various monuments and artworks placed around our city. This would keep the integrity of the confederate soldiers, while also being mature enough to accept that Richmond's history had a rocky start.

Kehinde's proposal described a way that the public art of Richmond could be historicized. Kehinde temporalized the geography of the city using the layout of an art museum as a simile when he reasoned that if a museum is laid out chronologically, with different rooms presenting art from different time periods, then the city can do the same. Rather than remove the traces of Richmond's racist history, Kehinde argued that they should remain as reminder of that history. He further argued that other neighborhoods in the city could present art that represents different time periods, and by extension different groups of people. Thus, he described a walk through the city as a walk through time with different people and cultures from those different time periods represented.

Discussion

In Rüsen's (2005) philosophical work, he explained his typology of historical consciousness using a fictional story about two Scottish aristocrats, an ancient blood oath, and a contemporary moral problem they both faced. In that narrative explanation the historical knowledge of the fictional characters faced with a decision is the same, but the epistemological position on historical truth, and the ontological position on identity as it relates to time varied substantially. Rüsen's example imagines such differences as they play out within one social class in an ethnically homogeneous society. When that framework is

applied to students from an historically marginalized community in a heterogeneous and unequal society some aspects of the framework hold up, others do not, and the tension between what does and does not work are instructive.

The typology worked quite well as a heuristic for delineating different types of arguments manifest in letters, as it has in previous studies (Seixas & Clark, 2004; Zanazanian, 2012). Jeané used “argumentation by judgment” (Rüsen, 2012, p. 53) in which general rules are created from historical cases and applied to the present. For Jeané, those timeless rules were that the living should respect the wishes of the dead, and that it is dangerous to transgress traditional social arrangements, particularly if one does so alone. Amos’s argument was based on the rejection of the past as an exemplar for how we should lead our civic lives today. He wanted Ashe to remain on Monument Avenue in order to erode the emotional and psychic power of Confederate Monuments and called for more monuments to marginalized Richmonders to be placed there. Kehinde historicized the monuments, contextualizing them in the period they were erected, and calling for more monuments representing different people and times in other neighborhoods so that a visitor could experience the unfolding of history by touring the city. Rüsen’s typology was an effective heuristic for honing in on the different ways in which the past was invoked by these participants, highlighting deep differences in epistemology of history and understanding of time even when, such as the cases of Jeané and Kehinde, they both argued for the removal of the Ashe monument.

Using Rüsen’s (2005) typology, the monuments themselves present a pedagogy of exemplary historical consciousness. They tell a monumental and timeless story of the heroism of Confederate soldiers and statesmen fighting for a Lost Cause. The effect of their *presence over time*, however, impresses upon people a traditional historical consciousness when considering their continued presence. In other words, the monuments have existed for a long time and thus should continue to exist. Only one participant out of ten suggested removal of the Confederate monuments, even though that option was in the public discourse.² That phenomenon begins to speak to the power of an idea, in this case White supremacy, repeated over time, exists in many people’s consciousness as a given justified by its continuous existence. Rüsen (2012) associated the power of such ideas with tradition, arguing that “the past is already present (as a result of historical developments) in the circumstances and conditions under which historical thinking is performed and is obviously influenced by it” (p. 45). However, the “circumstances and conditions” (Rüsen, 2012, p. 45) evident in these data indicate that contextual factors related to identity and affect were not sufficiently theorized in Rüsen’s (2005) original framework.

The shortcomings of Rüsen’s typology were most clearly evident when considering other questions that arose from these data. What are we to make of Jeané’s emotional projection onto the Ashe statue, or her fear that its placement in a space considered hostile to African Americans diminished the art and Ashe’s legacy? What might account for Amos’s more sophisticated understanding of historical negation through addition rather than destruction? What accounts for the fact that responses like Jeané’s, coded at the lower end of Rüsen’s (2005) scale, expressed an awareness of multiple perspectives and were thus more sophisticated than the examples that Rüsen, as well as Seixas and Clark (2004) offered at those levels?

King (2019; 2018) has argued that the material conditions as well as the oral and intellectual traditions of Black life in the Americas inform an historical culture with profound implications for the historical consciousness of Black people. In the analysis of the letters as well as in the more detailed case studies it was clear that race was salient to this historical controversy for these participants. Jeané argued for moving Ashe or adding monuments of Black and female historical figures who will be his “allies;” Amos does not call for

destruction or removal of Confederate monuments but wants the increased presence of Black bodies to diminish their power; Kehinde worries that removal of Confederate monuments will diminish contemporary understanding of Richmond's "racist history." Thus, there was strong evidence in these data of a depiction of the continuous salience of race and racism across historical time, as well as the belief that racism has diminished over time and will continue to do so into the future. These data suggest that it was students' *consciousness* of the salience of race as African Americans in a city that valorizes White enslavers that informed their positions, whether those positions were based on timeless principles, the negation of the past, or a more integrated understanding of past, present, and future.

These data also suggest that in heterogeneous and unequal societies, identity is (re)formed through dialogic processes that include a significant Other. Regardless of where participants fell in Rösen's typology, there was evidence that they understood that White Virginians were the significant Other whose presence, gaze, and power was a perpetual consideration when considering the future of Monument Avenue (Du Bois, 1993/1903; Zanzanian, 2012). For Jeané, the gaze of that significant Other needed to be managed, for Amos it needed to be challenged directly, and for Kehinde it should have been ignored. The affective nature of those expressions was also evident. Affect was evident in participants' consciousness of their own identity and of the significant Other's. The clearest example was provided by Jeané, who personified the Ashe statue by discussing its feelings of alienation on Monument Avenue. Kehinde's expression of embarrassment of the tactics used by Black politicians in 1990s Richmond was also an expression of that affective connection.

The findings suggest that Rösen's (2005) treatment of identity and its relationship to historical consciousness was too simple, leaving a crucial aspect of the phenomenon blurred. For Rösen, identity is what connects people to each other in the present with reference to historical categories and narratives. He leaves out the role of a significant Other (Zanzanian, 2012), a separate group whose ideas, narratives, and categorizing schema impact the ongoing dialogic process of identity construction. Those factors have a direct impact on how we understand the development of historical consciousness. For example, Rösen (2005) theorized that as one develops towards genetic historical consciousness, one becomes better able to hold conflicting ideas and perspectives in one's head simultaneously. However, Jeané—judged to be at the lower-end of the developmental types—was clearly able to toggle between her own perspective and that of the significant Other's. For Du Bois (1993/1903), such toggling between perspectives emerges as a survival tactic amongst members of a subordinated group. King might describe that tactic as evidence of a distinctly African American historical culture. Either way, evidence of the ability to toggle between multiple historical perspectives across respondents regardless of their assessed type of consciousness suggests that members of marginalized groups may be more likely to express historical consciousness in more sophisticated ways *contra-type*, a potential cultural asset with regard to learning and understanding history deeply.

Conclusion

Rösen's (2005; 1989; cf. Nietzsche, 1997/1874) philosophy provides a strong basis for an emerging theory of historical consciousness, its development, and a methodology for studying it as a phenomenon. However, it can be strengthened with a dialogic understanding of identity that focuses on the specific social context of the study and the role that knowledge and affect play in informing participant's positions on historical questions. Social factors, such as the heterogeneity and inequality of the locale, group relations there—in short its history—are salient to the arguments that people construct. Including concerns for local history, identity, and rhetoric when designing studies of historical consciousness means taking history as a

cultural resource seriously. In understanding how that resource is employed in specific cases, such as arguing what should be done with Confederate monuments, the dynamic, situated, and dialogic nature of identity is crucial to what and how people argue. That, however, is not an argument for the use of broad categories to form assumptions about how individuals might connect past, present, and future when addressing a current civic controversy. Rather, considering local context and identity helps to illustrate how context helps form the lenses through which history is refracted.

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Endnotes

¹ All names are pseudonyms.

² At the time these data were collected, no major removals of Confederate statues, such as the statue of R. E. Lee in New Orleans had occurred yet.

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