

HST 203: U.S. History Sp18 (Escobar Meta 41002 43590)

[Home](#) / [My courses](#) / [HST 203 Sp18 \(Escobar Meta 41002 43590\)](#) / [Week 7](#) / [Forum 3](#)
/ [Historical Amnesia](#)



Forum 3 Historical Amnesia

[Subscribe](#)[◀ Using & Abusing History](#)[Using & Abusing History ▶](#)

Historical Amnesia

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Thursday, May 10, 2018, 9:29 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Historical Amnesia topic.

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, something that describes which one of the questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Historical Amnesia

Sum of ratings: -

[Permalink](#) | [Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Zachary Denton](#) - Friday, May 11, 2018, 12:54 PM

I think the biggest concern regarding "historical amnesia" in this case is the simple fact that Japan is trying to hide certain atrocities that their military did many years ago. It is hard knowing what your country has done in the past but trying to forget that part of history doesn't make it go away. This makes the Chinese argument look bad for the crimes they have done to their own people as mentioned in article two. This, though, still does not excuse the attempt to downplay the war crimes that happened in Nanjing. As for the authority of which "codes of war" should be written, I believe we already have that now in the Geneva Convention. The Geneva Convention is multiple treaties and such that defines the basic rights of all wartime prisoners with most of these being ratified in 1949. Enforcing these laws of war is a difficult task but for the most part I believe most countries abide by them. In most cases of them not being followed it is not a government or uniformed military doing it, so attempting to punish and hold the people responsible is difficult because they clearly don't care about the consequences. Now if it were a government or uniformed military performing war crimes they should be subject to attack from a combined UN effort and then made to pay a great sum after they are defeated. This is easier said than done but I believe that is how it should be handled.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Tanner Wiese](#) - Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 12:29 PM

I agree a significant problem is that Japan, and I'm sure other countries hide certain catastrophes that they caused. And, simply lie to everyone about their actions. It's already hard enough for people of a country to accept the past mistakes that their country made. And, even harder for the children and grandchildren of the people affected by a certain catastrophe to forgive a country like Japan. It is a very complex issue, that is hard to find the correct answer for. I also think it is hard to have "historical amnesia" and forgive a country, without downplaying the past issue. In many scenarios these events cannot be forgotten or downplayed.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Sienna Grosse](#) - Friday, May 11, 2018, 3:34 PM

Historical amnesia comes with many consequences in the case of the Nanking Massacre. One is that it continues to cause political problems between the Chinese and Japanese, so much so that it was a contributing factor to China's desire to veto Japan from joining the U.N Security Council. "Only a country that respects history

Japan from joining the G7 Security Council. "Only a country that respects history, takes responsibility for history and wins over the trust of peoples in Asia and the world at large can take greater responsibilities in the international community," he said. (China Says Japanese Textbooks Distort History April 13, 2005). Furthermore, the denial and lack of education causes social disputes in both China and Japan. "Such painful wartime memories led to the violent protests in China with demonstrators throwing stones at the Japanese embassy and breaking the windows of some Japanese restaurants -- a rare occurrence in the tightly controlled Communist regime." Lastly, survivors deserve a platform to openly talk about their experiences, something that has proved to be cathartic for survivors of the Holocaust. But that can't happen if it's an unspoken history, and it seems impossible to move on from something so tragic without having open dialog.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Kyle Schmidt](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 11:57 AM

Hello

I like how you talked about how ignoring political and social issues like the Nanking Massacre can lead to problems between the people of different nations. Tension between Japan and China is a very real problem today and I think its cool that you brought it up. I am curious if anyone knows any other instances of this in history or current events?

Sum of ratings: 0 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



my thoughts on historical amnesia

by [Tanner Wiese](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 10:24 AM

This is an issue that is very hard to find the correct answer for. Part of me knows that history repeats itself, and, if a nation is willing to bring harm to another nation, they will have no problem doing it again. But, I also find it hard to hold hatred towards a nation and its citizens for the bad decisions of a bad leader. So, I truly think there are a lot of factors that go into this. There are certain catastrophes that cannot be forgotten or forgiven. In the first video they showed the horrible tragedies the Japanese caused on the Chinese people (Rape of Nanking Video). And, at the end of the video they stated that the Chinese people would not forget what they did. And, that "the bones of their massacred ancestors will not rest". And, there are no doubt many situations like this where you cannot forget what has been done. It is a very hard topic that I don't think you can necessarily find an answer for all scenarios. It depends on a lot of factors in

each case.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1) 1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Kyle Schmidt](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 4:55 PM

The idea of Historical Amnesia can be applied to almost any country in the world.

Every nation has a tendency to gloss over the more graphic or moral gray areas of their history. After all who would want to explain to the next generation about war crimes and other atrocities that were committed by a nation they are taught to love.

Even in America many aspects of our history are completely ignored until high school. The extermination of the native americans for example was not taught to me until I was in grade school and even then it was heavily downplayed. So I understand the tendency for Japan to want to censor Jr. High textbooks. While I do not agree with it, it makes sense that they would want to spare the children the gory details. What offends me is that Japanese nationalists defended the soldiers who committed the war crimes going so far as to threaten the museum presenting evidence. "Ultrnationalists have threatened to burn down the museum, prompting the elderly staff members to look into the unfamiliar world of high-tech security." (Article #1 5th paragraph) Personally I think threats like this one is the worst effect of historical amnesia. In the case of the rape of Nanking not only is it whitewashed in school but even adults don't seem to know what really happened. Misinformation and downplaying events leave people in the dark about parts of their own history. This can cause angry and even violent responses when people are forced to confront truths like the atrocities of war. Especially from reactionary people this can be a very dangerous and volatile mix of clashing beliefs about what really happened. If the government had not hidden the war crimes from the public in the first place such misplaced nationalism would never have occurred and such a strong reaction about photographic evidence would not have happened either.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1) 3

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia / Grave Concern

by [Kevin Gable](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 7:16 PM

The gravest concern I have for this specific WWII case, has to do with the current discussion for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. One half of my concern the odd memory of the facts involved in the education system in Japan. In article two it

talks about recent history books published in Japan, “Specifically, the new textbooks play down Japan’s brutal occupation of China from 1931 to 1945, including the 1937-38 Nanking massacre -- sometimes referred to as the Rape of Nanking -- that resulted in the deaths of between 250,000 and 300,000 Chinese.” (art 2, par 3) I am certainly no authority on education. However, skipping over crucial information of a country’s past with intent of shaping a more desirable version of history is a grave disservice to each generation misinformed. “The most famous example is the museum attached to Yasukuni Shrine, in Tokyo, which is dedicated to the spirits of soldiers who died in combat, including some convicted of war crimes. That museum essentially argues that Japan was forced into the Pacific way by Western colonialism.” (art 1, par 6) A permanent seat on the UN Security Council comes with great responsibility. Would a distorted memory of a county’s own history affect its ability to make decisions in a world governing body? Today’s digital world is making Isolationism more difficult than ever before, although not impossible. This brings me to my other half of the issue. Every country on the UN Security Council has a period of history they are not proud of depending on how far back into history you want to count. Should China be allowed to prevent Japan from sitting at that council with its own guilts? “School books in Beijing leave out significant historical events including the 1989 Tiananmen Square democracy demonstrations in which Chinese troops killed thousands of unarmed protesters, and the three year famine between 1958 and 1961 when communist policies led to the starvation of an estimated 30 million Chinese.” (art 2, par 9) Should China be forced to admit it’s atrocities? What about the atrocities of the other members? I would agree with any decision prevent any government actively supressing its own people becoming a member to that council, Norht Korea for example.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



"you won't find this in your textbooks"

by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 7:22 PM

This is my first-time hearing about the Rape of Nanking, before this forum I had no idea that this horrific event ever took place. I think trying to deny and forget the past, especially that in your own country is a terrifying thing. And the fact that it has been so long and there are still people denying and threatening anyone who tries to dig up the truth is scary as well. The first article states that “Ultrnationalists have threatened to burn down the museum, prompting the elderly staff members to look into the unfamiliar world of high-tech security.” I applaud the veterans and survivors for bringing the truth to light, despite reliving and owning up to such intolerable acts. Yes this was a highly disgraceful, unbelievable event that was committed by the Japanese Army, in no way

should anyone be proud of this history, but history must be recorded and retold, all history, not just the politically correct ones. It should be a priority of all people to make sure that the truth is upheld so that there is no way that is ever possible to repeat. Denying history makes me nervous that people will not be able to foresee things in advance from happening again. An important quote that stuck out to me in the first article, "Only a country that respects history, takes responsibility for history and wins over the trust of peoples in Asia and the world at large can take greater responsibilities in the international community," It goes for the Holocaust as well, Germany will forever live in the shadow of this event in history but it is so important to remember that time in history because it reveals so much. Just like the Ultrationalists in Japan, there are still people in Germany who to this day claim the Holocaust was a "hoax"

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia / Codes of War

by [Kevin Gable](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 7:42 PM

It is difficult to give an unbiased answer to the questions of what authority the codes of war can be written. The easy answer for me is my country. Though, that is a biased statement. When I considered this issue deeper I assumed the UN was in charge of this matter and looked into it. The UN is in charge of "International Law".

-International law defines the legal responsibilities of States in their conduct with each other, and their treatment of individuals within State boundaries. Its domain encompasses a wide range of issues of international concern, such as human rights, disarmament, international crime, refugees, migration, problems of nationality, the treatment of prisoners, the use of force, and the conduct of war, among others. It also regulates the global commons, such as the environment and sustainable development, international waters, outer space, global communications and world trade.-

(<http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/uphold-international-law/>)

The UN asserts both the authority to write and enforce the codes of war. I am okay with an international body of represented governments presiding over this issue. This adds a new dimension to the historical amnesia issue. The UN Security Council has great authority in this regard. The permanent seat members have veto power. (textbook pg 879) It brings into question how well a country that is guilty of war crimes can write or enforce law preventing war crimes?

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Codes of War/Who writes and enforces?

by [Sienna Grosse](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 11:45 AM

This is just a thought, but maybe a country that is guilty of war crimes can write them more honestly and with more first hand experience about what needs to be enforced and prevented. I was reading up on the history on setting codes of war, and I found this, which I think gives some support for my claim.

"For centuries before then, rules had applied to the conduct of war, but they were based on custom and tradition, were local or just temporary. 1864 changed all that and began a process of building a body of law that is still evolving today. The initiative for the first convention came from five citizens of Geneva. One of them, Henry Dunant, had, by chance, witnessed the battle of Solferino in 1859. He was appalled by the lack of help for the wounded and organized local residents to come to their aid. Out of this act came one of the key elements of the first convention – the humane treatment of those no longer part of the battle, regardless of which side they were on." (<https://www.icrc.org/eng/war-and-law/overview-war-and-law.htm>)

I definitely see your point about the enforcing part though, which I think is a super valid thing to question.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Codes of War/Who writes and enforces?

by [Kevin Gable](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 10:34 PM

I like your thought on a country guilty of war crimes still being able to contribute, especially from a first hand experience of what it takes to change and learn from it as a society. This is one of the reasons I do not rush to condemn the other countries on the UN Security Council. At some point in history every nation has made grave errors in the treatment of one group or another. However, for better or worse those facts and events are in US and British history books. I am not an authority on the French education system but would bet they don't hide their history as does China for instance. And I think that is the root of my question. If China is not willing to put Tiananmen Square in their own history books they can not provide that experience and their contribution is limited and less effective. One of the major lessons I have taken from each class lecture is the duality of the history of this nation. As our nation has developed and shaped the world with it's exceptionalism it has had, along the way, a darker side of the events that shaped the world and our home. Understanding this duality is powerful. It allows us to judge our own system more accurately. Of course we never lived up to our own ideals. We were never supposed to reach them without effort. Also, all of these

great figures we have studied, had a past of their own. And that, for me, humanized them greatly. This helps me to understand why we never reached those ideals yet. We are a nations of humans, fallible and working with limited knowledge. But by acknowledging our mistakes it allows us to learn from them. By acknowledging our mistakes it allows others to learn form them too.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Lest ye be judged.....

by [Jason Yeager](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 8:26 PM

My first thought when reading through these materials was about the massacre of innocent civilians committed by American troops in My Lai, Vietnam. This was a really awful incident, and while not on the same scale as Nanking, it is worth remembering. I thought I would check and see how our textbook handled this occurrence, and it barely warrants a paragraph. Also, the authors claim that U.S. soldiers "murdered more than 200 civilians, most of them women and children." (pg. 984, *Liberty, Equality, Power*) I guess this is technically true, but the Wikipedia page related to this massacre paints a much more vivid picture--"Between 347 and 504 unarmed people were massacred.....Victims included men, women, children, and infants. Some of the women were gang-raped and their bodies mutilated." (Wikipedia) Seems like the authors of our textbook have their own case of "historical amnesia".

Regarding Nanking specifically, I think the gravest concerns have to do with accurately remembering the true nature of the incident so that it will not be repeated. There is also pride to consider. Japan is one of the most prideful societies on the planet, and yet they are dishonoring and tarnishing the memory of the people that suffered so greatly at their hand. I wonder how the Japanese would feel if the roles were reversed. I understand why the Japanese are trying to minimize this incident--it's embarrassing! Just as I am embarrassed when I think about how many innocent Japanese were killed when we decided to set off a couple of nuclear bombs in their country. I'm quite sure that the Japanese people would be highly offended were we to try to wipe these incidents from our history books.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Lest ye be judged.....

by [Kayla von Stein](#) - Monday, May 14, 2018, 10:10 PM

I think that your point on our text book not going into the depths or extent of what we did in Vietnam is an excellent point in that Japan is definitely NOT the only one

doing this. I've seen many different occurrences of this with other topics in US History (especially anything having to do with Native Americans, it's ridiculous!). I find that the historical amnesia problem is rampant pretty much everywhere. The pride that comes with wanting to be proud of every action a country has done tends to combat with the need for transparency.

I found it interesting that the Japanese basically pointed back at the Chinese for doing the same thing they were doing (Article 1 of the Forum 3 Materials). It just kind of felt like a pot calling the kettle black situation back and forth.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Context: It's Important.

by [Kayla von Stein](#) - Monday, May 14, 2018, 9:24 PM

As a person who enjoys getting to the root truth of what actually happened historically, the real concern about rewriting or glazing over the not so glamorous instances in our past is losing the context that can help explain why the world is the way it is.

The way the many countries in this world communicate with each other are affected by the history that took place before it. When we discussed the causes of WWII, we talked about how the Great War before it was definitely a part of the reasons why the war happened. Without the information regarding the Treaty of Versailles and how Germany was essentially given the blame for the war as a whole, the culture in Germany that culminated in Hitler coming into power at the time of the war would make much less sense.

In terms of the Japanese, the ultranationalists are ashamed of the actions taken in Nanking and want the newer generation to grow up never knowing the full extent of what took place (Article 2 in the Forum Materials). It is a disservice to the victims of the massacre that occurred there, but also to the soldiers who did these atrocities. War can be told like a legendary story or myth, and putting the truth in the forefront is important to understand what war is ACTUALLY like. I think that is what Japanese soldiers like Tsuyoshi Ebato are getting at when they openly discuss things like using actual Chinese prisoners for bayonet practice (Article 1 in the Forum 3 Materials).

I find it disturbing from a historical standpoint and from a humanity standpoint to just

...find it disturbing from a historical standpoint and from a humanity standpoint to just "forget" about the bad things that have happened in the past. They are so vitally important to understanding our interactions and to grasp the flaws in war.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Context: It's Important.

by [Jason Yeager](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 2:44 PM

I like how you bring up the specific example of the Japanese soldier and how his experience speaks to "what war is ACTUALLY like." This illustrates the complexity of the "codes of war" and how they should be written.

I was struck by the soldier in the video who states that "I remember an order to kill all the villagers. And it was an order. We had to kill them. We knew we'd be killed if we weren't capable." (2:46, Rape of Nanking video) The soldiers understood this to be an order from a divine authority, and their culture dictated that it had to be followed. While this "code of war" seems to be abhorrent by today's standards, at that time in place and history it was deemed acceptable.

I try to imagine myself in that situation. Commit murder of innocent people, or be killed myself. I'd like to think that I would do the honorable thing and refuse, and face my own execution with pride. But who knows how they would react in that situation? Would I be willing to sacrifice myself, knowing that those innocent people would be killed anyway? Or would the desire for self-preservation take hold and allow me to commit such an atrocity?

I also wonder how much of this atrocity, as well as the countless others that have happened in war, is simply a result of "blood lust" that seems to take over the will of man under such conditions. I have never been in combat--hope I never will--but I have a hard time vilifying the acts of cruelty committed by these guys, considering the extreme pressures they were under. By no means am I attempting to lessen or justify the horrors inflicted upon non-combatants. War is just an awful thing, and humans tend to act in awful ways in those situations.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Historical Amnesia

by [Kyle Schmidt](#) - Tuesday, May 15, 2018, 6:17 PM

Remembering history has always been a very important part of why we study it. Not

only to commemorate tragedies for the sake of people who lived through them or have family that were involved. Also to help us understand why these things happened in the first place. The Rape of Nanking was clearly attempted to be censored in Japanese culture because it was removed from textbooks around the same time soldiers began anonymously speaking out and releasing diaries. I mentioned in my last post how dangerous ignorance about these events can be regarding extremists who become outraged when their beliefs are challenged. I see similar patterns even in our own country where people use nationalism to enforce their misguided arguments. This is why it is especially important that school systems are non bias because teaching that nations are without flaws is what causes people to grow up believing that is true. In the case of Nanking The rules of war were completely ignored in part by officers and soldiers, but mainly by the emperor himself. The soldiers involved in Nanking were not all horrible people yes, the committed many atrocities but we have to consider that these were their orders from the emperor of Japan. Most Soldiers did not want to kill women and children but were afraid of being punished for disobeying their emperor. "We knew we would be killed if we were not capable."(The Rape of Nanking 2:53) I think this helps explain why there was such an effort to cover up these horrible war crimes. In an effort of the emperor to deify himself he caused the entire country to be deceived by the perspective of one man. There are many examples in history of people and their leaders using wartime as an excuse to do horrible things to other people. Even in America we dropped atomic bombs on Japan. However that was technically not a crime set forth in the league of nations post WW1 but, to be fair no one knew what would happen. The rules established in the league of nations are good guidelines for committing war while attempting to limit suffering. With this in mind we cannot expect all countries to follow these rules in the desperation of war times. Also they are not perfect like the atomic bomb example I used. Like I said they are more guidelines than rules and I think to enforce them there need to be actual punishments enforced by the United Nations against countries who commit war crimes of any nature.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Understanding of History helps Understanding of Present

by [Rachel Gragg](#) - Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 5:46 PM

I think that historical amnesia in all cases, but especially ones of this kind, is incredibly dangerous. It is so important for people to be educated on all of history in order to understand what is going on in the world, but especially historical events of violence and terror and war are important to know and understand. The Rape of Nanking is a very sensitive and intense topic and if people are not educated on it, how will they know to be sensitive about this topic and to be aware of the history? History, I think, is something that grows people and helps people have a better understanding of how to

see the world and not knowing something this big could really affect people's understanding of the world. "Putting a lid on a stinking pot" (War Museum Resists Japan's Historical Amnesia) is not an effective way to teach history in order to help people understand the present.

This event, according to the third video, cost the lives of over 20 million people. That is an incredibly large number of lives to be ignored. That is dishonoring to all of those people and it is offensive to those people's families to just pretend that this didn't happen. I think this happens all of the time in America. When I think of my elementary education when I first learned about the American settlers and how they treated the Native Americans, I absolutely was not exposed to all the horrors of that time period. My teachers did not thoroughly educate me about the atrocity and the pain and terror that the English settlers brought onto the Native Americans in order to drive them out of the land. Part of the reason that elementary schoolers don't learn as much in depth about this is, of course, because that's a very heavy topic to teach to young children and that is understandable. However, it is definitely still glossed over very often later in schooling as well and I think that is because Americans are embarrassed of this fact and don't want to admit to their wrongdoings. I think this has to play a part in why, according to the second video, most Japanese soldiers refuse to acknowledge their crimes at this time and why it isn't gone into in very much depth in history books. Because of this, people are not being educated and aren't aware of this terrible event and therefore aren't able to be sensitive towards it or aware of things that could happen because of it. What do you think? Do you think having a thorough understanding of history is important to having an understanding of the present and future?

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Authority and codes of war

by [Sienna Grosse](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 12:05 PM

When thinking about who should have authority to write codes of war, it didn't make sense to me that one country or state should have that much authority. If it were in the hands of one group, all in the same geographical location, it seems like the codes would be biased and unfair. I started looking into who, what, where, and how these laws came about.

I found that, "The rules of war are universal. The Geneva Conventions (which are the core element of IHL) have been ratified by all 196 states. Very few international treaties have this level of support." The IHS stands for international humanitarian law, and is a

have the level of support. The ICRC stands for international humanitarian law, and is a set of international rules that set out what can and cannot be done during an armed conflict. Most places in the world have agreed to these, which I think is pretty fair.

I also found that, "If the rules of war are broken, there are consequences. War crimes are documented and investigated by States and international courts. Individuals can be prosecuted for war crimes." I looked to see if I could find some specific cases of war crime trials, and there are quite a few, so obviously is something taken very seriously.

It seems to me that this is a pretty good system, I'm sure there are flaws, as with all systems, but I think taking war crimes to trial, like all crimes, seems like an adequate way of handling things.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Authority and codes of war

by [Kevin Gable](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 9:23 PM

I agree with you that taking those suspected of war crimes to a trial to determine guilt is the best system we have at this time. Here is an interesting article I found in Newsweek. It's about a 94 year old former Nazi being put on trial for war crimes in Germany. Some interesting points I read was, during his service, the accused could have chosen another assignment than the extermination camp he chose to serve at. I'm not sure how factual that is. He was found guilty and will serve the rest of his life in prison. Here is a quote from the article. "Each of these trials is a history lesson and it reinforces the notion that there is accountability for an individual's actions, even in a totalitarian state," he said. But it "would be a breakthrough if he actually spent a little time in prison. [It would reinforce] the notion that no one is beyond the law, that there is a price to pay no matter how long you live and that living to an old age does not absolve you." <http://www.newsweek.com/world-war-ii-nazi-war-criminal-too-old-prison-hes-96-years-old-german-court-726264>

Do you think this sends a positive message to dictators in the world today? I would like to think the importance of not tolerating these atrocities, no matter the age of the accused or inconvenience of the trial, and bringing those guilty to justice is critical if the UN is to work. Look at what fate the League of Nations suffered. They failed to take action at the beginning of Germany's military expansion and as a result WWII broke out ending the League of Nations. It became the global lesson in "appeasement" (textbook pg 855)

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

**"Codes of War"**by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 6:12 PM

Through history we have seen a multitude of wars and how they are carried out by the countries and the cultures involved in them, we saw it in the Philippines, WW1 and WW2, if you visit any of the wars Wikipedia page they dedicate a section to atrocities from both sides that were committed, and their consequences, if any. The Nuremburg trials of crimes committed during WW2 and the holocaust comes to mind when I think of "consequences" as many people were jailed or executed. As a result of these trials a new set of rules called the Nuremburg Principles in which one of the principles is paraphrased as stating This principle could be paraphrased as follows: "It is not an acceptable excuse to say 'I was just following my superior's orders'". (Wikipedia) . Which I thought was interesting because I recall several soldiers in the video of the Rape of Nanking using this explanation defending their actions as well.

I believe that there absolutely should be "codes of war" especially since we have so much technology to document and hold people accountable in these times. Although things are still kept secret and people cover things up as they always have, it is far more difficult now than in previous wars past. I struggle with coming up with a way of who in charge of this and held responsible for intervening when these codes are broken I don't think it should be any one country. I recall the Geneva Convention is one of the agreements that pioneered the rules and standards of war, unfortunately people have blatantly stepped over these rules. It seems impossible to expect people in desperate war times to abide by a written law protecting human rights, even though they SHOULD (optimism) in some cases they don't, and that lies a problem with humanity.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) [Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Ignorance is Bliss??**by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 6:26 PM

As some of you have mentioned I can see an example of historical amnesia in our own country as well as being the colonization of America. The way the textbooks glaze over the treatment and the war with the Native Americans in order to become "America". I wonder if they were "protecting" us because of our age, but I don't think that should calculate to downplaying the seriousness of our nation's actions, I mean, Columbus Day is still celebrated and kids are coming home from kindergarten with cute little colorings of Christopher Columbus without any realization of how he treated the people who already lived on the soil.

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Sum of ratings:1 (1) [Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Japanese Perspective on Rape of Nanking**by [Sam Reposa](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 11:50 PM

From the videos and articles, the biggest concern I have with this particular case of “historical amnesia” comes the Japanese perspective on the Rape of Nanking. From trying to erase or change history by altering the information in their textbooks or banning them altogether to trying to forget that part of their history when THEY were the instigators/aggressors. The Japanese should be embracing this part of their history, not ignoring it. Both the first video @2:28 and the third video @6:50 mention the Japanese struggle with this part of their history. I can’t help but imagine how the Chinese feel about this part of their history--I think I sympathize with the Chinese more in this situation, due to them being the victims.

There are certainly many pieces of American history I’m sure we’d love to alter, downplay, or forget. For example, slavery, usage of atomic bombs, etc; however, it’s important to know our nation’s history good or bad, because whether we like it or not, it happened. An example of historical amnesia happening today is the taking down of statues and memorials of former slave owners, or controversial figures. Who gets to decide what becomes history and what doesn’t?

Sum of ratings:2 (1) [Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)[◀ Using & Abusing History](#)[Using & Abusing History ▶](#)[i Moodle Docs for this page](#)You are logged in as [Joe Escobar](#) ([Log out](#))[HST 203 Sp18 \(Escobar Meta 41002 43590\)](#)