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Historical Amnesia

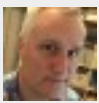
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Historical Amnesia

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Friday, May 6, 2016, 9:20 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Historical Amnesia topic.

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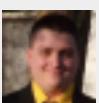
The danger of historical amnesia

by [Long Chen](#) – Sunday, May 8, 2016, 2:10 PM

In my understanding, historical amnesia is an action which people choose to forget some parts of the history. I think people try to forget the selective events of history is lying to themselves. However, it will cause other cultural conflicts. When people try to talk about a historical fact, many people try to get away with the truth, it happens to different countries' governments as well. So it is the reason that there are so many conflicts exist between countries.

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"Shitting the bed"

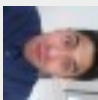
by [Robert Edwards](#) – Sunday, May 8, 2016, 2:27 PM

To me, it is no surprise that any country, let alone Japan, strives to forget past atrocities. For a people to be proud of themselves, they cannot be haunted by acts of cruelty, hostility, and other morally questionable actions of the past. That said, many are too eager to bury the past, and this allows the next generation to operate under the false assumption that their people have never erred, which then leads to that people erring because they do not understand the past or how they got to where they are.

The people who would rather pretend the holocaust never happened, while not limited to Germany alone, is an example. Nobody wants to believe anyone is capable of such monstrous evil. They would rather forget, attempt to rationalize it, or pretend it never happened than, to quote a certain fictional character, "admit they shit the bed" (Bonus points if anyone knows the source of the quote). This kind of enforced ignorance resulting from the guilt or regrets of those connected to the incident(s) must not be allowed to happen, but it must not also be allowed to forever hound a people. You don't punish an adult for something they did as a child unless they continue to act in that manner. If a people decides to move on from their actions, they must be allowed to do so.

Otherwise we get people like that one character from that movie clip we saw in class who said Americans were entirely at fault when discussing the appeasement of Germany (which was ironic because we actually tried to prevent Germany from being economically butchered after WW1, unless I'm missing something here?)

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Re: "Shitting the bed"
by [Miguel Perez](#) – Tuesday, May 10, 2016, 6:29 PM

While I agree for the most part with what you are saying, Nations are not children, and they do not grow up to be adults. Nations are led by multiple GROWN men and women, who do not think like children. Take for example slavery, this wasn't simply some mistake a teenage America made, this was a full blown monstrous disaster made by the grown men in power. Regardless of what was deemed morally wrong or right.

While we are for gone from the mistake made in the earlier years of the United Sates, that does not mean they never happened and therefore they should never be ignored. There must be some type of atonement for mistakes made whether they were our "sins" or the "sins" of our fathers.

Miguel

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Re: "Shitting the bed"
by [Robert Edwards](#) – Tuesday, May 10, 2016, 9:08 PM

I agree that nations are led by adults (Despite how some adults may act...), and that a nation that has fallen or participated in some vile act(s) must atone for those sins in some manner, though hopefully not in the way Germany was forced to "atone" after WW1, as that will always lead to retaliation, as WWII showed us. A problem I've seen is what people consider a nation to have atoned enough before they're forgiven, as there is always a grudge.

Now forgiveness doesn't mean forgetfulness. If a country shows signs of repeating a mistake, they should be confronted. I'm not sure if there's a widespread grudge against Germany for the actions of the Nazi party (excluding Holocaust victims for obvious reasons) now that Germany is no longer a Nazi regime, but if Germany appeared to be resurrecting that era, no country should stand aside and let it happen again, which is also another sin on the part of the other nations for not stopping it when they could.

It's as you said, the United States used to condone slavery, but it has since learned to do otherwise and actively strives to avoid recreating that part of it's past, while also remembering where we came from. So in a way, nations do kind of "grow up", in that the processes guiding it change and evolve over time with new perspectives or ideals.

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Forget and Forget
by [Miguel Perez](#) – Monday, May 9, 2016, 11:39 PM

We have all heard the saying about ignoring history and being doomed to repeat it (I am paraphrasing). I have always wondered how countries (say Germany, Japan) who committed horrific atrocities against humanity teach history to their students. It is tough to teach the mistakes of the nation you are a citizen of, to the children and young adults who will one day lead said nation.

The United States did its fair share of human injustices, things like; the Trail of Tears, Slavery, “separate-but-equal”, taking Native American lands, etc. I could go on, but for the most part I feel as if I was lucky enough to have had a proper education that did well to teach accurately the atrocities that helped shape our nation. The United States has come a long way, but we still have quite a ways to go.

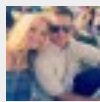
See, the problem with “Historical Amnesia” is we seem to bump our heads all too often. We are not forgetting; we are constantly IGNORING our grim past. We use the excuse of moving on and say we have learned from our mistakes, but have we? During lecture Mr. Escobar presented a letter sent to Japanese-Americans after their internment, we need to do more of this. We need to offer closure to those affected by our history. Especially to

those within our borders.

Miguel

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Nanking

by [Benjamin Glaeser](#) – Wednesday, May 11, 2016, 1:51 PM

One of the biggest concerns in my opinion regarding the Rape of Nanking was that listening to the soldiers talk they still didn't really seem to accept responsibility for what they did. Like the soldier said in the video they were ordered to kill everyone and had no choice. But I highly doubt they were ordered to rape. And listening to him talk about how first year soldiers could not rape the women almost as if during the time it was a priveledge to do so was horrifying and terrible.

Everyone country in its history has made terrible mistakes and done terrible things some worse than others. But to completely cover them up and act as if they never happened in my opinion is now only cowardly but disrespectful to the people that those atrocities happened to.

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Concerns of historical amnesia

by [Christopher Cockman](#) – Saturday, May 14, 2016, 3:02 PM

Firstly, I think everyone can agree that the events that took place in Nanjing are disgusting and inhumane. From rape and massacre, to even cannibalism, I doubt that the emperor explicitly told his soldiers to rape and eat Chinese women. So what interests me is, where along the lines of these massacres in Nanjing, did the social order be to commit these acts? Who originated these acts and then enforced them? The soldiers said that they were following the emperors orders to kill women and children as well, and execution would become of Japanese soldiers that didn't live up to standards. So these heinous acts were direct from the soldiers themselves, despite the emperor's orders to kill innocents on top of that. It is clear that Japan would want to cover up such a grotesque aspect of their history. But I thought honor in war was one of Japan's cardinal merits, ever since the times of feudal Japan? Now it seems that Japan is not even living up to their own standards. Japan should be concerned with upholding this honor. It's not a secret what happened in Nanjing anymore. Rather than erase these accounts form memory. The need to apologize is much more severe.

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