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Historical Amnesia

by Joe Escobar - Friday, May 17, 2013, 9:28 PM

This forum thread is for Historical Amnesia posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the individual questions in SEPARATE posts.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post.

To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post.

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Slighted and insulted

by Kaylee Garman - Sunday, May 19, 2013, 9:17 PM

Countries victimized by historical amnesia often feel unimportant, devalued and insulted. In 2005 there was a survey taken by 1,000 Chinese citizens over Japanese textbooks downplaying the Rape of Nanking. In the survey, 96% of the Chinese citizens said, "such action had severely hurt the Chinese people's feelings and constituted an insult to the Chinese people" (Nwazota). Japanese failure to publicly recognize their atrocities adds even more strain to the already poor relationship between the Chinese and the Japanese.

Many relationships between countries and cultures have suffered because one side felt like their story wasn't told fairly. When history is retold accurately, both sides are able to begin healing because they don't feel like they have been slighted.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june05/textbooks_4-13.pdf

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Re: Historical Amnesia

by William Jones - Sunday, May 19, 2013, 11:36 PM

I think cases like this cause people to question history's accuracies. I think the gravest concern is that it removes credibility for history as a whole and leads the subject down a slippery slope. Without reliability, history is nothing. If a country suggests that it is okay for them to pick and choose what events in their past can be recorded and later studied, then it fuels people to question all aspects of the country, including its values. History should not be distorted or manipulated by conscious or unconscious biases. It should accurately report what happened without minimizing or whitewashing details or in some cases entire events because they are an embarrassment to the country. If anything, I think concealing the truth and denying its existence serves as more of an embarrassment and does absolutely nothing beneficial for the country. In the case of Nanking, not only must the Japanese be associated with their horrific actions of the past, but are now also viewed as deceitful and unapologetic. It is downright disrespectful.

Denying such atrocities also denies the victims and their families' closure. These misinterpretations and doctored versions of history displace all responsibility of those in the wrong and prevent future measures from being instituted to stop events like this from ever happening. If the event is believed to have never happened, no one will push for progress. It paints a false picture of a country and leaves many oblivious.

I had heard of Nanking before, but did not know specifics. I definitely did not know about the incredible atrocities perpetrated on the Chinese people. Truthfully, as stated in the video, it is hard to believe that such horrors could be committed, but they did happen. These unfathomable actions when combined with the militant denial of a country lead to the falsification of history and leave the subject rendered insignificant.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Human nature

by Agina Hale - Monday, May 20, 2013, 10:51 AM

I absolutely love history, all of it. I don't think there is as much of a value in knowing only part of the history. Everything is about context. The surrounding facts help give you an idea of the mindset that people were going through at that time to lead to the next decision they made. I think what happens is there is an atrocity that absolutely stuns and shocks humanity, the people then explain the details and it gets perceived as justification. A simple example would be the Holocaust. We all know the ferocity at which jews, slavs, romanis (gypsies), homosexuals etc were killed in the camps. Knowing more about what Germany was going through at the time, doesn't mean

making excuses, it's just learning the whole story. Germany went through almost a worse depression than ours in 1929, and desperation set in. What do humans do when they are desperate? Anything.

What do we learn about the horrid details of such practices? I think it just sticks with us. I can remember learning about the Holocaust in middle school, and I can honestly say that the images are still in my head. Just like other things that are happening today trigger history in the past. We are all better off for seeing potential signs for the future.

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Re: Historical Amnesia

by Francisco Reyes - Monday, May 20, 2013, 11:23 AM

First of all, history is written by the winner and not by the loser of wars. This often leads to one sided debates in history books. Man's pursuit of history is never an easy affair. Except for Genghis Khan, the only conqueror whose history was written by those whom he defeated, Other than that history has been written by man's own interpretation of events. BUT HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO RAPE OF NANKING YOU MAY ASK? Simple, historical amnesia in this case "the Chinese people" suffering in the hands of the empirical Japan, have not been able to surpass the atrocities suffered in the hands of the Japanese as there has been failure to publicly recognize the mistakes and atrocities that they have made towards the Chinese. Even though, if Japan were to be truly be sorry for their past actions, it is often hard to apologize to something you have wronged. That being said it is hard to believe that such horrors could be committed. These actions when combined with the militant denial of a country lead to a one side debate in history books and leave the victim's rendered and without closure.

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Lid on a stinking pot

by Lorena Hernandez - Tuesday, May 21, 2013, 12:31 PM

One of the scariest concerns, regarding this article, is the argument of if this really happened in history, or if it didn't. Post war Japanese veterans have been hiding their embarrassment all along and are denying their case, while the chinese historians are trying to preserve such hatred that has happened in their country.

Like the Hollocaust in Germany, no history should be hidden from the books. More on this topic should be known than it is today, in all countries.

Maybe one of the biggest concerns is the fact that someone is fighting against the museums and wants them to go away.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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History Needs Color

by Kristin Sledge - Friday, May 24, 2013, 1:21 PM

When it comes to historical amnesia I believe that it is getting easier and easier to hide behind. The generations of Photoshop and other editing programs make it easy for someone to say "oh, those photos are doctored, can't you see the inconsistencies" just because there was some sort of blemish in the photo due to age. We live in a world where it seems the Historical perspective is "Look at all the great things we've done" but when it comes to something messy it's become "deny, deny, deny". This is dangerous, not only when it comes to the Raping of Nanking or the Holocaust, but it opens the door for the bloody history to repeat itself. We deal with such sins by saying they never happened because such atrocities could never take place, that such hate and disregard for any people just isn't "encoded within us" yet we clamor around the TV in hopes on a developing story of such actions provided by peoples of other countries. No one would dare say that 9/11 didn't happen since it wasn't done BY us but TOO us. A sad fact to history is the Us vs. Them mentality, including only that which justifies the terrible things that we have done "for the good of the country". It is so important to preserve and authenticate artifacts and pictures from the Holocaust and Nanking to prove that it does not take much for humanity to spin so far out of control. These events should serve as a warning and deterrent from such actions happening again and to toss them under the rug to make someone's history less stained with blood or hatred for the sake of appearance is insulting to the memory of those lost.

The fact that so many people allow for such amnesia to persist are just as guilty in my opinion to those who deny it outright. If we allow others to deny it, how will that effect generations to come? Eventually they will be forgotten all together, all evidence destroyed making it completely possible for such actions to happen again. History needs color to mean something, sometimes that color is blood red and clogs up a river.

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Disgusted and Appalled

by Tracy Tunnell - Saturday, May 25, 2013, 5:53 PM

I think one of the gravest concerns I would have would be the winners trying to forget and bury what really happened. This is a part of their history whether they like it or not. To hear that this is kept out of the history textbooks really appalls me. I think everyone has a right to know what really happened and it should be written by the winners and the losers, since there is two sides to every story.

"Terrible things like this happened all the time, now people are saying that they never happened. Japan wants to keep a lid on a stinking pot." History always has a way of

repeating itself whether we want to admit it or not. Putting things in textbooks and having museums teaches people what really happened and to think about how they would react if this were to happen again. There needs to be a place of closure for people when they endure something like this and burying it because the enemy doesn't like what their past ancestors have is unacceptable. It would be like trying to bury what the Nazis did or what happened on 9/11. These people need to be remembered for what they went through, even a hundred years later. If it's buried it's forgotten in the bad guy's mind.

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Historical Amnesia

by Michael Maxey - Saturday, May 25, 2013, 11:16 PM

Countries tend to want to forget the horrible atrocities that they have committed in the past for many reasons, and politics in those countries dictate what historical information can be learned so that the truth can't be revealed of those atrocities. Japan was really bad at that and still is in some ways. You can't grow if you don't learn from the past especially if there are instances that make a country look extremely bad. Germany even tried to ignore that the Holocaust happened for many years after the war ended and even tried to block it out so it will be forgotten. The problem with choosing to self-impose historical amnesia on the masses is that, when situations like the Rape of Nanking, the Holocaust, and others are not acknowledged then future generations of people won't be able to avoid making those same mistakes as the previous generations who made them. History doesn't repeat history, only people repeat history, and if they are kept from the facts and truths of history they will be doomed to make similar atrocities.

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Re: Historical Amnesia

by Lina Flores-Perez - Saturday, May 25, 2013, 11:42 PM

When it comes to events like the Rape of Nanking, the past should not always stay in the past. I understand those trying to move on with their lives and overcome such horrific events. Though with those completely unaware of such a case, like me, need to be opened to the truth no matter how horrible it may be. History is key in making your country a better place. We only learn from our past and specially mistakes. A president or really any group of people should be taught events in the past that have made huge impacts on where we are trying to make a home. It seems embarrassing to me that Japanese people are trying to completely seize the existence of something that has affected over thousands of people. If people are supporting "historical amnesia", it worries me that grave dangers could happen again. The history of any event or person could serve as a warning from how one came about what they are doing and how it resulted. Regarding to the war museum, those trying

to shut it down are truthfully getting no benefit from their efforts since it has already been opened to the public eye. As a citizen of whatever country you may be, we should learn and accept the history taught to us and those hidden from us.

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