



Forum 3

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Historical Amnesia

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, May 8, 2015, 11:17 AM

This forum thread is for Historical Amnesia posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. 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.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Historical Amnesia

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Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Stanley Cates](#) - Saturday, May 9, 2015, 2:49 PM

I think the most grave consequence of the "historical amnesia" phenomena is that it leaves a loss in vain. It's one thing to have a loss, or commit an atrocity, but when subsequent generations forget that it happened you lose the silver lining on the cloud; as this as it may be; and keep the door open for similar occurrences in the future.

Like the Japanese text books cited in the forum materials I recall my own high school history books to be lacking material on the Japanese-American internment camps. Mind you they weren't absent all together; and I was fortunate enough to have a few history teaches who cared enough to talk about the subject despite the limitations in the book. And while it would certainly be ridiculous to directly compare American internment of Japanese citizens to either Nanking or the holocaust; down playing it has similar results.

Human's are rather emotional beings who seek closure in the wake of tragedy, forgetting about things that aren't particularly flattering denies people that essential healing property that comes from something as simple as an apology and the opportunity to give forgiveness and lift a grudge. I think Joe's story of the Japanese woman who came to speak was rather telling of this; it wasn't about the money; it was much more important to simply have someone take responsibility and admit that a wrong had been done, and cherishing that fact to the point of framing the letter and displaying it in her home.

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Modern Mindset

by [Samuel Black](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 8:41 PM



I agree with you that the greatest cost of historical amnesia is that victims can not have closure, the problem is when those people, or their ancestors, do not use it as closure. In 2008 the U.S. government officially apologized for slavery and the Jim Crow laws (1), seven years later, there is still a predominant stereotype for whites regarding their involvement with slavery and racism. "in other words, deal with your white sh*t, white people. slavery is a *YALL* thing. — lord commander (@saigrundy) [April 22, 2015](#)" (2) these are the words of a African-American professor at Boston University. This of course is not true, I remember learning about slavery in History 201 and the fact that the majority of African slaves that were brought to America, were first enslaved by other Africans (3). But this is not the point, the point is that not everyone has the amazing mindset of the asian woman from Joe's story, which is probably why our government, and most other governments, utilize historical amnesia to avoid these problems.

1. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93059465>
2. <http://www.thecollegefix.com/post/22369/>
3. Textbook 6th edition, page 12.

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Re: Modern Mindset

by [Stanley Cates](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 9:26 PM

Well put.

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Forgotten Massacre

by [Adam Graves](#) - Sunday, May 10, 2015, 12:33 PM

Does our own textbook writers feel the "Rape of Nanking" needed to be left out? I thought it was weird that I didn't remember reading about it in the text. But our textbook decided to leave it out.

I have to hear Mike Rowe the host of "Dirty Jobs" describes to me the "worst massacre of the modern age" that the Japanese soldiers decided that part of their job in dominance and imperialistic power was to massacre 300 thousand Chinese. I can see why Japanese ultranationalists would like to sweep this under the rug and pretend that it didn't happen.

I'm sure all countries have committed war crimes, and none of them get the ability to hide from their history. The U.S. has plenty of stains in our history, and I can see why the Chinese feel that the textbooks should accurately depict the massacre and not underplay it to an "incident" where only 300k or so were murdered, raped and buried alive.

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Japan's Historical "Amnesia"

by [Kylee O'Connor](#) - Monday, May 11, 2015, 7:35 PM

I believe that the gravest concern regarding "historical amnesia" is that it insults and undermines countries that were faced with genocide and mistreated by other countries. In Japan's case with the distribution of biased school textbooks, it misinforms the future generations and causes students to have distorted views of what happened throughout Chinese-Japanese history. It is immoral and unjust to alter history in a way that favors a country or portrays a country in a way that was untrue. If a country was involved in inhumane acts, like Japan was with the Rape of Nanking, they should own up to it and teach the future generations about their wrongs. How else is history not supposed to repeat itself if a country does not learn from it's mistakes? If I were a Chinese leader, I would be angry too and demand that the textbooks be rightfully rewritten.

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Historical Amnesia: taking responsibility

by [Chloe Steger](#) - Thursday, May 14, 2015, 11:33 AM

A couple others gave said they have not heard about this till recently and that goes for me as well. In my opinion, Japan is not standing up and taking responsibility or admitting their wrong doing. This is still something that is painful and well known to many people. Japan even excluded this from their book and it's something that should be a historical fact, not something

hidden and kept secret. While tried to be kept a secret, anyway. I guess we can't look at individuals who can't do much but the bigger people in Japan that can make an impact should stand up and make things right but instead it seems like they swept this under the rug and think it's forgotten and in the past, which is indeed very false.

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: Historical Amnesia and the solution for post-massacre generations

by [Cory Logan](#) - Thursday, May 14, 2015, 4:42 PM

The worst and most painful side effect of 'Historical Amnesia' is of course, as said by other students, the way in which acting as if a horrible event never happened concretes the deaths that were a result of said historical atrocity, such as the Rape of Nanking, as having happened in vain. We can only imagine how slighted the families of massacre victims as well as citizens of China as a whole must feel when Japanese people or Japanese educational curriculum down plays the tragic events of Nanking. The only way to appropriately move on from terrible acts by one group of people onto another, especially (but not limited to) one that is a historical stain to the degree that Nanking or the Holocaust is, would be for the offensive group or nation to acknowledge the excessive nature and the specific horrors of the event, and vow to rise above such behavior in the future as a group, with an attitude of sympathy and respect for the victims.

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tragedy

by [Brent Hill](#) - Thursday, May 14, 2015, 11:00 PM

The rape of Nanking was obviously a horrible tragedy. I can understand why Japan does not want to keep this piece of history alive. It would be very embarrassing to say that their country had a part in that. It is something that is very difficult to talk about but it is something that really needs needs to be talked about. By talking about this tragedy now and in the future we can help prevent something like this from happening in the future. Taking these horrible tragedies out of text books has a part in taking away the significance of the tragedy. It blows my mind that any human being could participate in something so horrible. We have seen other tragedies such as the holocaust happen from the help of mob mentality which is basically just going along with group. Mob mentality can be powerful because it can make people do things that they could never do on their own. I think this was a key factor in the holocaust and the rape of Nanking. I don't think that Japan should water down their text books and try to morph the tragedy into something that it is not. From the articles I read its seems pretty clear to me that they have more than enough evidence to prove that all of these horror stories are true. I hope we can learn from these horrible tragedies and keep them alive to remind ourselves that these horrors once existed and are possible to commit no matter how inhumane they may seem to be.

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its hard to say im wrong

by [Perry Washington](#) - Friday, May 15, 2015, 12:11 PM

Accountability is one of the hardest adult skills to develop. Because, most of the time you don't fell rewarding, and can often lead to repercussion. But if you want to grow and become better it's essential. For instance it makes no sense to me, if you're rising communist why would you neglect to teach them to avoid famine. But some wrongs are harder to admit then others, such as infanticide but how can we as humans try to not repeat mistakes we don't know we have made. And learn from them and remind us what we are capable of like you said.

I didn't know about these book until about a year ago and haven't had a chance to pick one up. But there "The Lies My Teacher Told Me". This is a history book with a few variations and publications, from different authors, but they all talk about the things they were taught through there public education in America that where either, misconstrued or plain lies. And this is American history taught in America which is not really that surprising to me. One thing I think is funny is there is an entire book on Christopher Columbus, and I'm pretty sure I heard 30 identical reports on him from like 3-5 grade.

I talked about how I don't fell as a society I don't fell as we progress, as much as we transition/move on, in my sociology class. But I think historical amnesia has a lot to do with that. As we forget the past, we forget the lessons that we learned, then we have to relearn by making old mistakes in a new ways.

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**Re: tragedy***by Tamara Berge - Friday, May 15, 2015, 11:01 PM*

I agree that the knowledge of these events are necessary to document and to have in textbooks, but these are junior high textbooks. In the middle school textbooks I remember of our own history on slavery and the brutality against Native Americans, most information was diluted. I can imagine the insult that must come from having such devastating history sugar coated, but I think the full truth of that information should be reserved ages older than that of junior high.

I found a link to a site that has a diary account from a German businessman that was living in Nanking during the Japanese invasion. The details were disturbing enough that I wouldn't want my children to read accounts like his at a young age. I will provide the link below.

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/nanking.htm>

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**Okinawa's "long kept secret"***by Tamara Berge - Friday, May 15, 2015, 9:55 PM*

There seems to be an overwhelming amount of historical amnesia tied into World War II, and our own Country is not blameless. While searching this topic I came across stories of the U.S. occupation in Okinawa, involving attacks on women by American soldiers. According to Wikipedia, "Although Japanese reports of rape were largely ignored at the time, academic estimates have been that as many as 10,000 Okinawan women may have been raped. It has been claimed that the rape was so prevalent that most Okinawans over age 65 around the year 2000 either knew or had heard of a woman who was raped in the aftermath of the war."

This information led me to an article from the New York Times, written by Calvin Sims, about the bones of three Marines that were discovered in a cave near Nago, Okinawa. The unconfirmed story is that the men had made weekly visits to the Katsuyama village, where they would gather the women and take them to the hills and rape them. The three soldiers were eventually ambushed and killed by the villagers.

Stories of rape and brutality towards women are often a part of war, but are rarely discussed. "The villagers' tale of a dark, long-kept secret has refocused attention on what historians say is one of the most widely ignored crimes of the war, the widespread rape of Okinawan women by American servicemen. (Sims)"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2000/06/01/world/3-dead-marines-and-a-secret-of-wartime-okinawa.html?pagewanted=1>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape_during_the_occupation_of_Japan

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**Re: Historical Amnesia***by Daniel Schulman - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 5:14 PM*

The greatest and gravest concerns of historical amnesia are the exact reasons we learn history in itself. We learn history to understand our past decisions, what the outcomes led to, why, and the underlying reasoning behind them. If we leave out parts of history, we can't learn from our mistakes made as a species. Denial is comforting, but detrimental to a nation, and the world. It leaves us uninformed, leading to the spreading of misinformation, and ultimately leading to poor decision making. It's possible if Japan continuously denies, or dilute the happening of Nanking in textbooks, it's possible the event could be recreated once again in the future. How can we expect ourselves as a nation to progress politically forward if we leave out everything that has happened behind us? We can't make logical decisions based off of ignorance, there is no logic in that. Any decision based off ignorance is uninformed, uneducated and unintelligent. Historical amnesia can lead to regression, as America sometimes have when it comes to foreign policy; regarding isolationism and imperialism.

From the second I finished the video on Nanking, I was mind_____ (use your imagination) on a disturbing level. I personally had no knowledge of it's existence up until the video. It was cringing to learn something on this scale happened, and I didn't have the slightest clue of it happening. It's hard to believe a tragedy like this hasn't been internationally recognized, with a large support group like the Holocaust has had. It's hard to comprehend this still goes on today, even with how drastically the world has changed for the better, somewhat. I was watching the Daily Show, and Jon Stewart made some great points regarding the riots in Baltimore and the medias portrayal of it, having forgotten past events: <https://youtu.be/IG6baZG4Ghg> Having a media that isn't willing to portray event's honestly most certainly doesn't help.

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Reason for the Use of Historical Amnesia

by [Samuel Black](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 8:45 PM

One big question I have is why does historical amnesia exists? Or rather, why is it allowed to happen? What is the motive for hiding an historic event? I had been wondering this until in class we had heard the story about the chinese woman who had lost everything when the U.S. government forced her into a camp. What struck me the most was her response the Joe's question, saying that the official apology from the government is what truly matters, not the money. I find it hard to believe there are many people who have the same mindset as this woman did, this is why events are often purposely removed from history or not given any attention, thus allowing them to be forgotten. Because these groups who tamper with history, know that people generally have a hard time forgiving and forgetting. Obviously, there is more to it than just the lack of faith in the forgivingness of humans, there is the pride factor for one, as are there several others.

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