Analysis of Holocaust Victims at Auschwitz*

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1 Introduction

This report presents the data on the ethnic origins and number of Holocaust victims killed at Auschwitz concentration camp. A Shiny application has been developed to visualize this data interactively, allowing users to explore the number of victims by nationality. The intersection of data, history, and human suffering presents a profound ethical challenge. As seen in the poignant recount by Bouie (2022) regarding the SlaveVoyages database, the representation of historical atrocities, like those experienced by Holocaust victims or enslaved individuals, extends beyond mere data points. It involves a responsibility to convey the depth of human experience and acknowledge the individuals behind the numbers. The simulated dataset on Holocaust victims and the subsequent creation of an interactive Shiny app must tread this

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*Code and data supporting this analysis are available at: https://github.com/CSCmaster/mini-essay12

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delicate balance: ensuring the visualization serves as a reverent memorial, an educational tool, and an acknowledgment of each victim's humanity.

2 Data

The data was obtained from a simulated dataset due to the sensitive nature and availability of accurate historical records. The dataset includes two main variables: the nationality of the victims and the number of victims per category. The Shiny app, much like SlaveVoyages, serves a dual purpose. It stands as a testament to the lost lives, helping to bridge the past's concrete horrors with the present's need for understanding. Yet, it also presents a challenge: to ensure that the visualization never loses sight of the individuals' suffering. The app must foster a connection between the viewer and the people behind the data. The interactive nature of the Shiny app, allowing users to explore and reflect on specific groups, mirrors the work done by researchers like Williams, who bring names and stories to the fore, turning impersonal data into a bridge towards one's heritage and collective memory.

3 Shiny Application

An interactive Shiny application has been created to allow users to visualize and interact with the dataset. The application features a dynamic graph and table, enabling users to filter the data according to specific nationalities or categories they are interested in.

Link to the Shiny app: https://posit.cloud/content/7897970

4 GitHub Repository

The code and data for the Shiny application are hosted on GitHub, ensuring transparency and reproducibility of the analysis.

Link to the GitHub repository: https://github.com/CSCmaster/mini-essay12

5 Discussion

The themes brought up in Bouie (2022) focus on the ethical considerations and implications of data visualization and interpretation, especially regarding sensitive historical data such as Holocaust records.Creating an interactive visualization of Holocaust victims is not merely an academic exercise; it's a form of digital remembrance. We must approach this representation with the ethics of care, sensitivity to the descendants, and an awareness of the visualization's

potential impact. It's crucial that the app, and any discussion thereof, includes context and narrative that reinforce the humanity of the data points. This contextualization helps in safeguarding against the objectification and further commodification of those who suffered(Bouie 2022).

6 Conclusion

The Shiny application and accompanying analysis underscore the importance of remembering and understanding the magnitude of the Holocaust's atrocities. It serves as a tool for education and reflection, allowing us to honor the memory of the victims through the careful use of data and technology. In summary, the creation of data visualizations for historical atrocities, such as the Shiny app for Holocaust victims, bears a heavy responsibility. It demands a careful balance between illustrating the scope of the tragedy and maintaining the dignity of the individuals. It must provide insight without causing harm, remembrance without commodification, and education without desensitization. As we step into an era where data becomes the medium to connect with the past, we must carry forward with an ethical compass that ensures we honor and remember the lives represented, not just the numbers.

References

Bouie, Jamelle. 2022. "We Still Can't See American Slavery for What It Was." *The New York Times.* The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/opinion/slavery-voyages-data-sets.html.