

Sujet Centrale 2021 : propositions d'introduction

Proposition 1

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The future of controversial memorials

A 2020 cartoon from 'The Philadelphia Inquirer' ironizes the fact of leaving in public spaces memorials of characters who were involved in social issues while a 2020 editorial from 'The Economist' argues for keeping those statues with added context instead of destroying (?) them | as in a 2017 op-ed from 'The Washington Post' depicting that La Nouvelle Orléans will put them in museums. Finally, through a 2020 op-ed also from 'The Washington Post' a black woman living near such statues ponders about their future.

Looking at the corpus, what to do with those statues in public spaces? We will explain why were they erected, then showing that destroying them is seen as a solution even if the genuine fix is to educate people through them.

(129 words)

Proposition 2

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Educate people about the past for a better future

In a 2017 op-ed from the Washington Post, the former mayor of New Orleans explains why tearing down confederate monuments of his city is required to build a better future, when a June 2020 testimony, published by the Washington Post, from a former member of the White House, deals with the evolution of Richmond's Monument Avenue through the decades and how people tries to change things despite the segregational background of this place ; while a June 2021 Economist op-ed argues that a consensus needs to be finded concerning the decision of keeping or not racist statues, a June 2020 drawing from the Philadelphia Inquirer suggest that keeping them is possible but not without contextualizing them in a first place. The corpus thus raises the following question: in which way do we have to look at our past to better understand it and then improve our future?

(157 words)

Proposition 3

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Removing memorials: respecting the present without forgetting the past

A May 2017 Washington Post open letter explains why the New Orleans mayor is removing memorials. Following this opinion, a July 2020 testimony from the same newspaper shows how Richmond's avenue shredding its signs of white supremacy by removing Confederate generals memorials. However, a June 2020 article from the Economist queries the relevance of removing them asking for consensus and context, idea followed in a June 2023 cartoon from the Philadelphia Inquirer which pictures a BLM activist asking for context next to the memorials surrounded with their victims.

The corpus queries thus the relevance of removing memorials. Indeed keeping them is glorifying a shameful past however removing them could led us to forget the past so one of the solution could be to find a consensus and adding context.

In a world that no longer shares certain values of the past, the presence of certain monuments glorifying Confederate generals is a source of concern.

But some worry that removing memorials is synonym to forgetting our past and prevent future generation from fulfilling their duty of remembrance.

To resolve this issue, consensus have to be taken.

(139 words + topic sentences)

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