RE-VISION: A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF CHANGE IN THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTER

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ABSTRACT

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While the number of Holocaust Museums in the United States has grown in recent years, few of these museums which serve as memorials to the victims of Nazi violence have existed long enough to undergo major revisions. The purpose of this study was to identify and investigate in light of revision theory those revisions that occurred in the Holocaust Memorial Center, America’s first Holocaust museum, during the recent relocation and expansion of the museum. Using existing theory in four fields, material rhetoric, museum theory, memorial theory, and revision theory as a base, this dissertation offers a rhetorical analysis of the museum loosely based on Carole Blair’s analyses of memorial sites such as the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial, as well as a catalogue and discussion of selected changes observed in the museum.

Using analysis of archival photographs, visitor guides, and a videotaped museum tour of the previous facility to identify what had been, the study then moved to a careful analysis of the museum as it exists today. This allowed identification and documentation of changes or revisions that had taken place. These changes were catalogued using a taxonomy created for the study, and a discussion of selected changes was presented.

The study found strong similarities between text revisions made by experienced writers and the museum revisions. Both were based on the same two key considerations: the identified purpose of the text, and the identified audience for the text. Both the text revisions of experienced writers and the revisions observed in the museum showed a
willingness to make radical revisions if necessary. However, there was one major difference discovered between the revisions of experienced writers and the revisions that take place in museums. The revisions that occur in museums are not always the product of the original creator of the text.

Implications for further research included replication of the study in publicly-funded or site-location Holocaust museums as well as replication in other types of museums. Another area for additional research identified was investigation of the impact of artifact construction by museums.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Introduction

For more than a decade following the end of World War II, there was silence in the United States regarding the Holocaust. This was a deep pervasive silence that included not only popular culture, but also the academic world. By 1957, more than ten years after the war ended, there were only two popular Holocaust works published in the United States, *The Diary of Anne Frank* published in 1952, and Gerda Weissman Klein’s autobiography, *All But My Life*, published in 1957. Raul Hilberg, the father of modern Holocaust studies, confirms that at the same time there were only two English-language scholarly texts on the Holocaust, both published in England and only minimally circulated in the United States.\(^1\)

While scholars disagree regarding the cause for this silence, several factors seem to have been at work. One factor was what Princeton professor Alan Mintz calls the power of the concept of victory after World War II. He explains, “Victory over the enemy, embraced as a final and all-encompassing notion, left no room for a tragedy that is unremitting. The enormity of the catastrophe—what it meant for Jews and for the world that a third of the Jewish people had been murdered—simply could not be accommodated by victory” (5). Since America had won the war, all that remained was for soldiers and sailors to return home and to resume a normal life as quickly as possible. The war and its experiences, unless one was a hero, were to be left in the past.

A second factor that played a part in creating the observable silence and kept the Holocaust from becoming a significant part of the American consciousness was that the Holocaust occurred in Europe. For many Americans, the war in Europe did not represent the most important hostilities. Since the United States’ entry into World War II followed the
Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the focus of the war was, for most Americans, the Pacific
Theatre. The war in Europe was not, in the minds of many citizens, as important as the war in the
Pacific and the defeat of the Japanese. It is possible to argue that for Americans, the Jewish
Holocaust victims were lost in the large number of deaths caused by the German Reich. The
Jews became part of statistics heard or seen, but not truly absorbed, because American attention
was focused elsewhere—on the Pacific Theatre and America’s island-hopping war there.

A third factor that helped to explain the silence was the growing absorption of Jews into
general American culture following World War II. Mintz explains that the postwar years saw a
general upsurge in the opportunities for Jewish acculturation into mainstream American society.
To focus on or to identify strongly with the Holocaust in Europe would have only impeded the
process of Americanization for the Jewish community (6). Therefore, among American Jews, the
Holocaust was not part of the general awareness or concern during the first two decades after the
war. All of the Jewish community’s efforts were focused on becoming firmly absorbed into
mainstream American culture and life even if it meant a diminished awareness of Jewish identity
or a refusal to identify with the experiences of European Jews.

Another element of this post-war cultural milieu that kept the Holocaust from a focal
place in American society was the position of the Holocaust survivors who had come to the
United States. They were not, at this time, survivors—they were merely refugees. They were,
like other newcomers to America, busy with the challenges of starting a new life. They were absorbed in learning a new language, in finding a job, in building a new family, and in carving
out a place for themselves in the culture. They were not seen as heroes because of their
experiences at the hands of the Nazis; if anything, they were seen as tainted by their past. Their
adopted society still saw survivors as victims—so there was little receptivity to or concern for their testimony.

There is another element in society at that time that also played a part in the silence. Several authors, including Peter Novick and Anson Rabinbach, propose that the primary cause for the great American silence was guilt. This guilt was twofold: in part, it was the guilt of a nation that could have done more, but failed to intervene. There had been, throughout the war years, reports published in the American press about the rumors of concentration camps and extermination camps for Jews that were being run by the German government. These reports never really captured the attention of the American public, and the reports failed to influence American policy in ways that might have made a difference in the fate of the Jews. Breitmann, Hilberg, and Dwork and Van Pelt also offer evidence that at the same time, official reports from State Department personnel abroad which identified the dire situation for Jews in Nazi-controlled territory were deliberately watered down, delayed, or destroyed. The guilt that created American silence was not just national guilt. It was, as well, the particular guilt of American Jews. The guilt of American Jewry was also a dual guilt: in part it was guilt generated by not having done enough, and in part it was the guilt of survivors.

Just as there are several interrelated reasons for the silence in American culture regarding the Holocaust, there is a core of interrelated factors responsible for the breaking of the silence. Initially, one can point, as do Novick and Mintz, to the success of the 1959 movie The Diary of Anne Frank as a key element. Although The Diary of a Young Girl had been published in the United States in 1952 and had been adapted for the Broadway stage in 1956, it was not until the success of the Academy Award-winning film that the general American public really became more aware of the Holocaust experiences of the European Jews. While a starting point for greater
awareness, the film actually presents a rather shallow look at the horrors of the Holocaust and presents, instead, a “feel-good” portrayal of the triumph of human spirit over unspeakable evil. However, the film does manage to bridge the chasm between the experience of ordinary Americans and the experiences of Jews in Europe. Part of the film’s success lies in its deliberate avoidance of the details of the concentration camps and in its intentional focus on the elements of ordinary shared human experience. But because the film avoids the creation of a distinct category of victims, it fails to accurately portray the situation of the European Jews under Hitler, and is, thus, only a small first step in the process of Holocaust consciousness.

The story of Anne Frank continued in the news when Otto Frank, Anne’s father, filed suit in the German courts in 1959. The lawsuit was in response to a public challenge to the authenticity of her diary mounted in 1958 by a German Nazi Lothar Stielau, a schoolteacher. The case was resolved in 1960 when the German courts ruled, after handwriting verification, that Anne Frank’s diary was authentic. The court case also helped to validate the reality of the Holocaust for the American public.

Another key element in the process of awakening awareness is the well-publicized trial of Adolph Eichmann in 1961. The highly public nature of the trial (it was broadcast on the radio) and the detailed information that came out in testimony repositioned the Holocaust in the American consciousness. Through the Eichmann trial, the Holocaust became, in the words of Mintz, a “key event in the modern age” (11). Peter Novick agrees stating that “the most important thing about the Eichmann trial was that it was the first time that what we now call the Holocaust was presented to the American public as an entity in its own right” (133). The new centrality of the Holocaust brought at least two other consequences. First, because the Eichmann trial made clear the failure of both Catholic and Protestant churches in Germany to intervene on
behalf of the Jews, it situated Holocaust discussion in the realm of moral-ethical debates for American churches. Second, the trial significantly improved the status of survivors; they were, in the context of the trial, not victims, but expert witnesses (Mintz 12). This status change addresses a prevalent perception of the Jew as passive when confronted by the Nazi death machinery and thus as collaborators, responsible for their fate. The Eichmann trial also brought additional books written by survivors to the fore. Eli Wiesel’s *Night*, which had been published in English in 1960, gained a much wider audience because of the Eichmann trial. Set in Auschwitz, Wiesel’s book helps to expand the identity of Holocaust survivors and to make it, according to Mintz, “one of the most heroic ideals of the age” (22).

A third event which helped bring the Holocaust to the fore in American thought was the publication of Alex Halley’s *Roots* in 1976, and the subsequent television mini-series based on the book that aired in 1977. For the first time in the twentieth century, it became acceptable to be a “hyphenated-American.” Ethnicity was embraced rather than shunned. This embracing of one’s ethnic identity came at a time when the Jewish community had achieved enough integration into American society to make them willing to forefront their ethnic identity. Rather than being a “lone” ethnic group in American society, Jews could join dozens of other groups celebrating unique heritages and identities.

A fourth significant event occurred in 1978 when the CBS miniseries *The Holocaust* was broadcast, thrusting an event that had been previously unmentioned into the forefront of the American consciousness. Overnight, the Holocaust went from being a word that only a few Americans had heard, to being an event that was, in a sanitized way, being reenacted or recreated in the living rooms of everyone. Although not popular with many in the Jewish survivor community, (Elie Wiesel’s outspoken criticism of the production appeared in the *New York*
The mini-series garnered nearly half of the American population as an audience (Novick 209). It is really at this point that the Holocaust becomes a full part of the American culture. The mini-series makes the Holocaust a point of moral centrality in American society. It becomes the standard for judging victimization and suffering (Mintz 26). Now the Holocaust, and the pure evil of the event, was a point of American moral consensus.

It is also in this decade that another related event occurred. Camp survivors moved beyond their role as witnesses and became outspoken advocates of American public memorialization of the Holocaust. It was the public pressure of survivors that helped lead to President Carter’s formation of the Presidential Commission on Memorialization of the Holocaust in 1978 (Weinberg 20). This commission began to explore the creation of a national memorial site that would commemorate the Holocaust. Though the process was plagued by disagreements and frustrations and the commission underwent multiple changes in membership, ultimately the product of their efforts, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, located in Washington, D.C., opened in 1994.

One may assume that this museum was the first significant American memorial to the Holocaust, but in reality, the first memorial and museum had opened some years before. Though it took more than thirty years for a “freestanding Holocaust museum” to emerge, in 1984 the Holocaust Memorial Center (HMC) opened in West Bloomfield, Michigan. Founded by a group of Holocaust survivors led by Rabbi Charles H. Rosenzveig, the museum was, in part, a response to what Professor Anson Rabinbach calls the fear of the “inevitable erosion of Holocaust memory” (227). The construction of this Holocaust museum is extremely important because the act can be seen as a clear declaration that the historical event of the Holocaust and its victims merit memory. It is significant also because it marks the first creation of an American place
where mourning and memorialization of Holocaust victims could take place, a cultural necessity according to Blair, Young, and Englehardt. 

The Holocaust Memorial Center celebrated its twentieth anniversary in June of 2004, just two months after the opening of its new facility, a 51,000 square foot building designed by Neumann, Smith, and Associates. Although this museum is not part of the mainstream of American tourism like the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C., it has received national media attention because of the reputation of its designers and the radical architecture of its new building. While it is a noteworthy example of recent Holocaust museum design, the museum is also significant because of its rhetoric—that is, its depiction and performance of the events of the Holocaust—and as the first Holocaust Museum in the United States to undergo significant changes which have rendered the current structure substantially different from the original incarnation of the museum. 

The product of this study is a rhetorical analysis of the museum coupled with an analysis of some of the substantial changes that can be identified in the new Holocaust Memorial Center. Some of the changes are immediately observable or identifiable, others are more subtle, but equally important in the creation of the revised text that the new museum represents. To date there is no similar study of change in a Holocaust museum, since there has never before been such a total renovation and restructuring of such a museum. Most other significant Holocaust museums in the United States have been constructed since 1993 (The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. and the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles both date from 1993, The Houston Holocaust Museum was constructed in 1996, and the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City dates from 1997). These museums have not existed long enough to undergo such a total redesign as that undertaken at the Holocaust Memorial Center.
James Young concurs that such a study does not exist and suggested that such an undertaking would add a new dimension to the understanding of the role of Holocaust Museums in American society.

**Theoretical Grounding of the Project**

**Rhetorical Theory**

While certainly not a text in the traditional definition of text as words alone, viewing the museum as a text is consistent with current practice in rhetorical studies, for in recent years, scholars have extended the study of text to numerous other sorts of discourse formations. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. (Carney, Blair, and Abramson), the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama, (Blair and Abramson), the King Memorial in Atlanta (Gallagher), and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Young, Patraka, Jones, and Linenthal) have all been the subject of such studies, and this investigation of the Holocaust Memorial Center extends this established rhetorical conversation.

There seem to be several additional clear reasons grounded in rhetorical theory for conducting this type of rhetorical reading of the Holocaust Memorial Center—that is a reading which, in the words of Blair and Michel, “attends not only to multiple design features, but also to its material performances and force within its context(s)” (32). First, it provides a source of critical commentary on the museum, which is, according to Foucault, one of the ways in which the publicly accepted meaning of such a work is culturally constructed (“Discourse” 220-21). By expanding the base of museums and monuments for which a rhetorical reading exists, there is the opportunity for increased comparative study of the rhetorical messages created by Holocaust museums.
Second, such a reading and discussion addresses the realm of material rhetoric, an increasingly prominent discussion within rhetorical studies. Faculty members at Penn State University in the late 1990s, such as Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley, have played a significant role in the encouragement and development of material rhetoric. In particular, the 1997 Conference on Rhetoric and Composition focused discussion on how “the material conditions of rhetoric, the material embodiments of rhetoric, and the material configuration of rhetoric’s technologies and artifacts” shape the conception, practice, and theory-construction of contemporary rhetoric (Selzer vii). Material rhetoric has been increasingly addressed in literature. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* has included several articles, and Selzer and Crowley’s book *Rhetorical Bodies* provides a core of substantive essays by well known rhetoric scholars. Literature such as a reading and discussion of the museum addresses the increasing attention to memory in rhetorical studies. And also, this type of analysis of the museum is in line with discussions in rhetoric of the various relationships between the writer, the text, and the audience. The rhetorical theory section which follows will consider three topical areas: material rhetoric, audience, and memory.

Central to the consideration of material rhetoric is the seminal recognition that there is in language and in rhetoric a material dimension that should be considered and that there is a rhetorical element in the material which also demands consideration (Selzer 8). Building on the work of Marx, Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard which clearly shows the impact of the material, Cheryl Glenn and Jan Swearingen are representative of those who have approached material rhetoric from a feminist position, focusing on what Selzer calls the “embodiments of the feminine in rhetorical tradition” (9). Judith Butler’s recent work extends the consideration to the relationships between bodies and persuasion.
The work of Carole Blair considers another type of embodiment, that of public memory. Her study of public memorials and memorial sites in the United States has worked essentially from questions such as what is the embodiment of public memory today, where are the sites of this embodiment, and how is public memory shaped by memorial sites and memorials. Blair has clearly articulated the position that memorial sites and museums provide a definite opportunity to expand the consideration of rhetoric’s materiality.

In her essay “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality,” she generates five questions that shape any consideration of memorial sites.

1. What is the significance of the text’s material existence?
2. What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the text?
3. What are the text’s modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation?
4. What does the text do to (or with, or against) other texts?
5. How does the text act on people? (30)

Equally significant are the functions that she ascribes to memorial sites. Blair considers “enabling, appropriating, contextualizing, supplementing, correcting, challenging, competing, and silencing” as normal operations for memorials (39). However, these functions of memorial spaces are equally applicable to Holocaust museums, since within our culture, they are an institutionalized memorial space. Blair’s functions can serve as foundational elements in the creation of a classification for assessing change in a museum as well.

Material rhetoric permits—or rather demands—a consideration and interpretation of the physical profile and spatial dimensions of the museum as well as its purely textual elements. Blair contends that such a reading allows consideration of at least two levels of materiality: 

“(1). The material conditions, contexts, and other discourses that articulate with a given
rhetorical artifact, and (2) the materiality of the rhetorical artifact itself” (“Reproducing” 33). Not to consider these elements is to achieve only a partial understanding of the text because the reader has chosen too narrow a focus.

Finally, a rhetorical reading of the complete museum is warranted because it permits full consideration of the museum-specific response to what Blair and Michel call one of the most profound rhetorical challenges faced in the design of any commemorative site: how to make an event of the past—what the memorial marks—[or in this case what the museum commemorates] relevant to the needs and desires of the memorial’s own present (33). Certainly, the design of the museum seeks to create what its directors see as a new profile demanded by the present climate in which the museum operates. It seems reasonable to argue that the location of the museum, both temporally—that is, some sixty years after the end of the war, and spatially—on a different continent thus totally removed from the specific locations of Holocaust activity—plays a significant role in the changes which one can identify. Such considerations significantly impact the performative rhetoric of the museum.

Isabel Englehardt would add that this challenge of design is particularly significant for Holocaust museums, more so than for other types of museums, because Holocaust museums carry “a belief in the power of architecture to make the content of the museum visible through its literal allusions to the Holocaust” (211). Gavriel Rosenfeld, a leading scholar on architecture and Holocaust museums, concurs, “In their very design, such museums attempt to communicate in symbolic form what their exhibits do in more literal and historical fashion” (10). It is essential to explore the significance of the building’s architecture and the way that the particular structural design acts on people, for the architecture, according to Young, seeks “not to be ignored, but to demand interaction” (At Memory’s Edge 131). To accomplish a full rhetorical reading of the
museum-as-text one, must carefully examine the museum-specific textual package that has been created and its performative impact.

Another concept from rhetoric that underlies this study is audience. From the time of the ancients, audience has played a significant role in the art of rhetoric. That a rhetor must consider his audience is unquestioned; how he should do so is still a matter for debate. In the Twentieth Century, far removed from Aristotle’s advice to “know thy audience,” rhetoric shares its concern for audience with numerous other fields including speech communication, mass media, advertising, psychology, and museum theory. Wayne Booth suggests that audience is one of three key elements required for successful communication. Successful writing, that built from a clear rhetorical stance, achieves a balance among the three elements: “The available argument about the subject itself, the interests and peculiarities of the audience, and the voice, the implied character of the speaker” (153). A clear understanding of the concept of audience permits investigation of the role that audience may play in the process of revision of the museum-as-text. Douglas Park suggests, in “Meanings of Audience,” that consideration of audience comes in two varieties—“out there” and “in here” that is, either as a group of real people or as a mental construct. It appears to me, however, that four distinct conceptions of the audience exist within rhetorical scholarship.

One approach to the audience in rhetorical and composition theory has been to view the audience as a fiction, merely the product of the author’s imagination. Central to this position is the work of Walter Ong, particularly his article “The Writer’s Audience is Always a Fiction.” Ong postulates two critical conceptions. First, the writer must create in his imagination some sort of audience for his work; second, the audience must fictionalize itself (12). Ong explains that the reader must “know how to play the game of being a member of an audience that ‘really’ does not
exist” (12). Within this conception of the audience, there is no active role for the audience to play in the creation of meaning. Chaim Perelman’s *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* extends the position. For Perelman, the audience was “as visualized by one undertaking to argue, [. . .] always a more or less systematized construction” (19). The audience imagined by the rhetor, may or may not correspond to a real audience, but it is the responsibility of the rhetor to create such a construct in order to successfully construct his argument. Ede and Lunsford describe such an audience using the term “audience invoked” (156), but suggest that such a conception of audience is inadequate, failing to take into account the “fluid, dynamic character of rhetorical situations” (156). They further state that such a position creates a “distortion of the processes of writing and reading by overemphasizing the power of the writer and undervaluing that of the reader” (165). Ede and Lunsford present a much more dynamic and complex role for the audience in the mind of the writer as he or she creates.

A second perspective posits the audience as an instrument to be used to achieve the rhetor’s ends. In this position, the emphasis is shifted to the rhetor’s or writer’s product. Knowledge of the audience is vital, but only for the purpose of effective communication. In book 2 of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, he creates a substantial taxonomy of audience. Distinguishing the male listeners by age, birth, and fortune, as well as by emotional condition and character type, he creates a rich portraiture of possible audiences, essential knowledge for creating ethical proofs based on an understanding of emotions and human nature. William Grimaldi in his article “The Auditor’s Role in Aristotelian Rhetoric” explains that for Aristotle, “the speaker, to be effective, must always recognize and utilize the fact that he is speaking to a certain kind of audience with a particular set of established attitudes, interests, intellectual convictions, desires, and needs, all of which flow into the judgments and decisions that they make” (79).
George Campbell adds to this picture of the instrumental audience, providing a complete discussion in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. He carefully explains how the rhetor can employ language to create in the audience the response he desires. The audience is merely a responsive entity, not part of the creation of meaning for those who see the audience as instrument.

A third perspective, the audience ignored, negates the role of the audience completely. Building on the critical authorial interest of the nineteenth century Romantics, the focus of some rhetors became much more aimed at the writer and much less concerned with the audience. E.B. White evidences this in *The Elements of Style* when he writes, “The whole duty of a writer is to please and satisfy himself, and the true writer always plays to an audience of one” (71). Wayne Booth describes this position in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, noting that “true art ignores the audience [. . .]. True artists write only for themselves” (89). Remnants of this thinking can be seen as late as Peter Elbow’s “Closing My Eyes as I Speak: An Argument for Ignoring Audience,” published in *College English* in 1987. While not as distrustful of the audience as was White, Elbow still issues a caution against too great a concern for audience, contending that it can interfere with the writer’s spontaneity and thus with the writer’s integrity.

A fourth perspective posits the audience as interactor—co-creator of meaning with the author. Kenneth Burke offers an example of this alternative picture of the writer-audience relationship as a mutually beneficial process of interaction. He effectively reconfigures persuasion as a cooperative activity. Young, Becker, and Pike expand the notion of cooperative activity between audience and author in *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*. This theoretical concern for audience has not been limited to rhetorical theory; audience has played an increasingly important role in museum theory as well.
It would be impossible to consider change in museums without some consideration of memory. Many today consider memory an idea without relevance in the modern world since computers can store more information more reliably than can any person’s mind. This makes it seem as if the assumption, voiced initially by Plato in the *Phaedrus*, that writing would destroy memory is indeed true. Bacon reiterated this idea in stating his concern for those who relied on commonplace books and thus weakened their memory (Bizzell and Herzberg 741). Many recent scholars would agree that memory has been rendered obsolete by easy access to printed materials—yet not all would concur. There is in modern rhetoric and composition a renewed interest in the canon of memory evidenced in voices like those of Virginia Allen and John Frederick Reynolds. Allen argues that to “maintain that the problems of memory are not our concern or that they more properly belong to the other disciplines is to accept the premise that rhetoric is only *techne*” (45). In extending her own statement Allen quotes Kathleen Welch who postulates “that ‘by diminishing its [rhetoric’s] range’ to three of the five canons, what has been created ‘is […] a wholly new structure that denies the central language issues of culture and power” (46).

Memory was undeniably a central concept for the ancients. Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintillian all make reference to it in their works. The story of Simonides, a Greek poet and magician, who was able to identify all of the victims killed in a house that collapsed by recalling where each individual had been seated, is common to the works of Quintillian and Cicero. Simonides is commonly considered the father of “artificial memory,” one of the two types of memory identified by the ancients. Sharon Crowley defines artificial memory as “the trained ability to remember long lists of items by associating each item or name with a carefully ordered set of mental images” (36). This made it possible for the individual to construct a schema by
which he personally could order his thoughts and the constructs necessary for creating speeches. Aristotle suggested a similar system for remembering the definitions and commonplaces necessary for the construction of enthememes. He recommended that a rhetor group his topics by category and then assign a number to each category. Mentally running through the numbered system would provide easy access to the ideas (Crowley 268).

A much richer and more multi-faceted notion of memory is discussed by Francis Yates in The Art of Memory. In his overview of her work, John Frederick Reynolds identifies some of her conclusions as follows:

The classical art, [of memory] she concluded involved much more than memorizing: it included improving memory (2), imprinting on the memory (3), memorizing in order (3,7), making memorable (9), holding in memory (12), retrieving from memory (34), delivering from memory (6), and preserving in memory (45). Memory she found was seen as critical to invention, arrangement, style, and delivery. [...]Memory was the custodian to all parts of rhetoric to the author of Ad Herrenium (5) proof of the soul’s divinity to Cicero (45), the source of oratory power to Quintillian (43), the groundwork of the whole to Plato (37), and the key to invention to Aristotle (34). (246)

Mary Carruthers’ The Book of Memory adds further detail to an understanding of the perception of memory in ancient rhetoric through her descriptions of two significant conceptualizations of memory—“memory as a set of wax tablets upon which material is inscribed; and memory as a storehouse or inventory” (14). Similarly Crowley describes memory as not merely a storehouse but as a means of invention that was always readily available (Ancient Rhetoric 265). The works of Aristotle, Plato, and Quintillian provide examples of both of these types of solidly accepted metaphors for memory and examples of the various ways that
memory could be used in invention. Neither of these metaphors calls up the image of rote memorization that Edward P. J. Corbett assigns to memory in his *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*.

While some assume that memory became less important with the advent of written literacy, there is substantial evidence, in the work of Carruthers, that it remained a significant concept in rhetoric throughout the medieval era. Sharon Crowley acknowledges the “connection between expanding literacy technologies and the demise of memory arts” (41), but with a twist—she sees the shift from memory to reading and writing occurring, not because of a rush to the new improved storage medium of writing, but for four reasons that she identifies as making writing “more friendly to modern notions” (41).

- Writing was more in line with the modern emphasis on “text as representation of the mind” (41)
- Writing was more in keeping with modern individualism and “commodification of knowledge” (41)
- Writing demanded a style of representation that memory, because it was not conceived of as a “faithful picture of reality” could not provide (41).
- Writing was linear and modern, privileging “unity and coherence” (41) while memory was non-linear but associative thus “privileging repetition, digression” (41) creating a more recursive than linear style.

In other words, writing was simply better suited to the new mindset generated by modernism.

There has been some renewed interest in memory as a rhetorical canon since the 1960s. John Frederick Reynolds ties the beginning of this interest to the publication of Corbett’s *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (1965). He also identifies Patrick Mahoney’s
“McLuhan in the Light of Classical Rhetoric” as another key text, calling it one of the first to conceptualize “memory as more than memorizing” (246). The 1980s yielded additional works which evidence a return of memory to a canonical centrality. Rick Cypert’s “Memory: A Step toward Invention” was presented at a CCCC conference, and George Hillock’s Research on Written Composition was published by NCTE. Both of these works include consideration of long and short-term memory and the implications of both for invention and composition. Most significant, perhaps was the publication of Winifred B. Horner’s Rhetoric in the Classical Tradition, a text with the traditional five part canon as its structural framework (J. Reynolds 248-50). Additional evidence for the resurrection of memory can be traced in the links between memory and psychology in composition studies. Reynolds identifies three important elements of this connection in the work of Flower and Hayes, Ong, and Welch (250). The centrality of memory to rhetoric and to the late twentieth-century field of memorialization are both influences on contemporary museum practice. This study of the Holocaust Memorial Center will participate in and contribute to current rhetorical discussion of material rhetoric, the significance and role of audience, and memory.

Museum Theory

Rhetorical theory forms only one of the groundings for this study. Because the investigation focuses on a museum, it must also be grounded in the scholarship of museums, particularly focusing on arguments regarding the changing nature and role of museums in the contemporary world. For several decades there has been a growing concern regarding the necessity of change in museum conception and museum practice. The movement began in England, where, in the face of a post-empire world, museums, which had for decades served as
simply the repositories of plunder from countries controlled by the British Empire, were forced to question their function. Following World War II, numerous special theme museums as well as children’s museums were established around the world. These museums focused not on collections of artifacts, but on a concept or message they wished to communicate (Weinberg and Elieli 50). The growth of such museums helped to speed the significant restructuring of museum purpose. Stephen Weil, Senior Scholar Emeritus of the Smithsonian Institution, published a series of essays in 1983 that focused on the traditional functions of museums: collection, preservation, study, exhibition, and interpretation of collections.6 More recently according to Weil there has been a “perceptible shift in focus away from the more technical aspects of day-to-day museum operations and toward the more fundamental questions of what a museum’s purpose might be and what actual outcomes a museum might hope to achieve among its visitors and in its community” (xv). In answer to this essential question of purpose, museum directors have increasingly emphasized the function of museums as venues of education. Museums have become places in which narratives are multiplied, where, according to Hilde Hein an American authority on change in museums, education “becomes no longer a by-product, but the central mission of the museum” (xii). Historically, the rhetoric of the museum as an educational institution has focused on the dissemination of information; today the focus has changed with the museum emerging as a key disseminator of values. This shift highlights the increasingly complex and controversial role of the museum in contemporary society. It also embraces a recognition that the roles of interpretation and exhibition are, in the words of Weil, “so intertwined with one another as to be inseparable” (61). Since this study focuses on the changes identifiable in the selected Holocaust museum, the considerations of change in general museum purposes over the
past two decades is essential information on which to build as is the awareness of the fusion of exhibit and interpretation or the communication of values.

Similarly relevant to this study are changes in the philosophy of museum design. W. Richard West, director of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), exemplifies the new ethic of museum design. In every stage of development—from the architecture to the design of exhibits to the selection of artifacts for display—the NMAI, which opened in 2004, used Native Americans as consultants (Hayden 52-56). The building and its landscape were the creations of Native American architects and ethnobotanists (See Appendix A for photographs of the museum). This principle of involvement has been one hallmark of the new philosophy embraced by museum professionals. Linenthal, Young, and Englehardt all agree that Holocaust museums have exhibited a similar awareness in their careful involvement of Holocaust survivors in all aspects of the development process. Participation in the planning and development process of those whose history a museum seeks to portray has become standard operating procedure for credible museums. This is in part a healthy response to the international conference hosted by the Smithsonian in 1988, *The Poetics and Politics of Representation*, which explored the issue of how adequately and accurately one culture could represent another in the museum.

A second key conceptual change in museum design philosophy, that of interactivity, is also an important consideration. Today, the visitor (or client as he/she is increasingly identified) is not a passive traveler through the museum, but a collaborative partner in the creation of exhibition meaning. Hilde Hein describes it in this way, “Exhibitions are becoming more public oriented, more theatrical, and more self-consciously rhetorical. [. . .] objects have been reconstituted as sites of experience, and museums increasingly hold themselves responsible for delivering experiences” (5). In this new design philosophy, objects often become less the basis
for the museum’s narrative than illustrations for the story being told. They become secondary to the oral histories—the recollections of those who were there (Hein 5). Holocaust museums have, to date, illustrated a strong dependence on oral history as the foundation for their narrative. These museums and their stories are not about the objects that they house; they are not concerned with imparting a particular set of information. Instead, they seek to stimulate a certain feeling or experience in the visitor. Sensations are deliberately crafted by the exhibit designer.

This intent to stimulate a feeling or response is explained by Ralph Applebaum, exhibit designer for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D. C., quoted by Hilde Hein: “It is the act of controlling a few hours of someone’s time and setting them up to receive a certain experience” (65). Few would argue that Applebaum has successfully created for visitors to the USHMM a sense of oppression and an increasing sense of having no control of their own destiny as they navigate the industrial-feeling lobby and the increasingly narrow hallways of the exhibit space that force visitors ever downward to an inevitable end. The emphasis on interactivity and the resulting shift to experience/sensory stimulation in the museum has produced changes not only in how the museums view audience, but also in what the museum visitor has come to expect. This is particularly true for younger museum visitors who have often experienced theme parks. If museums wish to engage teen audiences today, they must provide opportunity for interactive involvement and allow the visitor to play a significant role in creating the meaning of the experience.

Memorial Theory

Another key theoretical underpinning for this study is the field of memorial theory. Since a key stated purpose of Holocaust museums has consistently been memorialization, it is
important to investigate the scholarship which has considered the process of memorialization. From the time of the ancients, memorial rhetoric has been one of the key aspects of rhetoric. Aristotle devotes chapter 9 Book I of his *Rhetoric* to epideictic speeches, and the topic is further addressed by Quintillian and Aphthonius. Cheryl Glenn, in *Rhetoric Retold*, describes two key functions of funereal epideictic rhetoric that are essential in evaluating the role performed by a Holocaust museum in contemporary America: the creation and shaping of community by providing a common rhetorical experience, and the linking of those present visitors to the audiences and experiences of the past (41). One ought also to consider another of Glenn’s conclusions when investigating Holocaust museums as memorials: memorial rhetoric is less concerned with an exact telling of history than in catching the attention of the public.

The work of James Young, professor of English and department chair of Judaic studies at the University of Massachusetts and one of America’s most prolific writers on memorialization of the Holocaust, redirects memorial theory away from speeches and toward “the activity that brings [memorials] into being, the constant give and take between memorials and viewers, and finally the responses of viewers to their own world in light of a memorialized past—the consequences of memory” (*Texture of Memory* ix). Remembering that the memorial (or the memorial museum) plays a key role in the creation of what is remembered about the Holocaust is an important foundation for the evaluation of changes made in the HMC since in Young’s descriptions, a memorial is never neutral—its “motives are never pure” (*Texture of Memory* 2). A study of change in the museum will help to identify the motives behind such changes. Young’s characterization of memorials also impacts another foundational element of this study, the intentionality of the museum text. Young makes clear that fact that there is and must be deliberateness in the creation of a museum: “Events that occurred in another time seem
increasingly to belong to another world altogether. Only a deliberate act [. . .] could reconnect them” (Texture of Memory 119). Isabel Englehardt builds on Young’s foundations, offering concrete examples of the memorialization process in her investigation of concentration camp sites. Weinberg further expands on the base laid by Young, discussing the special “tension between the function of a memorial and the function of a museum” that is particularly acute for a Holocaust museum (29). Using the traditional museum activities of archiving and display to create a memorial space that satisfies survivors, a group with a very clear agenda, is typical of this special tension. A similar deliberateness exists in carrying out change in a museum. One must accept that there is an agenda at work. Behind each change that was made is a purpose that ultimately shapes the vision of history that the museum visitors carry away from their experience.

**Writing Process and Revision Theory**

The final theoretical element underlying this study is composition theory, particularly the aspects of composition theory related to writing process and revision. Since this study considers a museum as a text, particularly as a text undergoing revision, the scholarship on revision that has been generated in composition seemed particularly relevant, since I assume that the same process of revision is at work in the revision of museum-as-text. One aspect that seemed valuable for this study of museum change was the emphasis on revision as an ongoing process. Nancy Sommers offers this and other fundamental assumptions regarding the writing and revision process that can easily be adapted to the museum as text. Further, her assumption that writing has spatial and temporal features that render it uniquely open to revision certainly seems to speak to museums as well. The “freezing” of the position of a particular moment that comes when words
are “recorded in space” (83) opens them up to constant review and occasionally prompts revision. Sommers' third assumption, that writing and revision are recursive processes, that from the moment of its conception, a piece of writing is open to revision, is also key. Each time the revision process occurs there are different emphases or different areas of focus, but it is the same process that is at work revision—re-vision—seeing the product anew and making the changes necessary to fit the old version to the new vision of reality. Finally, her assumption that the process of revision is undertaken by writers because of a concern for the message that their work conveys seems to place an emphasis on communication with the reader as the motivating factor for continuing revision. Sondra Perl seems to expand on Sommers' idea of communication with her discussion of two key concepts—“retrospective and projective structuring” (“Understanding Composing” 103-104). Perl calls these elements part of the same basic process—the writer’s ability to shift between mental positions of writer and reader during the ongoing act of composition. Perl states, “As we move through this cycle, we are continually composing and recomposing our meanings and what we mean” (105).

With limited exception, the scholarship on revision seems to work, in the words of Nancy Welch, “away from dissonance and disruption and toward clearness and concision” (1). This may be expressed as a movement from “writer-based” to “reader-based” prose as it is in Linda Flower’s work. Or it may be described more in terms of bringing into being text that is flawlessly crafted for the situation. Faigley and Witte describe a successful revision as one that moves “a text closer to the demands of the situation” (411). Likewise, the work of Richard Beach, Lillian Bridwell-Bowles, and John Hayes has investigated the process by which writers revise their texts and the timing of revision. Nancy Welch offers a tantalizingly different perspective in her discussion of revision as “seeking to question, challenge, and transform (not fit in with, not flee
from) a particular reality” (29). She further describes revision as a process of “dis-orientation” (29), a process which offers “revisionary questions: What am I becoming? and What else might I become?” (31). Welch’s ideas seems closely linked to Susan Osborn’s description of revision as “the development of new concepts, new relational paradigms, new symbolic solutions that make meaning of our experience” (261).

Of particular significance for this study are the taxonomies created in the study of revision. Those which I found are basically descriptive—Sommers’ easily accessible classification of revisions was created from her observations of both students and experienced writers. Her categories, taken from those used by Chomsky in grouping transformations, identify the action taken—addition, deletion, substitution, or rearrangement. Lester Faigley and Stephen Witte’s work, reported in “Analyzing Revision,” offers an alternative structuring, considering changes as macrostructural or microstructural. Faigley and Witte describe macrostructure changes as those which “would alter the summary of a draft” (404); microstructure changes are, on the other hand, those which “would not affect a summary of a text” (405). This allows the possibility for differentiating between textual changes that are significant to the overall meaning conveyed by a text (written or museum) and those that are not. However, the scholarship on composition process and revision, while offering concepts that can guide a cataloguing of revisions identified in a museum study, does not offer taxonomies that provide a functional analysis of revisions. For this reason a new taxonomy was created for this study.

Definition of Terms

There are four terms key to this study that should be defined at its outset in order to allow the reader to be certain of the author’s intended meaning.
One key term is “Holocaust.” For this study I use the term Holocaust as it “and genocide were originally conceived (or reinvented) to respond to the actions in Europe against the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s” (Patraka 1). The term as used for this study will refer to Nazi actions undertaken between 1933 (after Hitler had consolidated his position) and 1945 (the end of the war). Patraka further clarifies that the term Holocaust has become generally accepted by scholars for use in describing and in referring “to the Jewish genocide because of its function as a stable, recognizable historical referent” (2). The Hebrew term *shoah*, also used by contemporary Holocaust scholars, should be considered a synonym for Holocaust.

A second significant term is Holocaust museum. I consider Holocaust museums to be a separate identifiable genre of history museum. For the purpose of this study, a Holocaust museum will be defined as a free standing museum or a separate permanent exhibit within a larger museum that uses artifacts, testimony, media, text, and design to communicate the events of the Holocaust for one or more of the following purposes: education, memorialization, or expiation. Such a definition is consistent with the work of Young and Englehardt, and is also consistent with the purposes identified by the American Association of Museums reiterated in Weils. While compatible with current theoretical perspectives on the purposes of museums, this definition does not attempt to consider some of the questions that might be asked when considering the way such a museum presents its narrative; for example, how much emphasis should be placed on victims, perpetrators, and bystanders? Should the museum emphasize only Jewish victims or should all Holocaust victims receive a voice? How large a role should the testimony of survivors play? How large a role should religion play in the museum?

A third key term is revision. For the purpose of this study, revision is defined as a process of intentional change made by an author to make the text more accurately appeal to the intended
audience, to make the text more reflective of the author’s purposes, or to make the text more accurately recapture history. This definition takes into account the emphasis that Calderonello and Edwards place on authorial audience awareness. This same emphasis is echoed in Sommers’ description of the clear focus of experienced writers on their audience during the revision process.

The final significant term to be defined for this study is audience. While the definition itself is simple, it is not made without awareness of the fact that concern for audience is a key element of revision and of the somewhat contested role of audience in Twentieth Century rhetoric. For this study, audience is defined as the target group for which a text is intended. This definition presumes that the audience is selected by the author in conjunction with an intended purpose for the text. Ultimately, the audience plays an important part in the framing, language, and medium used to communicate the author’s ideas.

Research Assumptions

I firmly believe that the concepts belonging to composition research on revision can be applied to a museum. I recognize that this belief rests on an underpinning of assumptions that I have constructed as I have studied history, theory of museums, and the memorializing process, so I will identify this set of assumptions.

My first assumption is that museums are texts. I base this on my observation that they use symbols to convey a narrative with persuasive intent. These same features are the essentials of a written text. I am not alone in this assumption. Hilde S. Hein in her book The Museum in Transition repeatedly speaks of the museum as a text or as a narrative. Susan Pearce in Objects
of Knowledge shares this position, frequently speaking of the narrative that is constructed through the museum displays.

Second, I assume that revision takes place in the texts that are museums. Because museums are socially situated, their message must reflect their rhetorical situation. There is ample evidence in Young, Lumley, and Englehardt of revision in the text of a museum after regime changes in government or in response to revised interpretations of past historical events.

Third, I assume that the revisions that occur in museums are similar to those that occur in the process of creating written texts. Namely, I assume that the revisions share similar purposes (see earlier discussion of Sommers). Also this assumption extends to a belief that the two types of revisions share similar audience awareness that serves as a focal concern in the revision process. Susan Sternberg speaks to this extensively in “The Art of Participation” and identifies successful communication with audiences as the museum’s most significant concern (154-55). An additional correlate of this assumption is that revisions can be internally or externally motivated. Internally motivated revisions include those which may be the result of an intensified sense of purpose or a changed sense of purpose. Changes such as these which seem to fundamentally reform an institution’s vision of itself seem to demand a revision of the text that is presented to the public through the exhibitions. There is evidence that it may lead to a revision of the museum architecture as part of the total message conveyed by the institution, as evidenced by the changes undertaken in the twenty-five year old Holocaust Memorial Center located in the Detroit area. Their new building presents a confrontational sensory assault with its strong resemblance to a concentration camp.
A fourth general assumption is that Holocaust museums particularly invite the study of revision. Many Holocaust museums have been constructed with interconnected webs of narrative, often dependent on survivor testimony. Because most of the major extermination camp site museums were located in territory that came under Soviet control after World War II, they tended to develop a narrative that was more tied to proper party line than to historical reality. The breakdown of the Eastern bloc in the last fifteen years has both opened these locations to closer outside scrutiny and restructured the political structure of the country. Revision, particularly in the form of addition or substitution has been commonly reported by Young, Gerbert, and Gitelman. I also believe that Holocaust museums are more subject to revision because presentation of the Holocaust in museum text form requires greater cultural sensitivity than do other museum texts. Young, Englehardt, and Weisman-Klein all identify the need for Holocaust museums to delicately balance survivor sensibility with historical accuracy and often, additionally, with community values and ideals. Such a balancing act with multiple perspectives to satisfy seems almost certain to generate revision.

Finally, I assume that this is the kairotic moment for such a study. I identify four factors which make now the “right time” for this study. First, recent discussions about the proper role of the museum and of the changes that museums need to make to move away from their “dead in time” past image generate demands for revision. While viewing the continued existence of the museum as critical in contemporary society, I agree with Witcomb that questions regarding form and approach for institutions abound. Such a multiplicity of perspectives increases the potential for revision in any individual institution. Second, I believe that several Holocaust museums are at a point in their history that encourages self-reflection and re-negotiation of goals and thus of direction. It is my belief that such self-study normally encourages revision. Third, I agree with
Walsh, Kirby, and Weil that as museums face issues with funding created by shrinking government allotments and decreased public donations, they must ask hard questions about what constitutes the best use of their resources and make changes that result in a revision of the museum text taken as a whole. Finally, I believe that the shrinking pool of remaining Holocaust survivors also is creating a renegotiation of the role of the Holocaust museum as the museum seeks to create memory for those who have no real memory of their own of the World War II era or its events, but who have merely the memories they have inherited from parents or friends.

The Evaluation of Observed Changes

While identifying changes in the selected museum was a relatively easy task, the selection of a schema for the cataloguing, analysis, and evaluation of observed changes presented a greater challenge. Several schemes for categorizing and evaluating types of revision existed in composition theory. Two of these schemas, those of Sommers, and Faigley and Witte, were investigated in detail. Ultimately a new schema was created for the purpose of the study.

Because of the lack of adaptability of the existing schemas that were considered, it was necessary to create a new categorization of types of change that permitted an orderly grouping and classification of changes that were observed in the museum. This new arrangement identified six basic types of change that had been observed. The categories are presented briefly here, but will be explained more fully in chapter 4.

1. Cosmetic changes: Changes made which have no intended impact on content.
2. Corrective changes: Changes made which are intended to bring museum content into line with most recent knowledge or historical interpretation, or to correct identified inaccuracies.
3. Constructive changes: Changes which are made with the intention of creating additional audience identification with the museum’s content.

4. Contextual changes: Changes which reframe the museum content in any manner.

5. Confrontational changes: Changes in museum content or design which are intended to create a confrontation between the audience and the museum text.

6. Competitive changes: Changes made with the intent of improving a museum’s status when compared to other Holocaust museums.

Prospectus for Other Chapters

Chapter Two provides a detailed description and rhetorical reading of the exterior of the Holocaust Memorial Center in Bloomfield Hill, Michigan, the United States’ first Holocaust memorial museum.

Chapter Three provides a detailed description and rhetorical reading of the interior of the Holocaust Memorial Center.

Chapter Four contains a catalogue, evaluation, and analysis of changes observed when the new museum and its displays were compared to the building and museum displays at the previous location on the campus of the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield, Michigan.

Chapter Five is the conclusion, in which I consider the general conclusions of this study, the limitations of this study, as well as the implication of the analysis for further study in the areas of revision, rhetoric, and museum studies.
CHAPTER II: MEANING FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

Introduction

The Holocaust Memorial Center, currently located in Farmington Hills, Michigan, opened in 1984; despite being the first Holocaust museum in the United States, the facility remained relatively unknown until its recent expansion. Planning for the museum began in the 1960s after Rabbi Rosenzweig’s return from a visit to Israel. While there he visited Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial, which led him to decide that the United States needed a Holocaust museum. On his return to the United States, Rosenzweig began working to raise funds to create such a museum, and after more than twenty years of work, he and his core group of Holocaust survivors successfully established the Holocaust Memorial Center which opened in 1984. In 2002, Rosenzweig announced plans for a new facility that would substantially increase the museum’s size and would significantly alter the museum’s profile in the community. The selected site, on Orchard Lake Road near the intersection with Twelve Mile Road, moved the museum from its low profile location in the Jewish Community Center Complex and placed the museum on a main traffic artery. The new building was dedicated on June 20, 2004, shortly before the Memorial Center celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The award-winning new facility has garnered nationwide attention not only because of the controversy its location and design stirred, but also because of the building’s rhetoric. The building not only houses the Holocaust Memorial, but also enacts and represents elements of the Jewish Holocaust experience.

There is a special relationship between Holocaust museums and their architecture. Holocaust museums are a distinct sort of historical museum, what Jeshajahu Weinberg, founding director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, calls “narrative museums” (17).
This type of museum is not built primarily to house artifacts, but as Weinberg explains, “It takes as its point of departure a historical narrative; [...] its display is organized along a story line” (17). Therefore, the exterior of the new building operates, in the words of Charles Jenks, “as a verb, an action” (4). The structure begins the story that the visitor will find within, complimenting the interior’s visual narrative of the Holocaust. Weinberg eloquently describes this relationship between structure and content: “The memorial building envelopes the exhibition with the right ambiance; the exhibition endows the memorial building with historical context” (27). The site and the story blend in a delicate duet, working together to create the full museum experience for visitors, reflecting the American conviction that the content of a museum can be visibly expressed by its architecture.9

Holocaust museum design is, in Rosenfeld’s words, a “highly metaphorical and symbolic architecture” (10). He further contends that a museum’s design operates as a “complex response to the Holocaust, whose profound impact on Jewish memory and identity has increasingly begun to find architectural form” (2). The exterior of the Holocaust Memorial Center exhibits several key tropes which Rosenfeld identifies as characteristic of this recently acknowledged architectural subgenre. First, the building was constructed using brick and steel as primary materials, echoing their use as the basic building materials of concentration camps. Second, the structure evokes what Rosenfeld calls “ominous forms” (10). That is, the building suggests elements of structures associated with concentration camps. Third, the museum design uses an easily identified motif repeated six times to represent the six million Jewish dead. While designers of several recent museums have used hexagonal shapes, the Holocaust Memorial Center’s designer chose triangular pyramids. Finally, the museum exterior also creatively uses
what Rosenfeld calls “interpenetrating light and dark space” \((10)^{10}\) in achieving the architect’s purposes for both the exterior and the interior.

It is my intention in this chapter to familiarize the reader with the museum’s exterior, accomplished by a detailed description of both the site and the building’s architectural features. The description will be followed by my rhetorical reading of the museum’s exterior based on my assumption that the museum site and exterior establish the museum’s ethos while simultaneously reorienting and relocating the visitor’s thinking, both temporally and spatially, as an introduction to the narrative of the museum displays. In deciding how to arrange this description and reading, I determined that structuring my commentary should be based on two principles. First, I should work from the whole to the part—that is, I would make initial comments on the total building’s impact on the visitor, since the viewer usually has a general impression of the design execution before specific elements that demand a more detailed investigation or consideration emerge. Second, I determined that the description and commentary should be arranged sequentially—my comments presume one walks along the full length of the building’s exterior before returning to the parking lot and the museum entrance.

In this chapter, the description will also, where possible, be accompanied by photographs of the museum’s exterior sections and features to further aid the reader’s visualization of the museum and its site. The more clearly one can picture the museum, the more clearly one can comprehend the architectural elements, the rhetorical devices, and the memorial tropes employed.

The Museum Exterior

Description

As drivers pass the museum, they are initially conscious of the building’s size. The
51,000 square foot building appears even larger because it is situated at the front of the site, separated from the road by only a narrow strip of grass. Even a casual passer-by identifies wire wrapping the building and what seem to be jagged shards of glass projecting out of a section of the roof. The observer also notices that part of the building is striped. These same impressions also assail visitors to the museum. But unlike those driving by, the visitor can more carefully investigate the structure’s unusual exterior.

The museum’s long exterior wall can be subdivided into several distinct zones. The initial section, a tall wall constructed of red brick with horizontal black brick stripes interjected every eight courses, appears to be wrapped in barbed wire. The effect was created using vertical aluminum posts crossed by horizontal steel cables. The cable wrapping actually begins on the front of the building and extends down the entire length of the brick exterior. The tall wall extends for approximately one third of the building; at that point, the brick wall becomes a low wall, still wire wrapped (Figure 1).

Figure 1

 Holocaust Museum Exterior: Looking down the side from building front
Behind the low brick wall one can see a taller structure vertically stripped in blue and gray. This wall contains windows at approximately one third of its height and has a cut out, creating a void, which divides the space above the windows. Slightly before the mid-point of the low brick wall, there is a segment of lower striped wall that juts out, breaching the brick (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Exterior wall of Holocaust Memorial Center showing wire wrapping, stripes, void, and glass skylights

Near its end, six glass pyramids rise above the low brick wall, dominating the exterior at that point.

The building ends in a different and much softer geometric form, invisible until one has walked almost to the end of the low brick wall, a semi-circular wall of white vertical panels
wrapping around and extending beyond the striped wall. Its softness seems almost out of place when contrasted with the sharp angularity of the rest of the exterior (Figure 3).

Figure 3

![Photo by Mona Dunckel](exterior-holocaust-memorial-center-institute-of-the-righteous)

Exterior of Holocaust Memorial Center’s Institute of the Righteous

**Analysis**

The Holocaust Memorial Center is, like the USHMM, an amazingly complex structure. Both buildings are intended to be more than neutral shells; the architecture is intended to refer to the history housed within. However, unlike the USHMM, the Holocaust Memorial Center does not seem benign (Architecture 2). The building’s confrontational design combines with its control of space in beginning to develop a narrative before the visitor enters the museum’s doors. The exterior is used to initiate a visceral confrontational process that relocates and reorients visitors before they see any exhibit; at the same time, the exterior is used to create the ethos of the museum through its unexpected approach to the rhetorical situation.
The confrontation begins in the placement and orientation of the building on the site. The situation of the building at the front edge of the property is intended to create a visual confrontation with all who pass by. It is impossible for those who pass to be unaware of the museum. The confrontation is further assured by the building’s orientation on the site. It is not a “short side” of the building which faces the road; it is the entire length of the museum. This allows the whole structure to be used to create a visual impression while simultaneously intensifying that impression because of its size. The building’s placement also begins to create the ethos of the museum—a place that confronts, disturbs. Unlike businesses in the area which are centered on or placed at the back of their sites, the museum is “upfront”—“in your face.” This is consistent with the desires of the museum founder Rabbi Charles Rosenveig, who explained in a New York Times interview, “We want to incite people to come here” (Maynard 6). In a Detroit News article Rosenveig further explained, “We’re not hiding. We want people to see the building. We want them to feel uneasy” (Kurth 1). Not all survivors and their families agree with the approach. Some have argued that the placement is counter-productive. Debbie Wallis Landau, daughter of a survivor complains, “By placing such a historically significant building in the middle of traffic, I fear the building will be more of a distraction than an enticement to explore its messages” (Kirsbaum “Eye” 57). When the placement is combined with the museum’s strong evocative images of the Jewish experience, the results can be highly emotional. Holocaust survivor Erna Blitzer Gorman describing her first view of the building stated, “Seeing it for the first time feels like dying. Not the kind where you lay down and die in your sleep, but it’s slow and agonizing. It’s like being put back into the ghetto” (Patterson “Holocaust Remembered” 1). Although the process is painful at times, the museum exterior begins to provide a way for survivors to practice memory and to reconnect with relationships.
long lost in time and distance; for those who have no memories of the events the museum depicts, the exterior begins a process of creating memory. The confrontation is instigated by more than just the building’s placement on the site, however.

An additional source of the site’s mood comes from the landscaping. The site is bleak, planted with patchy grasses and twisted shrubs. It is according to Agnes Arbuckle, a Polish native and project manager for the construction firm that built the museum, like the landscape around the concentration camps (Wieland 4). The minimal landscaping leaves the long line of the building unbroken. There are no foundation plantings at the base of the wire-wrapped walls; there are no shrubs to soften the building’s impact. The lack of plants makes it clear that nothing will be allowed to modify or distort the intended message. It also makes clear the harshness of the message.

Also helping to create ethos and reorient visitors are the materials selected for the construction. The material, brick and steel, are hard, rough—there is no softness. From their initial view of the museum exterior, visitors begin to realize that the story housed within is one of hardness and harshness. The brick of the walls was chosen because it matched the brick of the ghetto walls that separated the Jews from the outside world (New Expanded 9). Brick was also a material often used in construction of concentration camps. When combined with the wire wrapping, the building evokes the concentration camp experience, mimicking the barbed wire and electrified fences that encircled the Nazi camps (New Expanded 9). Even the casual passerby is left wondering why a building so ominous and forbidding is located on a main thoroughfare. The structure seems out of place, but at the same time, it is oddly compelling. In a successful symbolic representation accomplished through building materials, the exterior has
been constructed in a way that foreshadows the story told within and entices the visitor to enter and investigate its message.

A third element of the exterior that is used to reorient while creating ethos is the irregularity of the wall surface. The building is not what a viewer expects—the multiplicity of surface textures and of building materials indicates that this is not an ordinary building. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the irregularity is the element of rupture repeated along the exterior. First, there is the rupture caused by the low jutting-out striped wall. It has broken through the fencing—escaped—symbolically representing, according to the building’s architect, those few prisoners who escaped the camps and the remnant of the Jewish population that escaped annihilation (New Expanded 10). A second rupture comes where the glass pyramids seemingly erupt through the roof of the structure. The jagged points disturb the normal roof line breaking the expected order in much the same way that Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, broke the ordered expectations of German Jews. At the same time, the glass itself seems broken, the triangular shapes appearing to be merely shards of something larger—broken remnants of the synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses destroyed by the vitriolic Nazi attacks. A third key rupture is created by the cut-out in the striped wall. The geometric void breaks the continuity of the exterior surface. This breaking may represent the breach created in European society by the Holocaust—the total breaking of the social contract. It can also speak of the brokenness of the individual in and through the camp experience where the Germans sought to break, in body and in spirit, those who wore the prisoner’s striped uniform. But the breaking extends to the present as well, for the building ruptures the personal space of the casual passer-by, forcing confrontation with an event many would rather ignore. This third rupture, that of the void, also may identify the ongoing rupture in European nations created by the void left when their Jewish
populations were annihilated. This is not a building that appears complete. It forces thought and, hopefully, learning.

But the museum and its architecture carry a message of more than brokenness—both go beyond breaking to healing. This is accomplished on the exterior by the soft, rounded unbroken whiteness of the final section of the museum, the Institute of the Righteous. Just as the story within ends in hope, the final element of the exterior offers hope as well. This section of the exterior is complete—unruptured, free of voids. This, too, suits the intent of the founder who wants visitors to leave the museum with a sense of hope, having chosen to work for the betterment of mankind (Wieland 4).

Having considered the totality of the museum exterior, the rest of the chapter will offer a physical description and rhetorical analysis of the entrance area, approaching from the visitor parking lot. Like the facade presented to those who drive by, the entrance area continues for the visitor to the museum the twofold task of creating the museum’s ethos while reorienting the visitor in preparation for the museum content.

The Entrance Area

Description

Returning to the parking area, one is able to focus on the approach to the museum and the visitor’s overall impression of the museum from this vantage point. The wire-wrapped brick continues across the building’s front. Also, a portion of the upper striped wall is visible. The entrance area, however, offers five distinct elements that function to further the visitor’s reorientation process: the landscaping, a ground level sculpture, the chimney evoked by the
elevator shaft, the tower that guards the entrance, modeled after the towers of Auschwitz, and the black granite wall which flanks the entrance (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Photo by Mona Dunckel

Holocaust Memorial Center entrance area

First, visitors notice the landscaping around the building. There are mainly grasses with a few small shrubs planted in all of the beds; none of the plantings produce flowers. The grasses seem permanently dry and produce a raspy, rustling sound when stirred by the wind. Everything in the landscape is true to indigenous plants around the Auschwitz Camp in Poland. Agnes Arbuckle of Granger Construction was responsible for the landscaping. A Polish native, she designed the plantings to look as much as possible like southwestern Poland.

Next, visitors approaching the building pass a compelling ground level sculpture. Near the passenger drop-off area, within a circle of concrete, intersecting sections of railroad track create a rough Star of David, which is painted yellow; a simple black vertical post holds a single light permitting its evening illumination. The tracks seem to point in random directions, but in
reality, they radiate outward along all of the points of the compass. The area is filled with white gravel and is devoid of landscape plantings (Figure 5).

Figure 5

![Exterior ground sculpture showing rail tracks and Star of David](image)

Exterior ground sculpture showing rail tracks and Star of David

Once past the railroad tracks, the visitor’s attention turns to the two vertical structures dominating the museum’s front. The first structure is located to the right of the entrance. Although it is located near the back edge of the building, it is tall enough to be clearly visible to drivers passing by on the road. An oversized elevator shaft rises through a glass tower and
above the flat roof; its design clearly evokes the lines of a crematorium chimney like those of the concentration camps that once spewed out a constant snow of human ashes (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Photo by Mona Dunckel
Elevator shaft designed to resemble crematorium chimney
The second of these vertical structures dominates the museum entrance. Directly in front of the doors looms a stylized glass and brick guard tower through which all who enter the museum must pass (Figure 7).

While it lacks the pyramidal roof of the stylized towers incorporated into the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., the tower was based on the same model—the guard towers at Auschwitz, and it includes even the slit in the tower front for the machine
gun barrel (New Expanded 10). Taken as a whole, the entrance area is eerily reminiscent of the entrance to the *Auschwitz-Birkenau* camp. Directly under the entrance tower is a large, yellow Star of David that completely covers the walkway. It is impossible to walk through this area without walking on this device.

The final external element that compels the visitors’ attention as they move toward the door is the black granite set into the wall at the left of the entrance (Figure 8).

*Figure 8*

![Photo by Mona Dunckel](holocaust_memorial_center_granite_wall_insert.jpg)

Holocaust Memorial Center granite wall insert

This contains basic information for the visitor, including the museum logo and the museum name. Above the name is the phrase “America’s first,” so that a reader could easily run the two together and see “America’s first Holocaust Memorial Center.” At the end of the granite panels, the visitor enters the museum through simple aluminum-framed glass doors or through a center revolving door.
Analysis

The entrance area of the museum intensifies the reorientation while adding a new element to the message. Everything that visitors see between their cars and the museum doors is designed to say—to scream—think about what took place; remember the Holocaust. Perhaps the most subtle of the elements found in the approach to the museum entrance is the train-track sculpture, which serves as a reminder of the rail journey taken by all who were transported to the camps. The location of the piece, near the passenger drop-off point for the museum, evokes a sense of disembarking at one of the camps, under the shadow of the chimney and the guard tower ahead. The tracks point in all directions, for those who came to the camps came from every compass-point, but there was only one destination—a concentration camp. For each person who was brought to a camp by rail, the ending point was also a beginning point; it was their entrance to the camp’s horror. For the visitors who have also come from every direction, the sculpture represents both their arrival at their destination and their introduction to the horror of the Holocaust told through the museum’s narrative.

The enlarged elevator shaft to their right as visitors continue toward the doors helps to further the sense of foreboding. It is unnerving for visitors to walk past the area that strikingly evokes the crematoria of the camps, an image that is intensified as evening falls and the glass area below is illuminated. The simplicity of the red brick structure makes the impression clear—unambiguous—reminding the visitor that the story this museum tells is not pleasant. Here, as along the museum’s front, there is nothing to break the intensity of the image. There are no other structures on the roof; there is only the stark brick chimney piercing the sky, viewed as visitors make their way toward the guard tower ahead.
The guard tower stands between the visitor and the entrance. It is impossible to enter the museum without walking under the tower, without sharing an experience of those brought to the camps, moving past the guard towers into the horror ahead. Those who entered the camps had little knowledge of what lay before them. Similarly, visitors do not know specifically what lies ahead as they pass under the guard tower. The structure also serves as a further intensifier of the ominous mood created by the rest of the building exterior. For some, the guard tower represents a difficult threshold; in passing under it, visitors move not just into the museum, but into a personal Holocaust experience—they have moved past the arrival point and they move toward enclosure. There is a further disorientation created by the large Star of David beneath the tower. It is impossible to walk under the tower without stepping on the well-recognized Jewish symbol. I have observed obvious discomfort on the faces of many visitors as they walk across the Star to reach the doors.

The visitors’ final orientation comes through the polished black granite wall located to the left of the doors. Using a material recognized as a standard trope of memorialization, the wall finally iterates precisely for visitors their location and their role requirements. The first element carved into the wall, the museum’s logo, identifies for those who can read Hebrew a key element of the museum’s message. Stylized Hebrew characters spell Zachor—remember. The high gloss of the granite allows visitors to see their reflections under the logo, turning the message of the logo into a personal exhortation—remember. This message is, as Andrea Liss explains, “not directed at survivors, who can never forget, but at those who have never experienced the events” (xiii). The rest of the inscription offers information that permits visitors an overview of what is ahead. Visitors can watch themselves reflected reading the wall’s inscriptions as they move toward the door. It is a further dislocation or disorientation. One is acting, moving toward a
destination, but is an observer as well, apart and detached. This mirrors the visitors’ role in the
museums—observer, yet participant. It is a role designed for them, not one of their own
choosing, as they are enclosed in the museum and in the story that it tells.

The architecture of the Holocaust Memorial Center is, according to its designer Kenneth
Neumann, “deliberately not pretty. [. . .] The architectural aim is to keep the historical wounds as
raw as possible” (Gallagher 1). Neumann seems to have successfully accomplished his purpose.
The building provides a consummate example of successfully using architecture to fashion
viewers’ responses. Through its hard edges, rough textures, and the unexpected gaps and
ruptures in its surfaces, the exterior creates an ambiance that although hard, inhospitable, and
oppressive, is still compelling. The building dislocates visitors, transporting them from a busy
twenty-first century American suburban street cluttered with strip malls to an ominous,
threatening place of another time and another continent.

By offering a realistic image of the events it memorializes, the museum succeeds in
evoking strong emotional responses. This, too, is part of the building’s ethos—in-your-face,
confrontational, hard-hitting. The museum’s existence is combative; it combats the lies of the
Holocaust deniers, the pseudo-history of revisionists and the loss of memory as the pool of those
who survived the Nazi atrocities continues to shrink. The museum has become a way of
extending their witness beyond the lives of the survivors, perpetuating their remembrance and
their memories as part of the greater goal of encouraging righteousness. The building operates
well in preparing visitors for the rest of the museum experience, the narrative of the interior
which will be the subject of Chapter Three.
CHAPTER III: INTO THE HORROR AND BEYOND

Introduction

This chapter offers a description and rhetorical analysis of the interior of the Holocaust Memorial Center. As in Chapter Two, the description will be accompanied by photographs to assist the reader’s visualization of museum spaces and displays. Because the interior display has more areas to consider, this chapter will be divided into sections, each corresponding to a part of the museums. Each section will include description and analysis of the museum segment being considered.

As with the exterior of the building, the architectural design of the interior is intended to express ideas, not merely to provide housing for the exhibits. According to Rabbi Rosenweig, the design is intended to meld together a metaphor of the rich texture of Jewish Europe, of the violence of the Holocaust, and to express the concept of righteousness . . . [in order] to assist the Center’s mission to keep alive the idea of remembrance (New Expanded 5). The general layout of the building’s first floor is tripartite, housing the museum spaces as well as a conference/classroom space. These distinct areas are divided by a lobby area which separates the different spaces yet integrates their uses. There is also a second floor area, accessed by a glass tower housing both stairs and an elevator. The upper level houses areas less frequently used by most museum visitors: the administrative offices and the library. The lobby and the museum spaces continue the disorientation and reorientation process begun by the exterior. Visitors are disoriented to make them more open to the message of the museum; hopefully, visitors will be reoriented through the message of tolerance that the museum presents encouraging them, in Rosenweig’s words, to “embrace the righteous acts of the few as the model for the many” (New
Expanded 2). Like the exterior, the interior repeats the same motif—entrance, enclosure, and release—that provides structure to the narrative that the building and the exhibits tell.

The Lobby

Description

The lobby, which is entered from a canopied area, serves as the core of the building. The two-story space, lightened by two walls of windows, serves a wide range of functions. To the right as one enters the doors is the reception desk where visitors are greeted and where they can obtain information about the museum and upcoming museum events. Behind the reception desk is a bank of lockers which are used to secure large bags that visitors may be carrying, since such items are not allowed in the museum. The lobby runs the entire length of the building; from it one can access all components of the museum and the conference area. It is also from the lobby that one accesses the library and offices on the second floor. The walls are brick, and the floor is textured cement painted black. Steel girders, which support the pedestrian bridge from the elevator to the offices and the library, give the area an industrial feel, as do the roof girders visible overhead. To the left, an angled brick wall identifies those who are memorialized by the lobby.

To begin the museum tour, one walks to the far end of the lobby through the hallway created as the lobby transects the building. Above is a balcony area, created by an open walkway between the museum offices and the library. The tubular steel handrails and the crossing cables used as a railing add to the building’s industrial feel. As visitors move into this portion of the lobby, they pass, on the left, the entrance to the exhibits. On their right, visitors pass a small gift shop, separated from the lobby/hallway by glass walls; visitors also pass classrooms and can see
a large lecture room. These rooms comprise the museum’s conference area. Near the end of the lobby, recessed under the balcony, is the area in which the Memorial Flame burns (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

The two adjacent walls of the alcove are black marble and bear several inscriptions. The floor in the area is brick rather than cement, and the flame, set below floor level and protected by a glass enclosure, is centered in the corner where the two black walls meet. At the end of the lobby, just a few feet past the Memorial Flame, are the exhibit area exit and another wall of windows.
Analysis

The lobby area of the Holocaust Center serves as a transitional space for visitors as they enter the museum, beginning the visitors’ transport to the experiences suggested by the exterior architecture. Consequently, the lobby is intended to evoke emotional responses from the visitors. The architects and designers have used design, space, light, and building materials to induce emotional responses in the visitor, to disorient the visitor, or to create a “memorial space of remembrance”\(^2\) in this part of the museum.

First, design that manipulates space is used to create emotional responses in visitors. Based on my observation of guests’ comments, one immediate reaction that the two-story lobby evokes in many visitors is a feeling of smallness. The lobby is intended, according to Rosenweig, to leave visitors with no sense of individual power; rather they should have an overwhelming sense of their own powerlessness, created by the vertical size of the space.\(^3\) The sense of height in the lobby is intensified because visitors enter the museum through a much lower, covered portico. The design is also intended to create a sense of visibility and vulnerability because of the multiple walls of windows. The space is open—unprotected. The sensations—vulnerability, visibility, and powerlessness—evoke the situation of the Jews in Nazi-controlled territory. One’s sense of being watched is increased by the architectural design’s use of an overhead walkway, resembling a prison catwalk, to connect the office and library areas with the elevator. More “watching space” is created by an open hallway overlooking the lobby that connects the library and the offices. Visitors’ sensations of vulnerability and observation intensify when there are people on the balcony above. As in the lobby of the USHMM in Washington D.C., multiple wall planes and angles are skewed. Visitors do not find the clean corners they anticipate. Some walls appear folded, their points jutting into lobby space—intruding. These walls also provide
protection for what lies beyond them in the hallway; because of the angles at which they intersect
the lobby visitors have no clear sight lines along the wall. The walkway connecting the elevator
and the balcony passes overhead at a skewed angle, furthering visitors’ disorientation while
simultaneously offering a commentary on the world during the Holocaust. The spatial
manipulation created by design continues through the rest of the lobby as well.

The lobby hallway, because it narrows and is flanked by enclosed spaces rather than high
windows, feels more protected than the entryway; one experiences less sense of vulnerability,
although she can still be observed by people on the balconies above. The hall leads visitors to
what many consider the heart of the Memorial Center—the Memorial Flame that constantly
burns in remembrance of the Jews who died in the Holocaust. Because the area is tucked into an
alcove created by the wall design, visitors are unaware of its presence until they arrive. Unlike
the rest of the lobby, the Memorial Flame area is not high and imposing; it is set into space under
the balcony above, significantly lowering the ceiling. Here one is no longer overwhelmed or
awed by the size of the space—here one is overwhelmed by the magnitude of the event and the
numbers of the victims commemorated. In design, the memorial area appears to mimic the
Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C.: polished black walls, though not joined, create a
“v” in the corner. The closeness of the area, when compared to the height and openness of the
rest of the lobby, draws people in and gives the Memorial Flame the ambiance of a holy place, a
shrine. Starting the tour at the Memorial Flame continues the spatial disruption, the reorientation
of the museum visitor. It is abnormal—backwards—to start at the end of the museum. The
abnormality is intensified because visitors walk past the obvious entry to the museum exhibits.
But the starting point of the tour is another deliberate indication that the narrative to be shared
will show a world that is abnormal, a world where things do not follow in order as they ought.
Another tool used by the museum designers to accomplish their rhetorical purposes is light. In the lobby, visitors are moved from spaces of greater light—introductions, to areas of less light—enclosures. The entrance area of the lobby is brightly lit by day because of the walls of windows; the natural light is intensified by canister lights suspended from the ceiling. Compared to the entrance, the Memorial flame area is darker, though by no means oppressive. The reduced lighting makes the flame area somber—a place of mourning and remembrance, while the entrance is bright—allowing a sense of promise and hope. The Memorial Flame serves as an “atmospheric and as an aesthetic counterpoint” to the rest of the lobby much as the Hall of Witness and the Hall of Remembrance serve as counterpoints in the USHMM (Weinberg 26). In the Memorial Flame area, light is used to create a formal memorial space within the museum. A low stone bench invites visitors to linger and to consider the places and the people who are memorialized, but such an invitation seems out of place to those who are just beginning their time at the museum.

A further element used by designers in the accomplishment of their rhetorical purpose is the selection of building materials. In the lobby most walls are either glass or tan interior brick, although one wall houses a large bank of metal lockers. There are no textiles, which would soften the space, used in the entry lobby. All of the materials are hard which creates an ambiance that is vaguely unfriendly, yet the curve of the wall is inviting, and one is compelled to enter rather than being driven away. The space provides entrance, but not welcome.

The area continues to create a vague disorientation, not only because of the hardness of the décor, but also because the lobby offers no real directions to visitors. There are no signs, no arrows. Visitors must ask where to go, or must be led by a docent as they move from the entrance of the building to the beginning point for their tour.
In all, the lobby successfully fulfills its role in influencing visitors. It produces basic disorientation through a lack of signs and the unexpected beginning point. The skewed angles, unexpected corners, and unanticipated doorways and spaces extend the disorientation. The lobby also successfully prompts emotional responses in visitors to the museum, from those of vague anxiety and vulnerability created by the architectural design to a quiet reverence produced by the shrine-like Memorial Flame. Finally, with the Memorial Flame, the lobby includes the desired “memorial space of remembrance” for the victims of the Nazi Holocaust (New Expanded 2).

The Museum Spaces

There are three museums contained within the Holocaust Memorial Center, along with an introduction hall. These exhibit spaces are critical to the mission of the Center, for they contextualize the memorial process. According to Weinberg, memorials “only serve as reminders for those who know” (18). Young agrees, suggesting that, alone, memorials are of little value (Texture of Memory 2). For those with no knowledge of the Holocaust, the memorial aspect of the Holocaust Memorial Center is meaningless. The exhibit area provides the critical contextualizing historical narrative that imparts meaning to the building and its memorial intent.

As a Holocaust museum, the Holocaust Memorial Center is a narrative museum, a specific genre that has exceptional educational potential. It uses elements of narrative as building blocks to create a coherent picture of history that can impact visitors emotionally, not only intellectually. Because visitors often place themselves into the story, they occupy a unique place—having the intellectual distance of bystanders, but the emotional perspective of insiders. According to Weinberg, central to narrative museums is the

Premise that exhibits have to be presented in a context that allows their full
significance to be understood and appreciated. [. . .] Drawn into the flow of the narrative, visitors view the display with their senses. [. . .] They walk through the exhibition galleries as if walking through a three-dimensionally presented oral history whose meaning transcends the original historical limitations of time and space. (49)

Because the museum is a narrative, visitors are basically reading a text, involved in an activity that makes meaning for them through their encounter. Thus, according to Patraka, they are essentially continuing to write the narrative (14).

“The Introduction”

Description

The introduction hall serves as the preface to the three spaces of the museums. It is a light, colorful, circular room that invites visitors to enter and explore. In the center of the room, at table height is a circular interactive map that presents the Diaspora, and documents various waves of Jewish migration around the world. The room also contains two timelines; one, approximately seven feet above the floor, provides a base line of World History and is identified by standard western dates. The second timeline, about three feet above the floor, tracks the history of the Jews and is dated according to the Jewish reckoning of years. Both timelines are weighted to emphasize post-Middle Ages history. The doorway to the first museum is to visitors’ left as they enter the room, which naturally encourages them to move from right to left around the room. However, visitors immediately notice that the dating on the timelines begins at the right and moves around to the left—in the opposite direction, from a Western perspective, of that
in which such graphics are usually laid out (see Figure 10). Because of this, the doorway occurs at about the end of the 19th Century, identifying for visitors the time period into which they are moving.

Figure 10

Photo by Mona Dunckel
Holocaust Memorial Center “The Introduction” showing timelines and map display

Analysis

This room serves as not only an orienting area, but also as a disorienting area. It removes visitors from their normal left to right linearity and shifts them into the right to left movement of Hebrew text. Visitors are forced to adopt, if only for a few moments, an altered perspective, significant as they move into the first of the Center’s three museum spaces, the Museum of Jewish Heritage. The displays also introduce information about the history of the Jews, presented
with a presumption that visitors bring little or no prior knowledge of Jewish history to their museum visit. The introduction successfully accomplishes—without threat and without insult—the three key purposes it must achieve: disorientation, reorientation, and education of visitors.

The Museum of European Jewish Heritage

Description

This area of exhibits is provided as an orientation to Jewish culture. There are displays, models, murals, dioramas, and video organized around four main themes: Judaism, family and community, education and learning, and culture and the arts (see Figure 11).

Figure 11

[Image: Holocaust Memorial Center: View into Museum of European Jewish Heritage from entrance]
The area describes and offers examples of each of the themes. Small sculptures and large murals are used throughout the area. The room is large, open, and very light because of a rectangular skylight which extends nearly the room’s full length. There is no particular order for visiting the exhibits suggested by the layout; the openness of the area lends itself to a recursive, circuitous wandering by visitors. Many of the displays such as the model of a synagogue or a model of a shtetle, are free standing, permitting visitors to circle them and examine them from all sides (see Figure 12).

Figure 12

Museum of European Jewish Heritage: free standing shtetle model.

Note the mural in the background. The figure in the long black coat wearing a white shirt and dark tie visible in the center of the mural is Rabbi Rosenweig, the museum founder.
The area is not square; instead, it has multiple obtuse angles which allow wall surfaces to flow into one another. The space farthest from the entrance houses a small but ornate theater where visitors can view a video presentation on Jewish accomplishments in the performing arts (see Figure 13).

Figure 13

Outside the theatre, one wall is covered by a beautiful full-color page of bordered and illustrated Hebrew text. Another wall is covered with dark wood floor-to-ceiling bookshelves stocked with
colorful volumes written by Jewish authors (see Figure 14). Beyond the shelves is a poster display that includes pictures of several of the authors.

Figure 14

Museum of European Jewish Heritage: wall of books by Jewish Authors

Throughout the room, carpeting and appealing wall colors create a rich and welcoming environment that invites the visitor to investigate.

For those who wish, it is possible to bypass the Jewish culture displays and to take a direct, “express path” to the rest of the museum by turning right as one enters. Following a tile path, visitors pass along a single wall containing of a series of ten gray text panels, back-lit with red. Each board describes an aspect of anti-Semitism, providing a portent of what is to come.
Analysis

The Holocaust Memorial Center provides its Holocaust narrative in three acts: “entrance,” “enclosure,” and “release.” The Museum of European Jewish Heritage is scene two of the opening act or entrance, intended to draw the visitor deeper into the museum and into the history and experience of the Jews. At the same time, this segment must continue the process of disorienting and reorienting visitors as it lays the groundwork to create in visitors an emotional response to the story that will unfold in the next museum.

Unlike the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Holocaust Memorial Center does not seek to make visitors tour the exhibits with the perspective of a victim. There are no passports which link visitors to the identity of a victim; instead, visitors are treated as bystanders. The goal is to generate an intellectual distance that allows visitors to consider and to analyze the events portrayed, yet at the same time to create an emotional response to and identification with the Jewish victims.¹⁴

One of the tools that designers have used to attain their aims is space. Nedra Reynolds, author of *Geographies of Writing*, comments on the importance of space stating, “People’s responses to place [. . .] determine whether they will ‘enter’ at all, or rush through, or linger—and those decisions contribute to how a space is ‘used’” (143). Within the Museum of Jewish heritage, the designers have created an open and flowing space that successfully draws visitors in. Visitors have clear sight lines to all areas of the museum from the doorway through which they enter. The array of display options is tantalizing, enticing visitors to enter and to stay as long as it takes to satisfy their curiosity. The designers seem to share the ideas of Lefebvre, author of *The Production of Space*, and by treating space as active rather than passive, they have created a space that successfully produces responses in visitors.
I find the designers’ use of space to be a powerful postmodern statement, altering what appears to be structured and ordered to make in its stead a place characterized by disorientation. The result is a space that clearly fits Reynolds’ description of a postmodern location (17). What appears to be a welcoming and comfortable place provides instead new ways for visitors to experience disorientation. A portion of the striped exterior wall, although not obvious, pierces the interior, mixing inside and out. There are no right angles in the room. Some walls connect in wide, obtuse angles, leaving very little definition of where each wall ends. Other walls are convex. Display cases and panels angle out from the walls. Also, as in the lobby, there are no signs or arrows to identify a proper path through the exhibits; the open museum is non-directional. Visitors are left to wander, to make their own way, mimicking the history of Jewish wandering throughout Europe. The exhibits also provide no directional clues; each offers independent information that is, displays are non-sequential. One section does not provide background information required to understand another element. The museum is thus, non-linear; combined with the lack of interior walls in the exhibit space, the non-linear design encourages visitors to take a recursive path through the exhibits. The open area provides no barriers, nothing that hinders turning back, so visitors can, if they wish, easily return to displays they have already seen. The recursivity is also enhanced by the free-standing models, such as the model of a synagogue that can be approached from any direction, which some may see as a statement about the Jewish tolerance. Despite the lack of signs, based on my observations, most people seem to move around the room to the left through the exhibits to the theatre.\(^{15}\) After exiting the theatre and viewing the exhibits outside its exit, visitors realize they have missed an exhibit on the short right wall of the museum space. Visitors must return to the room’s entrance to view the previously missed display—an exploration of Anti-Semitism. The use of space in this exhibit is
distinctive. Unlike the rest of the museum, which has high ceilings, this area has a low ceiling which after the openness creates an unexpected sense of confinement.

Light provides another device by which the museum designers achieve their desired results. The Museum of Cultural Heritage is even brighter than the Introduction area, making it very inviting for visitors to enter. The brightness comes from good overhead lighting and effective use of spotlights to highlight individual displays. The light is increased, however, because of a large skylight. The natural light adds warmth and enhances the overall ambiance. The brightness of the room creates a sense of calm; it provides no hint of the calamity to come. There is no hint of darkness until one reaches the panels which chronicle anti-Semitism. This area, because of the lower ceiling, is darker than the rest of the room; it also does not seem to benefit from the skylight. The space is always somewhat shadowed, appropriate for the content which casts a subtle shadow on what visitors have already seen.

Color is also used as a rhetorical device to communicate the desired message to visitors. Again, the panels chronicling anti-Semitism are the exception to rest of the museum. Throughout the Museum of Cultural Heritage, the walls are a rich blue or a warm burgundy. The colors are inviting. While the large paintings of shtetle life contain primarily black, gray, and shades of brown, the color selection makes the paintings appear earthy, real. There is underlying warmth despite the drab colors. The Anti-Semitism panels, on the other hand, appear cold and impersonal, in part because of their color—institutional green-gray. The contrast is particularly evident if one comes directly from the rich inviting colors of the wall of books. Each green panel is illuminated from behind with red light. The color selection of the light is also significant, giving a warning of danger ahead while harkening back to the bloodshed that historically accompanied anti-Semitism. The red lights also discourage visitors from moving back to review
a previous panel. If one turns back, the lights behind the panels become a row of stop lights, suggesting that there is no return in this direction. These panels help create visitors’ final impressions and serve well to create a vague disquiet in visitors as they move on to the Holocaust Museum.

One final aspect of the Museum of European Jewish Heritage that is used to achieve the designer’s rhetorical purposes is the display design. This museum is arranged topically; therefore, there is no overarching story that must be told. While the exhibits are educational, they do not require great intellectual engagement from visitors. The theatre presentation entertains as it educates, so that visitors remain relaxed and unpressured. Further, visitors maintain their role as observers because all of the exhibits are passive. Visitors merely move among the exhibits and take from the smorgasbord of material presented; because the exhibits require no effort, visitors are “set up” for the next museum. They are lulled into expecting more of the same; they are anesthetized much as bystanders in Germany might have been as Hitler rose to power. Visitors are thus unprepared for what they find as they enter the second museum.

The Holocaust Museum

Description

This section of displays covers events from Hitler’s rise to power until approximately two years after the end of the war using ten titled display segments. Visitors are led by the anti-Semitism panels in the Museum of Jewish Heritage to the entrance, reached by making a 180 degree turn around the anti-Semitism display wall. Around the corner is a display that documents the rise of the Nazi party. However, the most significant element of the display is the portrait of Adolph Hitler that is directly before them at the end of the ramp. Because of the extreme angle, there is
no possibility for visitors to see what is ahead, so many, based on my observations, seem taken aback by the large photo that dominates the area and seems to grow larger as visitors approach (Figure 15).

Figure 15

photo by Mona Dunckel

The Holocaust Museum entrance is dominated by this floor to ceiling photograph of Hitler

Handrails on both sides of the walkway limit visitors’ usable space. Slate gray walls contrast with the warm, rich colors of the previous museum, and tile floors replace the carpeted floors found in the Museum of Jewish Heritage. The only colors used in this segment of the museum are the bright red in Nazi flags and armbands, a rusty red, and the continuing institutional green-gray of the panels. Since floors slope downward, the walkways become ramps along which
visitors move through the displays that present the rise of the Nazis and that detail social legislation enacted by the German government. As visitors move through a section identifying social changes under the Nazis, sight lines have been created to their left. Visitors can see ahead, through iron grillwork, and glimpse the results for society of the actions chronicled in the display panels. For example, at one point, visitors can look through to see a street scene: a bench marked “only for Aryans” sits before a wall covered with anti-Semitic Nazi posters (see Figure 16).

Figure 16

Holocaust Memorial Center: Holocaust Museum street scene display including anti-Semitic posters
The exhibits continue with sections on World War II and early German military successes, a replica of the entry gate to the Auschwitz concentration camp, and a segment which details life in the Warsaw ghetto and includes a replication of the ghetto wall (see Figure 17).

Figure 17

![Holocaust Museum display on the Warsaw ghetto including replica of Ghetto Wall](photo by Mona Dunckel)

In each section there are dioramas, video displays, replicas, or artifacts intended to enhance visitors’ understanding of the material presented in written texts. Visitors continue to move downward along narrowing ramps that provide increasingly limited space and which increasingly crowd visitors together.

A sharp turn marks the entrance to the “The Final Solution,” the section exploring the Nazi deportation process in which Jews were removed from German occupied territory and transferred to concentration and work camps. Here, visitors move into a recently installed replica
of a rail car used for transporting Jews to the camps. This segment also contains artifact displays that juxtapose the experience of a concentration camp inmate and a camp guard. Another display in this section consists of a tall wall of file drawers; some can be opened to provide access to silent video presentations chronicling medical experiments and other abuses which took place in the camps. Visitors move on to the section titled “Death Camps,” where they view a video theatre presentation of survivors detailing their camp experiences. While there are railings in the video area against which visitors may lean, there are no chairs provided. Following the video, visitors move on to “the Abyss” (see Figure 18) and “Liberation.”

Figure 18

The Holocaust Museum: The Abyss

photo by Mona Dunckel
The Abyss, entered after negotiating another 180 degree turn, is the lowest level of the displays. On a narrow catwalk wide enough for only one person, visitors pass multiple screens, each showing continuous video footage of concentration camps taken by liberating Allied troops. The screens are set at different heights, and each screen is skewed. Visitors cannot take everything in at a glance; they must constantly turn, looking up or down, or looking from side to side as they attempt to take in what is portrayed on the screens. The wall opposite the screens, to the visitors’ right, is painted black, providing a safe alternative view for those who do not wish to see the graphic film footage. Visitors walk along the catwalk toward a flame, visible through a textured glass panel. Near the catwalk’s end, against the black wall, highlighted by a spotlight, sit two stacked suitcases, a name clearly visible in white on the upper bag. Minimal lighting makes the Abyss the darkest portion of the museum. At the end of the catwalk, around another blind corner, is the survivor theatre where museum visitors may sit and view a video in which camp survivors tell their stories. From here, visitors move on to section nine, titled “Responsibility,” which consists of a wall of photographs. Each photo identifies one of the Germans who were tried at Nuremberg for war crimes; the fate of each is stamped in red across his picture.

The final area of the Holocaust Museum stands in sharp contrast to the rest of the displays; it is light, open, and filled with color, predominantly purple. In the center of the room, six lighted, multi-sided display panels ring a map of the world inset into the floor. The map provides data on post-World War II Jewish emigration and details the number of Jews who entered countries around the world. Each side of the lighted panels offers the story of one individual’s immigration experience. Large paintings and photographs provide additional
information about post-war Jewish migration and about the founding of the Jewish state in Israel (Figure 19).

Figure 19

Holocaust Museum: looking into the Post World War II Exhibit

Analysis

The Holocaust Museum presents act two of the drama offered to visitors—enclosure. Here one enters a world that is dominated—literally—by Hitler and progresses through the years of Nazi supremacy. Unlike the other two museums, the Holocaust Museum is organized chronologically rather than thematically. Because of its chronological arrangement, the museum has a clear linear structure. It is evident as one proceeds through the displays that, unlike the
Museum of Jewish Heritage, this museum is narrative driven—there is a story to tell. The Holocaust Museum offers an ideal example of what British museum expert Eilean Hooper-Greenhill calls contemporary museums. In her book *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* she writes, “Ideas are now more important than objects. Now the idea is to tell a specific story” (206). There is an echo of Burke’s emphasis on message rather than medium in contemporary narrative museums. While the Holocaust Museum uses artifacts in its storytelling process, the artifacts are not the central element around which the story is built. Hilde Hein expands on Hooper-Greenhill’s observations, detailing another key element of this museum and all narrative museums; Hein writes that they are increasingly based on “oral histories and experiential recollection” (61). Oral history and the recollection and telling of personal experiences play an important part in the exhibits of the Holocaust Museum. But space, light, color, and exhibit design are used as rhetorical tools to more effectively communicate the story of the museum and to create in visitors the desired emotional response to the combination of oral histories and exhibits.

Control of space plays a key role in shaping visitors’ museum experience and in shaping visitors’ response to the story presented in museum exhibits. Reynolds reminds that “location and argument [. . .] are dramatically linked” (2). Helmers, in her article “Framing the Fine Arts through Rhetoric,” explains the relationship, noting that meaning in the museum comes in large part from the interplay of the spectator and the space in which spectators view exhibits (65). The designers’ manipulation of space, which begins as soon as one enters the museum, is central to enacting the theme of enclosure. Visitors move from the Museum of Jewish Heritage where they were free to wander unhindered through exhibits, to the Holocaust Museum where they are walled in from the time they enter. In the Holocaust Museum, visitors walk an ever-narrowing
path that increasingly crowds people together as it winds through the exhibits. When combined with the down-slope of the ramps, the space creates a tangible sensation of being herded, of being forced along. The crowding is intensified in the railcar. Here, members of tour groups are pressed into the car’s spatial confines to provoke an emotional response by recreating a small portion of the victims’ horrors; visitors share the experience of transported Jews as they are crowded into the car like cattle. Space operates very differently in the Abyss, where it is used to create isolation. While other sections compress and depersonalize groups of visitors, the Abyss forces them to pass through individually, alone and unsupported by the group. This isolation mirrors the individual odyssey of Holocaust victims; hopefully, this causes the museum visitors to grasp the victims as individuals, not merely as group members.

The use of lighting also helps to provoke the desired emotional responses in visitors. Just as the space continually narrows, the lighting in the museum becomes progressively darker. Visitors enter the Holocaust Museum with a window behind them; after they begin their descent, there is no more natural light. Each area is subtly yet discernibly darker than the preceding display. The darkening continues through the Abyss where the only lighting provided comes from rope lights along the floor at both edges of the catwalk. While there is additional light from the glow of the video screens, the Abyss is clearly the darkest segment of the museum. The darkness of the room helps center visitors’ attention on the flame burning ahead of them toward which they walk. It is a cold flame that provides neither light nor comfort; it is not the warm inviting flame of a fireplace, it is the frightening reality of a flaming oven. In their trip through the Abyss, visitors experience the horror of victims on the death marches, the dreadfulness of victims walking toward death in one of the crematoria, and the revulsion of the liberating soldiers as they entered the concentration camps.
In other sections of the museum, light is used to emphasize educational displays. Spotlights are generally used to highlight elements that provide particularly significant information or displays that the designer wishes to emphasize. Special lighting is focused on the model of the Auschwitz gate, accentuating well before the death camp video, the importance of this camp. Similarly, a model of the Warsaw ghetto receives special lighting treatment. While this exhibit does not foreshadow any later displays, the lighting makes the display more prominent and intensifies the educational impact of the display. Another display chosen for special lighting treatment presents articles from U. S. newspapers that show early American knowledge of German extermination policies. The lighting accentuates articles from local Detroit area newspapers, suggesting that locally, in an area visitors might identify with, there was guilt or blame.

Another dramatic use of lighting in the Holocaust museum occurs in the post-World War II exhibit. Here the space is flooded with light, both from expansive artificial lighting and from the spillover of natural light from skylights that illuminate the next museum. Here the light corresponds to the end of the dark days of the war and to the dawn of hope offered with peace. The brightness of the area and the warmth produced by the mixture of natural and artificial lighting presents a radical alternative to the experience of the abyss. It clearly signifies that the future is not to be like the past.

As it was in the Museum of Jewish Heritage, color is used to create and to reinforce visitors’ emotional responses to the museum exhibits. However, in the Holocaust museum, it is lack of color that is initially evident. The first half of the museum derives its color primarily from the green-gray text panels. The neutral walls of the Holocaust Museum provide a bland backdrop for the panels with none of the rich, warm tones that dominate in the Museum of Jewish
Heritage. There are, however, splashes of reds, initially bright in the accents of Nazi armbands and flags, bright like the new blood shed in the Nazi rise to power. In the segment which covers the Nazis’ consolidation of power, the text panels themselves are red, emphasizing the role of violence and bloodshed in the process. In later displays the red changes to a rusty shade, much like dried blood. The color is repeated in the brickwork of the Warsaw ghetto exhibit and again on the exterior of the rail car. Until the Abyss, the museum offers the institutional walls of the system accented with the color of blood. In the Abyss, only black and white are used. To the left the horror of the camps replays in black and white film, to the right, a blank, black wall; to one side death, to the other nothing. The bleakness of the colors when combined with the images of the concentration camps offers no hope to visitors. The use of color changes in the post-World War II section of the museum. Here, walls are subdued shades of blue, signaling a return to a more normal world. There is an interesting use of red here; still signifying bloodshed, red ink indicates those among Nazi leaders who were executed following the Nuremberg trials.

The most dramatic use of color occurs in the post World War II exhibits which chronicle the founding of the nation of Israel and Jewish migration in the post-war years. In this area, vibrant shades of lavender and purple cover walls, floor displays, and display panels. The color reinforces the message of rebirth and renewal repeated in the stories of individuals who survived the camps and those who migrated after the war to start new lives. The color encourages visitors, who leave the Holocaust Museum with a sense of hope and renewal.

The emotional response of visitors to the museum is also significantly influenced by the design of its exhibits. In Holocaust museums in general, and in this museum as well, the most important aspect of the museum’s message is not information dispensing; it is instead, the creation and release of profound feeling in visitors. According to Ralph Applebaum, exhibit
designer of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, museum visits allow designers to control several hours of someone’s time and to set them up for certain experiences (Hein 65). The expectation is that the emotional experience will permit a greater receptivity to and understanding of the message the museum hopes to communicate.

For visitors to the Holocaust Museum, their emotional experience begins the moment they enter. Visitors are immediately confronted by the larger than life picture of Hitler that sets the tone for the displays that follow and clearly evokes an emotional response in visitors. The photograph dominates everything and everyone in the first section of the museum. Not only does it dominate visitors’ view as they walk ahead, it dominates their peripheral vision as they turn to view the display cases they are passing. The photograph placement does not merely control the entrance, the placement makes the picture appear to grow larger and become even more dominant as visitors move into the museum. Since visitors are descending a ramp, they must increasingly look up to see Hitler’s face. The design perfectly captures and communicates the importance of Hitler to all that the museum visitor is about to see.

Within the Holocaust Museum, exhibit design also selectively permits or restricts visitors’ lines of sight as they move through the exhibits. Alternatively allowing or denying visibility ahead intensifies the emotional impact of exhibits. Enabling visitors to see what is ahead increases the seeming inevitability of what is coming. Using blind corners intensifies the shock or horror of what comes next when it is ultimately revealed. This is particularly true of the blind approaches to the rail car and to the Abyss. In both locations the element of surprise, created by the inability to see what lies ahead and to mentally prepare for it, heightens the emotional impact of the exhibits.
The Holocaust Museum fills, however, less than half of the Memorial Center’s museum space. Here, while the Holocaust has been made the center act in the drama, it is not the final act nor is it the final message that the Holocaust Memorial Center has for visitors. In the eyes of Rosenweig, the center’s founder, the Institute of the Righteous with its appeal for tolerance and righteousness is the heart of the message he wants to communicate.

The Institute of the Righteous

Description

The third of the Memorial Center’s museums exists to honor the non-Jews who saved, or attempted to save, at least one Jew despite the danger such an action entailed. The museum begins with a bright ramp, lighted not only by artificial lights overhead, but also by the six pyramid skylights that dominate the exterior. The ramp houses a gallery of photographs of well known and lesser known people memorialized for their righteousness, for their attempts to save Jews. Each picture is accompanied by a chat card that identifies the individual or group and tells the story of their righteous actions. From here, visitors move on to a round theatre where they experience a multi-media presentation on diversity.

The theatre offers no seating, but visitors are encouraged to sit on the floor as they watch the presentation. The theatre has six screens which wrap around the front and sides. Images flash around the viewers in the rapid-fire show about the importance of diversity in the world today. The production is both high-tech and high-style. From the theatre visitors move to the last segment of the museum. The final component of the Institute of the Righteous is a large oval room. Here eight computer kiosks provide visitors the opportunity to participate in an interactive decision-making experience.
Institute of the Righteous: computer kiosks with panel displays in background

 Visitors are presented with scenarios, some Holocaust related and some contemporary; following the presentation they must choose how they would respond in the situation. The computers are linked, allowing individuals to see the choices their friends have made.

 Around the perimeter of the room, text and photo panels are used to present a series of concepts which includes tolerance, compassion, and love (see Figure 20). The selected concepts represent aspects of righteous behavior. Quotations from films or from speeches by famous American and world leaders illustrate each of the concepts or encourage individuals to cultivate
the concept in their relations with others. The center of the room is open and holds several low round tables where visitors can sit and write their impressions of the museum. Visitors can affix their writings to the outside walls of the computer kiosks, leaving them for future museum visitors to read. From here visitors exit the museum spaces. The exit is opposite the Memorial Flame; visitors have come full circle, ending where they began.

Analysis

This museum is the final act of the museum’s drama and the primary message it offers to visitors is release. While it offers physical release from the confinement of the Holocaust Museum, more significantly it offers emotional and spiritual release from intolerance. The most overtly didactic of the three museums, its message is clearly tolerance. Again in this museum, space, light, color, and design are used as tools to persuade the visitor of the importance of the museum’s message.

The use of space in the Institute of the Righteous returns to the open recursiveness found in the Museum of Jewish Heritage. After the gallery ramps, visitors are again unrestricted; they are released from the confines of the Holocaust museum, from the narrow halls and the confining exhibit spaces. The shape of the theatre and the exhibit space communicates softness to visitors; there are no hard edges. The shape also communicates openness—there are no surprises here. The circularity encourages visitors to follow the curve of the walls and to investigate.

Lighting in the Institute of the Righteous provides a dramatic contrast to that in the Holocaust Museum. From the opening ramp lighted by the skylights to the circular main room, there is an abundance of light, meant to convey and reinforce the message of hope and morality.
The light also communicates the purity of those who were willing to risk their lives for others. The main exhibit area is also light, continuing to build on the Institute’s promise of hope.

Color, too, conveys reinforcement for the message of righteousness and tolerance. Two colors dominate this museum. White, a traditional color symbolizing purity, and purple, a color traditionally associated with nobility. In the ramp gallery, both colors are intended to describe the actions and the character of those identified as the righteous. The colors extend into the main exhibit space, where even the tables are purple; the colors provide a continuing reminder that the attributes of character encouraged in the poster displays are both pure and noble. The colors also continue the upbeat feel communicated in the multi-media show. They further provide a subtle reminder of purity and righteousness as visitors engage in the decision-making computer simulation.

Exhibit design in this museum mirrors that of the Museum of Jewish Heritage. Both museums allow visitors total control over their visits. Here guests may choose between following the curve of the wall to the poster exhibits or heading into the computer carrel space. This museum is the most high-tech at the Memorial Center. The multi-media program mixes sound, motion, and images to forcefully convey the message of diversity. This presentation serves as an educative bridge between the portrait gallery of the righteous and the plea for righteousness in the present that is the message of the main exhibit hall.

The main hall uses posters to present definitions of concepts that are necessary components of righteousness. Additional posters highlight examples, usually taken from popular movies, of these core virtues or values. Visitors are led around the sweep of the curving wall through sections that cover tolerance, compassion, and love. There is also a high-tech component to the exhibits—an interactive computer experience that allows visitors to participate by
selecting what they would do, given a range of options, in response to situations of prejudice, discrimination, or violence. The visitor can compare his actions with those of others. The scenarios presented onscreen also provide a conclusion—telling what happened in the situation presented—that allows visitors to identify the consequences of the choices they made. This section of the museum is exactly as Hooper-Greenhill describes contemporary museums, “as active and interactive as possible” (Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge 206). The computer interactivity permits what Helmers describes as inserting viewers into a desired realm of thought (87). The simulations, products of the designers’ imagination, in turn are expected to reproduce imaginative thoughts in the mind of the visitor including assumptions about what is good or bad, about what should be done, what could be done, how, and what the consequences of any act will be. The simulation is intended to create real moments of choice that permit visitors to deliberately exhibit righteousness as a consequence of what they have seen. The hope is that the computer interaction will be viewed not merely as a game, but that the situations presented will engender reflection and action. The predicaments depicted do not make choices easy—there is always a cost for choosing righteous action, but the process is designed to accomplish the same result that Robert Skloot, a Holocaust theatre historian, describes for Holocaust dramas, to help people “revise [their] understanding of themselves by provoking disquieting and continuing inquiries of the most moral kind” (3). Rosenweig describes the exhibit’s purpose as helping individuals to choose to live righteously in the contemporary world (Green).

By returning visitors to the Memorial Flame as they exit the Institute of the Righteous, the visit becomes a completed circle. The revisiting both emphasizes the importance of the Memorial and provides an opportunity for its real appreciation by the newly educated and
enlightened visitors. For some, the return is unnecessary, for they are survivors who do not need to remember because they can never forget. For others, especially younger visitors who had little knowledge of the events that are chronicled in the museum, the second visit to the flame is different from their first. They are indeed in a position to understand the memorial because they now know why it has been created. The convolution of the end with the beginning is also another evidence of the disorientation that the museum seeks to create for visitors. Brought back to where they began they leave, informed, but still not understanding how all that they have seen could have happened.

In the next chapter, I will consider two studies of revision, then explain the taxonomy of change that I used, and finally, catalogue and discuss selected changes observed in the museum.
CHAPTER IV: INVESTIGATING THE REVISIONS

Background

Before discussing revision in the Holocaust Memorial Center, it is appropriate to explore in more detail some of the scholarship that was part of the study of revision during the 1970s and early 1980s. Richard Gebhardt, Bowling Green State University professor and former editor of *College Composition and Communication*, identifies a re-visioning of the activity of revision in his article “Writing Processes, Revision, and Rhetorical Problems: A Note on Three Recent Articles.” In describing the search for broad theory that would accommodate and “unify the linear and non-linear approaches” then in conflict within composition, he identifies and explains an evolving complex conception of revision (295). He further provides an overview of the rich tradition of revision study during the 1970s. Likewise, George Hillocks, in his *Research on Written Composition*, singles out studies conducted during the 1970s and 80s, but he orders his discussion by dividing the body of scholarship into two categories: those that had examined “kinds, numbers, and quality of revisions made by writers,” and those that had attempted to “determine the cognitive processes involved in revision” (39-40). Both Gebhardt’s article and Hillocks’ book identify a core of studies conducted by such composition luminaries as Flower and Hayes, Linda Sommers, Sondra Perl, and Sharon Pianko, while Hillocks also includes a discussion of the 1977 National Assessment of Educational Progress study. Several of the included studies utilized researcher-generated-taxonomies to assess the types of changes or the level of the text under revision As the foundation for my evaluation of revision in the Holocaust Memorial Center, I selected two seminal revision assessments, Linda Sommers’ “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers” and “Analyzing Revision” by
Lester Faigley and Stephen Witte, for further investigation because both contained taxonomies that I hoped might serve in considering the revision of the Holocaust Memorial Center text.

In “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers,” Linda Sommers describes findings from her research conducted over a three year period in the late 1970s. Identifying as a starting point her “dissatisf[faction] with the linear model of writing” and her dissatisfaction with the “lack of attention to the process of revision,” Sommers’ research—beginning from a clear process stance—compares the approaches to revision of two groups differentiated by their experience with the writing process (77). While one of the research groups consisted of freshmen students from Boston University and the University of Oklahoma, the other group was composed of adults who were journalists, academics, and editors. All writers in Sommers’ research groups wrote an explanatory essay, an expressive essay, and a persuasive essay; each essay was rewritten twice. The protocol also called for interviewing each of the writers three times, once following each essay’s final draft. Sommers and her research staff analyzed the completed papers using four revision operations borrowed from Chomsky—addition, deletion, substitution, and reordering (77). Four levels of change—“word, phrase, sentence, [and] theme, (the extended statement of one idea)”—were also considered (77). The counts and resulting analysis allowed Sommers and her staff to construct what she called “an individual scale of concerns,” a personal profile for each writer that described authorial concerns and allowed evaluation of focal consistency for each writer across drafts (77). Her work led her to redefine the revision process as “a sequence of changes in a composition—changes which are initiated by cues and occur continually throughout the writing of a work” (77). Key to Sommers’ definition is her view of revision as a process, not the end stage in a linear model; while she
found revision strategies occurring throughout the writing of both groups, she identifies distinct differences in revisions made by students and those made by more experienced writers.

Sommers’ research shows students to be primarily concerned with revision in a lexical sense, seeing revision as primarily word selection. Sommers describes student writers as blind, having an “inability to ‘see’ revision as a process: the inability to ‘review’ their work again, as it were, with different eyes and to start over” (79). Of particular importance, the research identifies student writers as working with neither a clear sense of audience nor a clear sense of purpose for their papers as they revise. However, Sommers’ research shows quite a different picture of revision undertaken by experienced writers; these individuals crafted their research strategies around two things: their perceived “line of argument” and “a concern for their readership” (82). Sommers describes the experienced writers’ revision process as more holistic and more varied, making use of all identified types of revision at all of the identified levels. While her research findings are useful, Sommers’ taxonomy is not easily adaptable to the museum text. Since the study of revision in the museum does not focus on a written text, the levels of change would be difficult to adapt. While the categories she borrowed from Chomsky could be adapted and would have allowed one way of grouping changes descriptively, this study required a different perspective.

I also examined the study of textual revision by Lester Faigley and Stephen Witte, which is described in the article “Analyzing Revision.” Faigley and Witte create a taxonomy that they describe as “based on two distinctions. The first and more important distinction is between revisions that affect the meaning of the text and those that do not” (401). The second distinction involves a “systematic way of differentiating minor and major changes of meaning” (404). Thus, their classification describes revision changes as “Surface Changes” or “Text-Based Changes”
Surface Changes are those which neither bring new information nor delete information from a text; these are further subdivided into “formal changes [which] include most, but not all, conventional copy-editing operations,” and “Meaning-Preserving Changes, includ[ing] changes that ‘paraphrase’ the concepts in the text but do not alter them” (402-03). Faigley and Witte subclassify text-based changes as either “macrostructural,” changes that “would alter the summary of a text,” or “microstructural,” changes that “would not affect a summary of a text” (405). The named structural concepts are the product of macrostructure theory, the collaborative work of text linguistics scholar Teun van Dijk, and cognitive psychologist Walter Kintsch.

Faigley and Witte, like Sommers, compared the frequencies and types of revision changes made by multiple experimental groups, but Faigley and Witte used three rather than two groups: a group of “inexperienced students,” a group of “advanced students,” and a group of “adult experts” (406). Their protocol utilized a three-day testing format with only one writing sample. Subjects were given a topic and asked to think about it and make notes on day one, to write an essay on day two, and on day three to write a second draft utilizing their draft from day two. Different colors of ink were used each day to allow easy identification and separation of revisions. Revisions, analyzed using the taxonomy Faigley and Witte created, showed differences in revision practices among the three groups of writers. Faigley and Witte’s results were similar to those of Sommers, finding that inexperienced students made more changes, but changes that were primarily at only the surface level. The results indicated that student writers very rarely made revisions that generated additional content or altered the meaning of their compositions, unlike the revisions undertaken by adult experts.

As with Sommers’ research, the taxonomy developed and described by Faigley and Witte did not seem to fit the circumstances of my study. Their emphasis, too, was on written text
produced within an experimental setting. It would have been possible to utilize the surface change/text-base change continuum in assessing museum changes, but again this did not seem to offer adequate distinctions because the museum-as-text is multi-faceted.

While both of these studies offered results that help inform the conclusions I will draw, neither offered a taxonomy that could be used to categorize the changes identified in the Holocaust Memorial Center as text. In part, this is because both Sommers’ research and Faigley and Witte’s project involved written text, while museums involve not only written text, but also artifacts, exhibit design, and architecture which play a part in the museum’s revision; the multiple voices of museum text call for a different strategy. Second, and more important, the taxonomies offered from Sommers’ and Faigley and Witte’s composition research focused on the process of revision and involved a comparison between different groups of writers; this project focuses on the product of revision and contains no comparative element. However, the taxonomies of Sommers, and Faigley and Witte provided a valuable beginning point: first, for preliminary sorting of the observed changes in the museum and second, in helping to craft a taxonomy that would allow categorization of observed changes in the museum by their function, that is, what each change accomplishes for the new museum-as-text.

Creating a Taxonomy

An initial point of departure in creating the taxonomy for this study was an investigation of changes identified by museum theorists as those that any museum might be expected to make, since it is my intention to create a classification system that is not limited to describing change in only one genre of museum or in only one specific museum. This led to the creation of six categories that describe museum changes by their function or their purpose for a museum-as-text.
The complete instrument includes categories describing types of changes that are not discussed in the research findings; this is not because these types of changes did not occur in the museum. All six types of change can be identified among the changes in the Holocaust Memorial Center, but the need to limit the large amount of material discovered caused me to limit my discussion to fewer categories. I have, however, described all of the categories in the taxonomy first, because they may prove helpful to other researchers who want to consider museum change and also because I wanted to create a taxonomy that was useful for analysis of more than one specific museum or one type of museum.

The first category, cosmetic change, includes changes which do not impact a museum’s ultimate message. Instead, they are changes that keep content intact but make that content more appealing to visitors—for example the substitution of one artifact for another. Replacement of an object on display with a like item that is in better condition would constitute a cosmetic change. While artifact substitution may create a better impression on visitors, the exchange does not alter the message or the intent of the museum display. Meaning remains static because the overall display content remains essentially unchanged. This type of change also includes changes in chat card text that neither add nor delete information, but simply paraphrase or restate the existing text. Although none of the changes that I will discuss are cosmetic, I did identify numerous cosmetic changes that occurred in the Holocaust Memorial Center.

The second category that suggested itself is corrective change. This type of change includes any change in text, artifacts, or displays intended to bring content more into line with current historical knowledge or currently accepted interpretation of a museum’s content. This category also includes changes that correct errors in museum displays or texts, such as an incorrect date. Because museum displays are increasing created by outside design firms which do not always
include individuals with expertise in a particular museum’s subject matter, it is not unusual to find text which may require revision or modification for historical accuracy. Usually such changes are caught before a display is opened to the public, but one might still expect to find corrective change in museums over time because culturally accepted interpretations of historical events change. Since museum texts are culturally situated, they remain responsive to cultural sensitivity about historic events as, for example, the recent controversy over the Smithsonian’s exhibition of the Enola Gay.

The third category in the taxonomy details constructive change, or those changes which are made either with the intention of creating additional audience identification with the museums’ content or with the intent of providing an additional experience for museum visitors. One type of constructive change involves changing the interactivity of exhibits—especially making a non-interactive exhibit interactive—for interactivity enhances visitors’ identification with the content they are encountering. Hein and Hooper-Greenhill both speak of the link between interactivity and identification. Creating experiential exhibits for museum goers is another example of constructive change. Experiential exhibits can be exemplified by “The Blitz Experience” at Britain’s Imperial War Museum. In this exhibit, groups of twenty people are ushered by “wardens” into a “shelter” to share through simulation Londoners’ experiences during World War II bombing raids. An audio tape provides the sounds of muffled explosions, babies crying, and people singing to encourage themselves and one another. The shelter shakes in response to a “nearby” explosion. Every effort is made to replicate the actual event as experienced by those living in London during the war. The intent of experience exhibits is to generate added emotional involvement in visitors and thus to create in them additional connection to the story the museum is trying to tell.
The fourth category in the taxonomy is contextual change, which I define as a revision which changes the museum’s context or which reframes museum content in any manner. Reframing can be accomplished by creating a frame where none previously existed; it may also be created by altering the prior framing, whether of a single exhibit or of an entire museum. Since context is essential to the perception of meaning, reframing the museum or its exhibits can significantly alter the meaning that visitors create from their experience (Helmers 65).

The fifth category is confrontational change. This type of change or revision is intended to create a direct confrontation between visitors or potential visitors and the museum or any of its exhibits. This type of change can be achieved using architecture, exhibit design, or manipulation of space, but the expected product of the revision is a direct clash between the museum and its audience.

The final category is competitive change. This category encompasses changes which are made for the purpose of enhancing or securing the museum’s status vis-à-vis other museums of the same type. Such changes might include duplicating one or more popular displays found at competing institutions or adding an exhibit that has come to be expected in Holocaust museums. (Examples of such tropes would include models of concentration camp gates, railcars used to transport Jews to concentration camps, or displays of shoes and/or luggage left behind by victims who perished in concentration camps.) This category is essential, because competition among museums for visitors as well as for status within the museum community is a significant element of contemporary museum existence.
Identifying Changes in the Museum

A primary task in the research was to identify as many changes as possible between the newly opened museum and the museum in its former location. This was accomplished in several ways. First, I compared photographs of the former museum and of the new museum. Using archival photographs of the former location, I was able to identify elements that had been added to or deleted from displays. Other photographs permitted a comparison of the current and former building exteriors. I also used past visitor’s guides that gave details of certain displays to the current displays (if an identically named display still existed). Other changes were identified as the result of reading newspaper articles about the museum’s new facility. Several articles focused on changes incorporated into the new museum and specifically identified such changes. I also obtained a videotape of a guided tour through the old museum site which was very helpful.

While data was not systematically gathered using interviews, another source of changes came from museum docents. During guided tours, several guides regularly compared former and current museum displays, identifying changes, as part of their commentary to visitors. As a participant in guided tours on many of my research visits to the museum, I was able to add to my list of changes through these commentaries. From these various sources, it was possible to create a list of numerous changes/revisions that had taken place in the museum.

Because of the number of alterations identified, it became necessary to limit my focus to only a select portion of the changes. To select a group of revisions for consideration in this study, I decided to use elements of both the Sommers, and Faigley and Witte taxonomies to create a screening device. As the primary screen, only changes that Sommers would have called either additions or substitutions were considered for potential inclusion in the study. While this was an arbitrary choice on my part, I made this decision because the majority of the identified changes
fell into these two categories, and I felt that these two types of changes could and would produce
significant alterations in the museum-as-text. In a subsequent screening, using Faigley and
Witte’s definition of macrostructure changes, I narrowed the revisions further by eliminating any
addition or substitution that could not be placed in their category of macrostructural change.
While this decision, too, was an arbitrary one, I wanted to narrow my focus to changes that were,
in Faigley and Witte’s terms, “a major revision” of the museum-as text that “would alter the
summary of a text” (404). From the changes that remained I selected nine revisions—all
additions or substitutions that Faigley and Witte would have called macrostructural changes—to
consider using the taxonomy I had constructed. The selected changes are listed below.

1) the new museum site.
2) the addition of the Museum of Jewish Heritage
3) the addition of the Institute of the Righteous
4) the addition of educational and conference space
5) the addition of the “Abyss” exhibit
6) the addition of the multi-media diversity program
7) the architectural style of the new building
8) the significant increase in library space
9) the addition of the railcar exhibit

In the next section I will describe and classify each of the selected changes, describing the
consequences of each for the museum-as-text.
A Description and Classification of Selected Revisions in the Museum-as-Text

The nine museum revisions listed above can be described using only four of the taxonomy categories: items one through three exemplify contextual changes; I consider items four through six to be constructive changes; item seven is a confrontational change; and items eight and nine are competitive changes. Table 1 offers the distribution of changes by category. In this section, I will consider the changes individually, in the same order that they appear above.

Table 1
Number of Revisions by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cosmetic Changes</th>
<th>Corrective Changes</th>
<th>Constructive Changes</th>
<th>Contextual Changes</th>
<th>Confrontational Changes</th>
<th>Competitive Changes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I considered three major revisions in the museum-as-text to be constructive changes. Each of these changes expands the audience’s identification with or responsiveness to the museum or provides an experiential element to a museum visit.

Constructive Changes

The first of the constructive changes, the addition of classroom space, may not immediately appear to add to visitors’ experiences in the museum, but the new classrooms provide a quiet venue for what many visitors identify as the ultimate Holocaust Center experience—listening to the story of a Holocaust survivor. While videotapes and recorded stories are used throughout the museum and provide valuable information, nothing can compare to
personal interaction with a living survivor, the opportunity afforded to all guided tours. The classrooms were added with this purpose in mind. By providing a location away from ambient museum traffic and separated from incidental staff hallway discussions, the classrooms offer a location where visitors can share the experiences of one who was part of the history the museum offers. According to museum staff, for many visitors, this personal element connects them to the events more than any exhibit they have seen. Affording the opportunity to interact with the speaker—to ask questions, or to handle a carefully saved memento brought to share with the audience—also affords the opportunity for the growth of emotional connection. In the Holocaust Museum, the story told is that of the group, the many; in these survivor presentation experiences, the Holocaust story becomes the story of an individual. What was impersonal (perhaps because the group lacked a face) is personalized, focused in the face and the sufferings of the survivor who shares his or her ordeal with visitors. By creating the venue in which a live encounter can successfully take place, the addition of classroom space functions as a constructive change.

A second constructive change is the creation of the center-piece display the Abyss. This addition is classified as a constructive change because it provides an exhibit to be experienced, not a display to be visited. I consider the Abyss to be a constructive change because it imaginatively engages visitors on multiple sensory levels to recreate the horror of the concentration camp experience. Darkness, multiple video screens spewing grotesque images of camps and camp victims, and isolation as visitors move along the narrow catwalk all heighten the horror of the flame toward which visitors are inexorably moving. The exhibit viscerally impacts visitors; I have seen teens that have noisily jostled for place and wisecracked with friends at previous displays brought to silence by the Abyss. The power of the exhibit is so great that some visitors feel the need to exit the museum at its end; emotionally drained, they are
unable to experience anything more. The designers, foreseeing such responses, have hidden a door at the end of the Abyss that returns visitors to the lobby near the memorial flame. The design and creation of the Abyss qualifies as a constructive change because of the unusual experience it generates for visitors, an experience that substantially heightens their emotional identification with the museum story.

The final constructive change to be discussed, the addition of the multi-media presentation on diversity which is an element of the Institute of the Righteous, provides another multi-media experience for visitors. This experience, however, could not be more different than that of the Abyss. Although the light in the round theatre is subdued, the experience of the presentation is upbeat and encouraging. A variety of young adults and teens are featured in the fast moving twelve-minute multi-media production that is reminiscent of MTV to present a message of the diversity that exists in America and its value for contemporary society. The visual images pulsate, from one of the six screen sections to another, at other times filling the full viewing area. The artful special effects keep audiences watching. The presentation boasts background music with a beat—particularly appealing to teen visitors. In all, the intent of the exhibit is to provide an experience that will connect visitors with the message—an experience that will make those present see the message offered as one relevant to their lives. Its purpose is to encourage individuals to help create a more tolerant world (Crum and Provenzano 6).

**Contextual Changes**

A second group of revisions were contextual, reframing the museum or its contents in ways that significantly impacted meaning. The first of these revisions to be considered is the new location of the museum. The choice to move to a site that was no longer part of the Jewish
Community Center campus marks a major alteration for the Holocaust Memorial Center. The selection of the new location, a clear contextual revision for the museum, generated much discussion, within the museum committee and within the community. Removing the museum from the Jewish Community Center campus and relocating to the general community in a mainstream location serves to secularize the Holocaust Center. The new location reframes the museum making it more community-centered not merely Jewish-Community-centered. By relocating, the museum, while not dropping its Jewish identity, reframes its identity as a part of the total community. No longer framed by other Jewish agencies in a location with a primarily Jewish focus, the museum now sits among banks, restaurants, and gas stations, clearly within the population at large. The new location opens the facility to a broader audience. Since the site is now on one of the most heavily traveled thoroughfares in the community, the new location gives the museum a much higher profile and invites visits by passers-by. Also, the new location recontextualizes the Holocaust and remembrance, boldly asserting that the Holocaust is not merely Jewish history, but community history; and that remembering is a community responsibility, not merely a Jewish obligation. The new location further reframes the importance of the museum’s message. Making the museum less obscure carries an implied message to the community that the museum and its content deserve everyone’s attention.

The second contextual change is the addition of the Museum of European Jewish Heritage. This change creates a framework for the Holocaust Museum within the Memorial Center. By providing a snapshot of European Jewish culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the new museum connects the Holocaust to preceding history; the Holocaust no longer stands alone. The addition of this introductory museum enriches the narrative which follows; the horror of Nazi actions and the consequences of those actions for the Jews are
intensified when contextualized. Also, by creating an introduction to the Holocaust Museum, the Holocaust is no longer the sole story of the Memorial Center. Recontextualizing creates an altered significance for the story of the Holocaust; it is no longer the only episode of Jewish history presented. The Holocaust becomes a part of a larger story. Reframing thus subtly shifts the emphasis of museum content. Giving the visitor a more complete story by presenting more background information changes not only visitors’ understanding of the primary text narrative, but also visitors’ response to the narrative. Robert Dillon, a professor of history at Lancaster University in Great Britain, would agree that by imbedding the Holocaust in a broader Jewish history, the museum reshapes “cultural expectations and a society’s perception of the present through the past” (6). Adding the framing of the new museum adds a complexity and richness to all of the historic information that the Holocaust Center presents.

The third contextual change is closely related to the second. This change is the addition of the Institute of the Righteous as a third museum space. With the addition of this museum, the Holocaust Museum is packaged with a conclusion as well as an introduction—there is the ability to bring a closure to the story of the Holocaust Museum that resides not in despair, but in hope. This addition, too, helps to reframe the Holocaust as only one act in the history of the European Jews. It does not diminish the horror of the Holocaust, but goes beyond the Holocaust to celebrate the life of the Jewish community that survives the war. It further celebrates the lives of the individuals who risked all to help individual Jews survive. The reframing goes beyond celebration, however. This revision permits introducing an additional purpose to the museum text—an attempt to shape the present and the future. Efforts to restructure vision are not uncommon in contemporary museums. Hein states that “museums are no longer seen as sites that passively preserve and exhibit. [. . .] They are active shapers and indeed creators of value” (xii).
She continues, “Museums are rightly perceived as world makers” (16). Dillon would agree that museums impact how audiences define “the past in order to make sense of an increasingly impersonal present” (11). By offering models of righteous behavior that can be emulated, the Institute of the Righteous is intended to provide direction for visitors who leave the Holocaust museum vowing that what they have just seen must never happen again. The Institute serves as a new frame that extends the story of the museum; it no longer ends with the actions of those who assisted the Jews during the war. The call to righteous action has been extended into the present, and museum visitors are encouraged to be today’s righteous.

Confrontational Changes

Although there is only a single change in the category of confrontational change, the next to be considered, this revision represents perhaps the most significant individual alteration made: the radical architectural difference between the old and new building exteriors. In its prior incarnation, the Holocaust Memorial Center existed in a very ordinary brick structure, the front of which could have easily been mistaken for an elementary school. The building matched the architecture of its surroundings on the Applebaum Jewish Community Campus in West Bloomfield. Substantially smaller than the current museum, the building fulfilled the founder’s vision for the museum at that time. Once a new location for the museum had been selected, the architectural firm of Neumann Smith & Associates was selected for the project. The first architectural drawings offered a building that in no way identified its content; the exterior could easily have housed any business or local agency. Rabbi Rosenweig rejected the initial plans, stating, “It is a beautiful building, but it was not a Holocaust center” (Wieland 4). He specifically requested a building that would be “in people’s face”. His intent, according to a Lansing State
Journal article by Barbara Wieland is to have “the outside reflect the inside” (4). Sarah Lyall further quotes Rosenweig in her New York Times article “In Suburbs, Reminder of Horror,” as saying “We want to incite people to come here” (2). Rosenweig’s choice of verb indicates the confrontation that he intends between the building and those who see it, whether visitors or passers-by. Gavriel Rosenfeld considers the building the most confrontational architecture found in any United States Holocaust museum. Both Rosenweig’s comments and Rosenfeld’s assertions make me secure in categorizing the new architecture as a confrontational change.

Competitive Changes

There are two revisions that I consider competitive changes, that is, changes made to match elements of other Holocaust museums or to position the museum favorably when compared to other Holocaust museums. The first competitive change is the significant increase in library space, which enhances the Holocaust Memorial Center’s position as a venue for research. In the prior location, the lack of library space meant a large portion of the museum’s library holdings remained in storage boxes inaccessible to anyone who wished to do research utilizing the Center’s holdings. Furthermore, the small space offered room for only one person at a time in the stacks (Edgar 3). When compared to the facilities available at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., or the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, the Holocaust Memorial Center appeared woefully inadequate as a research site. The new Memorial Center building addressed this issue and now offers library space that is nearly seven times larger than that in the previous location (Green 4). The new library is bright, with a full wall of windows, providing excellent light for researchers. Rows of tables are available, allowing adequate space for spreading out work projects. Ready access to electrical outlets makes the
space computer-friendly for those scholars who wish to utilize a laptop. The increased space means all of the library’s holdings are now on display in a section of stacks, and in addition, the library contains adequate secure storage for valuable or rare books and artifacts. The Holocaust Center actively encourages both novice and professional researchers to employ the collections. The Center’s professional library staff is experienced and willing to assist researchers in any way possible. The revised allotment of library space was undertaken not only to assist those who use the museum for research, but also to enrich the reputation of the museum as a research site. I believe that this particular change stems from a revision of the museum’s purpose in the twenty-first century, a reconception that significantly expands the museum’s educative role.

The final competitive change is the creation of a replica cattle car in a section of displays that details the transportation aspects of the deportation process through which Jews were moved from Germany and German controlled territories to concentration camps and death camps. The creation of an actual rail car replica was not part of the initial revision plan. The original concept called for an area of wide wooden planks set into the carpeting. The dimensions of the plank area were to be identical to the size of the freight cars used for transportation of Jews. The ceiling was arched in the area over the plank flooring, and it was assumed that visitors would have some sense of the deportation experience. However, several major Holocaust museums have actual rail cars that were once used in the deportation process or period rail cars like those used to transport Jews. The British Imperial War Museum has an actual car, as does the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.; the Holocaust Museum in Richmond, Virginia, has recently added a period car; and the Los Angeles Holocaust Museum exhibits a railcar. Rather than be a Holocaust museum without a railcar, the Holocaust Memorial Center has between March 26 and April 11, 2005 installed a replica of a cattle car. A car body was built to surround
the wooden plank floor. The car interior has been given wooden wall covering and a wooden ceiling to make it look more like actual European period rolling stock (see figure 20).

Figure 21

photos by Mona Dunckel

The Holocaust Museum: rail car exhibit
Left photo shows exhibit March 27, right photo shows same exhibit area April 11

It appears that rather than be left behind, the Holocaust Memorial Center has created a replica of a railcar—what has come to serve as a “must-have” exhibit in Holocaust Museums. I believe that the intention of this revision was solely to maintain parity with other “competing” museums, which makes the inclusion of the railcar replica clearly a competitive change.
Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided more explanation of the revision research foundation for my study. I have also detailed the taxonomy I created and the methods I used for identifying changes in the museum. I also provided classification of, description of and explanation for a set of selected revisions of the museum-as-text in the Holocaust Memorial Center. The next chapter will detail conclusions I have drawn from my research, explain limitations of the research, and offer suggestions for additional research regarding change/revision in museums texts.
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study has sought to examine The Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills, Michigan, as a rhetorical text, and to identify, classify, and examine the recent revisions of the museum-as-text that occurred with its relocation and expansion. To that end, Chapter Two offered a description and rhetorical reading of the exterior of the museum, while Chapter Three offered a description and rhetorical reading of the museum’s interior. In Chapter Four I offered a classification and explanation, based on a taxonomy created for this study of selected observed changes in the Holocaust Memorial Center. In this chapter I will present and examine the conclusions generated by this study, consider the limitations of this study, and offer implications for further research.

General Research Conclusions

Examining the differences between the initial text of the Holocaust Memorial Center and its new incarnation which opened in 2004 led me to a number of general conclusions about revision in museum texts based on this example.

1) Revision does indeed take place in Holocaust museums.

2) The revisions that take place are the result of the same concerns that, according to Sommers, drive the text revisions of experienced writers: the intended message of the text and the intended audience.

3) The revision that takes place in Holocaust museums includes all of the change operations identified by Sommers and occurs at both microstructural and macrostructural levels as defined by Faigley and Witte.
4) Revision in Holocaust museums is an ongoing process, just as revision is an ongoing process in the work of experienced writers, and the process may continue after the “completion” of the new text.

My first general conclusion is that revision does indeed take place in the texts that are museums. Examples of revision were evident in all elements of this museum. From the architecture of the new building to the substantially altered exhibit structure, there seems to have been no area of the museum that did not undergo revision. One evidence of the revision is the radical, confrontational exterior, typical of recent Holocaust museum architecture, operating as what philosopher Andrew Benjamin calls “an architecture of remembrance,” something he considers essential, because “after all, it is architecture that conserves” (103). The building exterior has been transformed to successfully accomplish one of the most difficult tasks that Holocaust museums attempt, the construction of the historical in the present—the creation of a bridge that crosses temporal and cultural divides linking what was to the experience of new generations, countering their ignorance and helping them to remember an event that they have never known. The confrontation can further be considered an act of resistance—an aggressive statement of what was in order to resist both the natural human tendency to forget over time and Holocaust deniers—those who still contend that the Holocaust never took place. Further evidence of revision is found in the reframing of the Holocaust narrative the museum offers, making it no longer a stand-alone story, but the center of a fuller and richer account that now includes an introduction and conclusion. There is revision, too, in the exhibits; the Memorial Flame area has been transformed using now standard tropes of memorialization—polished black marble bearing names to be remembered and a guarding, eternal flame.
My second conclusion is that the same general concerns drive revision in both the work of experienced writers and in museums. The first of these concerns, the intended message of the text develops as the experienced writers question, “What does my essay as a whole need for form, balance, rhythm, or communication?” (Sommers 84). The ability to focus on the “big picture,” to explore how a text as a whole works is, according to Sommers, a key element of revisions undertaken by experienced writers. Similarly, the ability to see how the individual elements of the museum will interact to create the intended message is a key element in the revision of the museum-as-text. During revision multiple options are explored while trying to create a text which will successfully present the intended argument. In museum revision as in revision work by experienced writers, the ability to review as part of the decision-making process is a crucial skill. There is a second key concern that drives the revision work of experienced writers that is also evident in revision in the museum text—a concern for audience. Both Faigley and Witte, and Sommers indicate the importance of the audience in the thinking of experienced writers as they revise their texts. Sommers talks of the experienced writers’ conception of audience as providing “just what the students lacked: new eyes to ‘review’ their work” (82). Faigley and Witte identify “the writer’s familiarity with the audience” as a key variable that experienced writers use to shape their text and make the revisions that “bring a text closer to fitting the demands of the situation” (411). This same concern for audience proved to be the driving force behind specific changes made in the Holocaust Memorial Center. An analysis of visitor statistics showed that a high percentage of the museum’s visitors are non-Jewish middle school and high school students (Edgar 3). This demographic became the target audience that informed much of the decision making in the museum revision process. The intentional focus on an identified audience displayed by exhibit designers in the new museum spaces appears very
similar to the audience awareness that experienced writers exhibited in both Sommers, and Faigley and Witte’s investigations of revision.

A third general conclusion, that all of the change operations identified by Sommers and both levels—macrostructural and microstructural change—identified by Faigley and Witte occur in museum revision, is not surprising. The four change processes—addition, deletion, substitution, and reordering—are not unique to text revisions. They are the same processes of alteration that occur consistently in everyday life. I have no raisins, so I substitute another dried fruit in a recipe; family members are allergic to nuts, so I delete them from my recipe; examples could be endless. Since these processes are the elements of all changes, I could expect to find them in museum revision, and indeed I did find them all in the new museum-as-text. Deletion of some previously-displayed artifacts, addition of new displays or a new mode of presentation, substitution of one artifact or example for another, and reordering the path of visitors’ journey through the museum were all identified. Likewise, among identified changes are examples of both microstructural and macrostructural revisions in the museum. Based on this limited research, I would contend that there is no difference in the types of revisions made in written text and museum-as-text. Just as the same concerns drive the revision process of experienced writers and of the museum revisers, they make use of the same basic elements of revision to accomplish their desired ends. It appears that revision of written text and revision of museums-as-text not only share the same focal concerns but also share the same tools.

A fourth general conclusion is that just as revision is an ongoing process in a written text, revision in the museum is an ongoing process as well. Sommers quotes one of her research subjects as saying, “It is a matter of looking at the kernel, [. . .] the content, and then thinking about it, responding to it, making decisions, and then actually restructuring it” (81). Another
subject states, “I am constantly chiseling and changing” (81). This same continuing process of refinement is evident in the revisions that occurred in the museum. I consider the ongoing “tweaking” of exhibits described by Rosenweig in a Detroit Free Press article to be the chiseling and restructuring of ongoing revision. One proof of ongoing revision in the museum is the creation of a replica of a cattle car to replace the suggestion of a railcar created using a section of wood-plank flooring and low arched beams over the planks. After observing and evaluating visitors’ responses, it was obvious that merely suggesting the cattle car did not really create the desired effect. Almost a year after the museum opened a major constructive revision took place creating a replica of a cattle car used to transport Jews to concentration camps. The museum staff and the exhibit designer looked hard at the exhibit content and the intent of the display, responded to perceived shortcomings in the original plan, and restructured the exhibit following almost exactly the activities described by an experienced writer when talking of his personal revision strategy. However, despite these substantial similarities, revision of text and museums is not identical.

In considering the revision of the Holocaust museum-as-text, there seem to be one unique aspect to revisions of this type of text; the author and the reviser are not necessarily the same person in museum revision. Although in the case of the Holocaust Memorial Center the founder of the museum personally directed the revision, in other museums this will not always be so. Once the individual or group that founded a museum is gone, revisions will be made by someone other than the original author; this opens the door for revision activity that may change the original author’s intent. I think that this issue is of particular significance for Holocaust museums because, over time, there will no longer be Holocaust survivors to “sign off” on revisions. Changes in Holocaust museums will increasingly be made by individuals who did not actually
experience the chronicled events; because these are narrative museums, revision without survivor
input can (and I believe will) over time subtly change the story that a museum communicates.
Anyone who has worked with an editor knows the experience of editorial changes suggested or
actually made in a text that erase some nuance of the originally intended meaning. In the same
way, those who have merely studied the events of the Holocaust, no matter how rich their
knowledge of history, cannot recreate fully that which they have not experienced. Knowledge
without experience always carries the risk of hollowness—recreating the shell of the experience
but lacking its emotional richness. Also, since most museum displays are today created by
professional design firms, there is a significant likelihood that a different firm or at least a
different designer will create the revised museum–as-text. This, too, opens the door for slight
shifts in the narrative presented since each designer tells a slightly different story of the
Holocaust through the process of selection and arrangement of artifacts and text. While I think
this unique element of revision and my other general conclusions are true for all Holocaust
museums, some of my conclusions relate only to the Holocaust Memorial Center, the focus of
this study.

Specific Conclusions Related to the Holocaust Memorial Center

The data I collected led me not only to general research conclusions about change in
Holocaust museums, but also to several specific conclusions that are unique to the Holocaust
Memorial Center. These are listed below.

1) The change process at the Holocaust Memorial Center represents a special kind of
museum revision—one in which the “author” actually directs the revision.
2) The changes observed in the Holocaust Memorial Center, although dramatic, are consistent with patterns of change observed in drama and art, where temporal distance from the Holocaust has brought less symbolism and more realism to representation.

3) The Holocaust Memorial Center used its revision to refocus the museum priorities, making education primary but retaining a strong emphasis on memorialization.

4) The shift in museum priorities also reconfigures the museum’s rhetorical purpose—making it primarily deliberative rather than epideictic.

Although author and reviser are not always the same people in revisions of Holocaust museums, one distinctive element of the revision of the Holocaust Memorial Center is that there, the revision was directed by the man whose vision shaped the original museum. I think that this “single-vision” revision process will not prove to be the norm for most Holocaust Museums. Only smaller private museums are likely to have a founding director who remains in control long enough for the museum, in its lifecycle, to require expansion or undergo significant alteration. Large national museums or other museums which are the product of government policy or funding will probably see a progression of directors rather than a single individual who both begins a museum and sustains it over twenty or more years.

Another conclusion regarding the revisions at this particular museum is that although the observable changes are dramatic, they are consistent with the pattern of change observed in architecture, and particularly in Holocaust drama. In these fields, the representation of the Holocaust has become less symbolic and more realistic with temporal distance from the Holocaust. John Sebestyen notes this shift in Holocaust drama over the last forty years, and Gavriel Rosenfeld documents a similar pattern of development in architecture. Therefore it should not be unexpected that the museum’s revision replicates elements of the shift toward
realism. I believe that the realistic revisions are, in part, an assertive step taken by aging Holocaust survivors to insure that what occurred will not be forgotten. I think that the realism is also linked to the new “third generation” audience with less knowledge of history and the horror of the Holocaust. When there is no shared background knowledge, symbolism is lost on the viewer; only realism can convey the necessary message. Finally, I think that this realism is in part because the museum, as a totally privately funded institution, had more freedom to take a more realistic and confrontational approach. Unfettered by limitations that always accompany governmental funding, the museum was free to search for a more dramatic approach that might have been unacceptable with formal sponsorship. The museum was free to find the strategy that allowed it to powerfully convey the historical reality of the Holocaust experience in a way that engages and instructs a new generation.

My third conclusion regarding the Holocaust Memorial Center is that its revision provided the opportunity for the museum to undertake what Welch describes as an opportunity that revision affords—“redirection and change in sense of self and [. . . its] role in the world” (35). I believe that the revised Holocaust Memorial Center exemplifies a reconfiguration of the museum’s identified purposes, making the museum more educational yet striving to maintain a strong emphasis on its memorial function.

Finally, I believe that the refocusing of the museum’s priorities also reconfigures the museum’s rhetorical purpose, making it primarily deliberative rather than epideictic. I was lead to this conclusion by Alan Gross’s article “Presence as Argument in the Public Sphere,” published as I was finishing my writing in Rhetoric Society Quarterly, in which he discusses the purpose of an Austrian exhibit commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the country’s Nazi takeover. His conclusion that the exhibit was primarily epideictic, not deliberative, led
me to consider the revised message of the Holocaust Memorial Center using the same lens. It is clear when evaluating the revised museum-as-text that while it retains a strong component of epideictic rhetoric, the primary function of the new museum-text is deliberative. Its intent is to investigate, to stimulate questions and discussion about the events the museum presents and the government policies that could have produced them. Since the museum is not afraid to raise questions about the responses of the United States and the other allies to the events that were chronicled in their newspapers, I consider it to be a clearly deliberative text.

Limitations of the Study

No single study can provide all possible information regarding the subject it investigates. No study is complete; there will always be identifiable limitation. I believe that there are three primary limitations to my investigation of revision in Holocaust museums.

First, this study included only one type of Holocaust museum; it investigated only a private institution. This means that site-museums (such as the museums at Auschwitz and Dachau) and national or nationally-subsidized museums (such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum or the Permanent Holocaust Exhibit at Britain’s Imperial War Museum) were not considered. It is probable that revision will differ in different types of museums. Differing expectations about the functions of site museums or national museums might substantially alter the process of revision. Likewise, issues regarding funding might impact revision of national museums or site museums. Revision of a museum-as-text can be an expensive proposition and may influence the likelihood of revisions in other museums. While this study does not consider all three types of Holocaust museums, it does provide a baseline revision study that could be replicated in other types of museums.
A second limitation of this study is that it considers only one Holocaust museum; there is no comparative element to the study. However, given the number of Holocaust museums in the world, it was necessary to limit the study. To attempt to collect revision data on all Holocaust museums, even if the study were limited to only one type of museum would have generated an overwhelming quantity of data. The availability of a significant Holocaust museum nearby that was completing a major revision process made the selection of that single museum reasonable as a pilot study. The study can be replicated to include a larger number of museums and to generate comparative data.

A final limitation of this study is that it was done “after the fact,” that is after rather than during the revision process. I see two real benefits to having been able to investigate the museum revision as it occurred. One benefit would have been more opportunity for detailed examination of all elements of the museum both before and after revision. This might have made possible the identification of more subtle changes that I was unable to observe. A second benefit of undergoing an investigation of revision as it occurred in the museum would have been the opportunity to consider the revision process itself. While I am able to make some comments on process based on what I have read or have been told, observing the revision process in operation might have yielded valuable insights to additional similarities or differences in revision of texts and revision of museum-as-text. However, timely completion of this project required working with a newly completed rather than an in-process museum revision. Again, I believe that while additional information may have been generated by working with an ongoing revision, the study as completed will be a valuable base for future studies of museum revision in progress.
Implications for Future Research

I believe that this study of revision in a single Holocaust museum suggests several directions for additional research. One such direction is the replication of this study in another Holocaust museum that has undergone or in undergoing significant change. One candidate for such a replication would be the Candles Museum in Indiana that serves as a memorial to the children killed in the Holocaust. The museum has recently reopened after extensive renovations following an arsonist’s attack on the original museum. Because the damage to the original museum was extensive, there was opportunity for this museum to have undergone significant revision during the rebuilding process. The museum would make an interesting complement to the Holocaust Memorial Center as the subject of research, for the impetus for change in each museum was different. The Holocaust Memorial Center offers an example of internally motivated change and expansion, while the Candles Museum’s change was more externally motivated, as a necessity following the arson. This would offer the opportunity to examine differences in the change process which might exist because of the internal versus external motivation for change.

A second area for exploration that this study suggests is a similar study of change at the other two types of Holocaust museums: site museums and national museums. The differing political and social expectations for each type of museum have the potential to produce substantially different change processes and products in each type of museum. Of particular interest might be the investigation of revision in a site museum such as Auschwitz following the breakup of the Soviet Bloc. Politically motivated revision of text and displays is a very probable side effect of the end of Soviet control and the expansion of Polish nationalism, and to date no study has considered changes which took place with changing political regimes.
Rhetorical analysis of museum text is another area that might be profitable. While this study did not investigate changes in chat card text or display panel text, an investigation of written text within the museum, perhaps using narrative theory as a lens seems to be an area that warrants additional research.

This study also suggests investigation of changes in non-Holocaust museums. The process and products of change may not be similar. A comparative study of two or more types of museums would seem to be a particularly fruitful consideration. Investigation of revision in additional museums would help to validate the assumptions regarding museum change reached in this study. Additionally, information about dissimilarities could help expand the general knowledge base about museum revision.

An additional area that seems to warrant additional research is the area of museum display practices and their impact. Museums must appeal to increasingly diverse audiences that are less familiar with history; these same audiences are also increasingly more interested in experiences. These two factors often fuel an increasing tendency of modern narrative museums to manufacture “artifacts” when necessary in order to tell the desired story (Hein 61). But does the use of fabricated artifacts present history that is in some way tainted? Do replications raise questions regarding the authenticity of other artifacts? More significant for Holocaust museums, does the practice of creating artifacts offer fuel to the claims of Holocaust deniers? Replication of artifacts seems to invite the argument that there were no “real” objects, so items had to be created to support a story that was also fabricated. Such questions do fall within the realm of the rhetorical consideration of a museum-as-text, for rhetorical analysis includes not only examination of the text’s intent but also demands scrutiny of the consequences of the text. They also seem to be cogent research questions for those who study ethics in museums.
A Final Word

This analysis of the Holocaust Memorial Center and of the revisions that have been made to the text constitutes a first step in attempting an extension of the application of revision theory to non-written texts. It constitutes as well an extension of the extant discussion of material rhetoric and a continuation of the scholarly consideration of Holocaust museums as memorial sites. Finally, this study is also a personal act of remembrance by one who has heard the voices of Holocaust survivors and who has been deeply moved by their stories. I echo the words inscribed near the Holocaust Center’s Memorial Flame: “These do I remember, and for them my soul weeps.”

While Holocaust memorials and museums have been created for a variety of reasons and to fulfill numerous purposes, the Holocaust Memorial Center, the first freestanding Holocaust museum in the United States performs the same functions that Carole Blair and Neil Michael describe as those of the astronaut’s memorial at Cape Canaveral. It encourages visitors to confront their own values; it encourages engagement by the posing of questions; it presses visitors to create their own meaning by considering themselves “in relation to the memorial’s discourse” (37). The museum’s historical narrative brings, in the words of James Young, “the events of the holocaust into some cognitive order” (Texture 6). The museum’s message encourages visitors to move beyond what they have known and what they have been; it further urges visitors to be transformed into the righteous, those who will make a difference in this generation. At the same time the museum powerfully fulfills its core purpose, the creation of a fitting tribute to those who died in the Holocaust and the creation of a place where the loss of millions of Jewish lives can be appropriately mourned. The museum provides a means by which survivors can extend their witness beyond their lifetime; it enlarges the memorial circle and
invites a new generation of Americans to become part of those who remember and who, as they remember, vow that never again will an event such as the Holocaust take place. The recent revision of the museum serves to make the text more successful in reaching the museum’s goal of illumination of the past to provide enlightenment for the future.
NOTES

1 Raul Hilberg, personal conversation, 4 November 2004.

2 See Linenthal’s book for a complete discussion of the USHMM founding.

3 It is worth noting that this first American museum opened more than forty years after the first Holocaust museum, which was created by the Nazis. Located in Prague and housed in a synagogue rebuilt after Nazi destruction, the museum contained more than 100,000 Jewish religious artifacts and pictures. It was secretly opened in 1943. Called the Museum einer untergegangenen Rasse (Museum of a race that has gone under), it was intended as a memorial to the destruction of the Jews.

4 Young’s comments were made during a post-session discussion at the “Lessons and Legacies” conference, sponsored by the Holocaust Education Foundation, in Providence R.I., November 5, 2004.

5 See Blair’s article “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality” in Selzer and Crowley for a set of five key questions which she identifies as arising from the materiality of a memorial site.

6 See Weil’s book Beauty and the Beasts for a detailed consideration of each of these purposes. The list of purposes itself, however, first appeared in the April 1970 issue of Museum News in which Joseph Veach Noble laid out his “Museum Manifesto”.


8 Granger Construction, the Lansing, MI based firm which completed the building received a 2004 award from the Associated General Contractors of America.

9 Other museums in which the architecture gives the visitor a preview of museum content include the new Smithsonian museum of Native American History, in Washington D.C. (see
photos in Appendix A), the Houston Holocaust Museum, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C.

10 The interior of the museum dramatically makes use of the light that enters through the glass pyramids to create evocative interior displays.

11 See Appendix B for pictures of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

12 This is the phrase used by Rabbi Rosenweig to describe the Memorial Flame in a personal conversation that we had June, 19, 2004.

13 Rabbi Rosenweig made these comments to me while I was observing visitors in the lobby June 19, 2004.

14 It is significant to note that this museum addresses only the Nazi actions against Jews. There is no attempt in the displays to consider the millions of non-Jewish victims, murdered in the Holocaust, not because of a lack of concern for such victims, but because the museum was created by Jewish survivors to commemorate their own.

15 I make this statement based on observations conducted in the museum. On several visits, I spent time in the area observing the path that visitors chose. While all were recursive, over ninety percent of those who went through the room moved to their left away from the entrance. All docent led tours move to the left as they enter this museum space.

16 Rosenfeld made this comment in an informal discussion at the Lessons and Legacies Conference, Providence Rhode Island, November 5, 2004.
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APPENDIX A

Photos by Mona Dunckel
APPENDIX B

Entrance to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Washington, D. C. showing Tower
Photo by Mona Dunckel