

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

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/ [Historical Amnesia](#)



Forum 3 Historical Amnesia

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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

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Cultural Self Reflection is tough when it's never been practiced...

by [William Perdomo](#) - Friday, May 11, 2018, 9:56 AM

The topic of “historical revisionism” is a tough one for me as a Westerner to really grasp because having grown up in the West, specifically, within a culture steeped in Judeo/Christian values with a heavy coating of Greco/Roman/Enlightenment philosophy, I was practically born to be not only self-reflective of myself and my culture, but pathetically critical of both as well. We in the West (and, please, understand when I say “the West” I mean from the point of view I know having grown up in it. It does not mean non-westerners do not, or are incapable of, practicing what I am describing) are very much concerned with ideals and living up to them. Rarely do we achieve what we set out as a culture to be but the active seeking has, for the most part, allowed us to recognize our faults and address them. After all, slavery was not abolished in the West by the intervention of foreign “good guys” who rode in to bash them Whites and smash the chains of those Black people they had ruthlessly enslaved. No, it was more complex than that. Slavery, and rightly so, was seen as a cancer in the West and as a culture, Westerners could not honestly proceed along history with diametrically opposed ideals of Judeo/Christianity and the ownership of another human being. Not to mention the humanist traditions that came out of the Enlightenment which would influence the American Constitution’s framers. I believe the Japanese are, as we saw in the Japanese War Museum article, genuinely trying to face up to their actions in the war but are hampered by a nationalist faction who believe they did nothing wrong and, in a culturally relativist way, could have done no wrong since the Emperor’s word was in fact the word of their god. They have no history of democracy, republicanism, humanism, or individual rights. Their culture, right up to 1945, was that of obedience to the Emperor. Bushido’s highest ideal is to “serve” and be useful to your lord and master. That means never dishonoring yourself through cowardice, which as we saw in some of the old news reels from the Rape, also included following orders to do the most awful things in the name of the empire and its Emperor.

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The Danger of Never Admitting when You're Wrong

by [William Perdomo](#) - Saturday, May 12, 2018, 2:23 PM

A grave concern that comes from historical amnesia is that the nations or peoples who suffer from it have made a positive attempt to not understand, take responsibility for, and thus make amends culturally for their actions as a nation. This is quite important if there is to be any catharsis as to why a country like Japan and Germany lost the war. In the former’s case, there is (as is represented by the active conservative censoring of text books) vocal and numerous faction within Japanese society that believes they were in the right for attempting to subjugate Asia and the entire Pacific. Furthermore, that whatever they did to secure the new frontiers of the Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere

that whatever they did to secure the new frontiers of the Asian economic sphere was good and right on the grounds that the Japanese were both the culturally and racially superior race which, in a social darwinistic sense, makes what they did in Nanking both a survival imperative and a moral one if race, as the Nazis and others would have it, is simply two aggregate animals consuming each other for energy and sustenance.

It sort of reminds me of the situation Germany found itself in after the First World War where the generals forced the Kaiser to agree to a ceasefire only to turn around soon after it was signed and claimed, in order to save face, that the new Weimar Republic had stabbed the empire (i.e., the Army) in the back. It was a pretty slimy thing that German army did to shift the blame of defeat onto the new government which ensured that it would forever carry a fatal congenital defect from birth that would eventually facilitate the rise of something even worse in the National Socialists. As we know from historical hindsight, the “stabbed in the back” myth carried right through to the 1933 elections and eventually transformed from those “greedy capitalists” stabbed us in the back and into those “greedy Jewish capitalists” stabbed the fatherland in the back. I see the same potential here because not only are the Japanese a proud and stubborn people (as the Germans are and were) but they are also (unlike contemporary Germans) the one enemy combatant among the Axis who escaped total blame for their actions during the war. Nuremberg placed the onus of all hostilities and war atrocities on the Germans with no ifs, ands, or buts about it; but the same kinds of war trials were not conducted in the Pacific. Hirohito was not tried for his passive role in the proceedings during his reign and neither were the Japanese scientists of Unit 731 who performed all sorts of sadistic and evil experiments of prisoners of war. The fact that the Japanese were merely defeated by force of arms doesn't mean that their ideology was also rendered to the dust bin of history because unlike the Nazis there was no universal condemnation of Japanese militarism and its consequences. At least in Europe we understand exactly the extent of the Holocaust whereas the historical validity of the Rape of Nanking is still “in doubt” despite voluminous eye witness testimony and even film evidence that was smuggled out in the lining of an American observer's coat.

With all that said, I must say it frightens me a little to see the Japanese edging closer and closer to military autonomy where they will be allowed to arm to the degree they were prior to WW2. If they had made amends as a nation for their crimes in the past then such a concern would probably be as invalid as one would have for modern Germany who has no problem admitting their sins so to speak. Cultural memory, especially one that holds a grudge, is a troubling thing because it tends to hide its animus under a thick veneer of economics and feigned friendliness on the world stage but, like their Samurai ancestors of old, have likely not forgotten the debt of honor still owed to their Asian neighbors and their conquerors across the Pacific.

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[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Historical Amnesia**by [James Croxton](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 12:29 PM

Well, for me the first thing to do is to accept the fact that no nation on Earth is completely happy with their past. I can't think of any exceptions either.

That being said what honestly alarmed me the most about this "historical amnesia" of modern times is the hypocrisy involved. For example, in the second article, "China Says Japanese Textbooks Distort History," the author discusses how "new" (circa 2005) Japanese textbooks were brutally downplaying the "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." In fact, the article goes further and announces the findings of a new survey: "of over 1,000 Chinese citizens by the Social Survey Institute of China, [they reported that] most people found Japan's approval of the textbooks insulting."

Not so great, right? But, here's the hypocrisy I was talking about.

Further down in this same article, the author discusses how "China -- a country infamous for smoothing over its often harsh human rights policies -- should look at its own retelling of history." It's noted that textbooks in Beijing leave out major events such as 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."

Honestly, in my opinion, every nation needs to be transparent when it comes to education the next generation about what has happened before them. "History repeats itself" - everyone's heard the saying, so why not heed the warning signs and keep from making the same mistakes twice. Additionally, I believe it is essential in the future of humanity that we keep accurate records just for simple record-keeping purposes. Future civilizations and such can look back, see the best of what we did, take those concepts, and hopefully apply them to their own lives.

Putting the WWII time period aside, historical amnesia is a concept that I am intrigued by and have studied about since I was very young and a member of the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum in San Jose, California.

Even as a young boy certain things made absolutely zero sense to me. One of those things was the basic timeline of the great pyramids in relation to later dynastic ones. Why (and how) are the oldest (and the biggest) pyramids still standing and in excellent condition when later ones (obviously modelled after the older) have collapsed or even simply crumbled into dust. From this point on, I have always challenged the "status quo" and have rejected a lot of mainstream Egyptology.

My personal studies eventually brought me to Gobekli Tepe in Turkey. It predates Stonehenge by 6,000 years and is remarkably sophisticated. There are 16 foot-tall t-pillars that weigh tons. There are even carved animals in the relief - some of which don't even belong in the area! The consensus from a lot of archaeologists (and the mainstream is even starting to come around!) is that this is the settlement of a people who survived the last Great Deluge at the end of the last Ice Age about 11,000 years ago. It has even been proven that these people purposefully buried their "city" (this is in quotes because while there are huge stone rings, t-pillars, and other structures, actual living areas have not been found.

This is a truly remarkable discovery. Nobody knew that this place existed. Nobody knows exactly who these people were. They certainly weren't the hunter-gatherers that our current textbooks say could only have been around at the times. It's simply not possible. True "historical amnesia" as Graham Hancock would say. He and others have found evidence and have proposed many connections to Egypt.

If anyone would like to read further about this incredible place check out the Smithsonian spread:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/gobekli-tepe-the-worlds-first->

[temple-83613665/](#)
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**Re: Historical and Current Amnesia**by [Carly Minow](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 4:53 PM

The greatest concern regarding historical amnesia is the fact that there is little admittance of wrongdoing by aggressors. None of the interviewed soldiers openly show any sign of remorse. While they represent an extremely small fraction of Japanese World War II soldiers, Japan's general thought process seems to be that the Rape of Nanking never happened. In the ninth paragraph of the first article, McNeill depicts the criticism and hatred those who spoke out against Japanese war atrocities faced. "Their testimony was fueled by atonement, compassion, and the need to fight what they saw as Japan's historical amnesia. When they were not being ignored, however, they were objects of scorn, vitriol, and mistrust. Many critics said the returned veterans had been brainwashed by Chinese Communist propaganda." Japan's unwillingness to admit to their wrongs proves that historical amnesia has taken hold.

A more current example of historical amnesia is the unfair slaughter of LGBT citizens in Chechnya. Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of Chechnya, and his forces have tortured and killed gay men in a form of cleansing. As quoted in a *Time Magazine* article, "In his televised remarks, Kadyrov has even referred to the expulsion of gays as a kind of national bloodletting. 'We don't have any gays,' he told HBO in an interview filmed in one of his palaces in Chechnya and aired in mid-July. 'If there are any, take them away to Canada. Praise be to God! Take them far away from us. To purify our blood, if there are any of them here, let them be taken away.'" (<http://time.com/chechnya-movsar/>) His denial of LGBT people and belief that his actions are just and correct expose a modern, current form of historical amnesia. Kadyrov's disbelief juxtaposed with his slaughters creates a World War II Japanese sentiment, as seen in the aftermath of the Rape of Nanking.

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**Lessons learned**by [Easton McVeigh-Walker](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 8:28 PM

I think that one of the gravest concerns regarding "Historical Amnesia," is what it can do to future generations. History tends to repeat itself, maybe it is just human nature and we cannot do anything about it, but on the other hand perhaps we can learn from

history and our past mistakes. By not teaching these historical events you are choosing to one, not come to terms with what happened, and two you are depriving your future people of those important lessons. They expressed that they want to make sure that nothing like this ever happens again by not forgetting the events that took place in Nanking. That is why it is important to make sure we teach these topics.

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Why Historical Amnesia is Bad

by [Kayla Hadden](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 11:06 PM

Historical Amnesia, especially in this case, is horrible. Not only is it extremely disrespectful to China and the victims of this event, but it is also disrespectful to Japan themselves. If this was a smaller event being forgotten (such as an imprisonment of a handful of people) then I could see why it would not be as big of a deal. But Japan is purposefully forgetting the deaths of 250,000-300,000 Chinese (Article #2)! Not to mention that these deaths were unusually cruel (decapitations, being used as practice for new soldiers, being raped before being murdered, being buried alive, and burned to death (Rape of Nanking video)). Japan trying to pretend like this did not happen to those people because they are ashamed is not right. Everyone has something in their past that they are ashamed of, but it is still part of our histories and needs to be treated as such. The only way to move on is to admit fault and apologize. While I understand that this does not make up for what they did, it would at least be a start to making amends between the Chinese and Japanese for this tragedy. I also feel like the Japanese owe it to China to teach this event to children in history. The Japanese deserve to know the complete history of their country, the good and the bad. People learn from their mistakes, so if they aren't shown the mistake how can they learn from it? It could bring closure for both countries if Japan came clean about what happened in the Rape of Nanking and stopped trying to hide what actually happened.

Codes of war should be a global thing. I think that every country should have some standard or rules that they abide by when in war. This should be a job for the UN or some other group that can bring the world's nations to an agreement for what these rules should be. I don't believe that war is really the answer except for very special cases, so I think that if war has to occur it should be done with as little "mess" as possible. I absolutely think it should be a rule that raping is NOT allowed under any circumstances. Not only does this mentally destroy people, but it is not necessary to the war effort at all. In the Rape of Nanking, around 80,000 women and CHILDREN were raped (Rape of Nanking overview ~1:50). This did not help the Japanese "win", it was solely for the soldiers' pleasure. These rules should be enforced by national leaders and people in charge in the army. I know it is almost impossible to control every person and that some people will break the rules, but at least there would be

every person and that some people will break the rules, but at least there would be LESS corruption! Some change is better than no change.

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Re: Why Historical Amnesia is Bad

by [Mirissa Hicks](#) - Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 6:59 PM

I agree with the points you made about having a code of war especially when situations are not happening for war effort, like in the case of women and children getting raped as well as taking prisoners that were not involved directly in the war but where unfortunate of where they were living when Japan took over Nanjing. I do think it would be logical to make a code of war between countries, but I think it's easier said than done for countries to follow it during war time. In class we talked about how Hitler signed the Munich Pact and the Nazi- Soviet Pact but they really meant nothing other than just worthless pieces of paper and he still invaded and provoked war on multiple countries. I do think that to prevent history from repeating itself that the most important aspect that could be used as having a code of war is to keep these horrific moments in history relevant and have people educated on them. For a code of war to be an actual document though I feel like for it to be effective that the consequences would have to be major, because throughout war government leaders especially think of their country and apply their morals and are not looking at it their actions being wrong.

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Re: Why Historical Amnesia is Bad

by [Kayla Hadden](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 3:42 PM

That is very true. I guess I just wish that, in times of war, countries cared about the lives of other human beings as much as they should. Especially since there are so many innocent citizens killed in war. I think people become blinded by the fact that a certain government is acting horribly and assume that most of the people under that government support what the government stands for, when in reality not all of them do. I really have no idea what we would even do about that issue though because it would be difficult to separate an entire country. And even if we did separate the supporters from the non-supporters, what would we do with all of the non-supporters? I feel like war is just horrible all around and there is never a way to actually win a war without morals and values being lost.

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The Importance of Remembering

by [Cam Burnett](#) - Sunday, May 13, 2018, 11:18 PM

With society changing and moving past a ugly time in a nation's history is hard to forget, especially with the times of WW2. And as the world progresses I fell that we must not forget what has happened in history, With things like the Rape of Nanking I believe that they teach a valuable lesson and should be preserved as the museum in tokyo mentioned is article one its something that can't be looked over. "facts and evidence to history scholars" as Ms. Niki states in the article is very important, this information can not only teach us about the past but help determine how to make future decisions. I believe we must look at all aspects of history even the very ugly. While these ugly things happen war time codes can help if followed by everyone things seem inhumane and yet are still done I believe that while a useful tool reparations isn't enough and a new way to up hold these codes should be thought up to make sure that they done happen. I think they can be enforced with a no tolerance system to where if they are done action to stop them would be taken and everyone involved held responsible.

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Re: The Importance of Remembering

by [Kayla Hadden](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 4:06 PM

I agree with your opinion. I, too, feel that remembering our past is a big part of preventing future mistakes. I agree that we should have an international code of war that every nation should have to follow, however Mirissa brought up a good point in response to my post. She said that in order for there to be a sort of international code of war that is effective, the consequences for breaking the code would have to be major. Honestly, I don't even know if there is a consequence that is enough to stop countries from doing unnecessarily horrible crimes during war. Like Mirissa was saying, "leaders especially think of their country and apply their morals and are not looking at it their actions being wrong." Especially when countries become desperate, they stop caring about the opposing side. So now I am questioning if a code of war would even work. From what has happened in the past, I am doubtful that countries would abide to such a code in a time of war.

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Good and Evil Gets Very Blurry Sometimes

by [William Perdomo](#) - Monday, May 14, 2018, 2:15 PM

by [Yuhang Chen](#) Monday, May 14, 2018, 2:10 PM

The video provokes an interesting thought about the idea of clear cut “good guys” and “bad guys.” I mean this in the the sense that there’s a prevailing notion these days, and a overly simplistic naive one, that associating with, or being part of, any group that has been deemed uncouth or “evil” by the prevailing culture must indicate that the individuals that make up said group, and its tangential connections, must themselves be subhuman and deplorable; while those who oppose them must, by contrast and default, be of impeccable morals and character.

In the video there was a brief mention of the “heroes” of Nanking who were a diverse, multi-national group of missionaries, diplomats, and business people who aided in sheltering, and outright protection of, the people of Nanking from rape, torture, and murder. The film doesn’t go into too much detail about these individuals; but, Iris Chang’s excellent book, *The Rape of Nanking*, does. In her account she goes into whole chapters on each of these people, one of which was a man named John Rabe.

Rabe was a prominent member of the Nazi party and a German national who owned a prosperous chemical company in Nanking. Aside from his business affairs in the city, Rabe represented Germany in a kind of pseudo diplomatic capacity during the whole Nanking episode and took it upon himself, along with other European representatives and Americans, to lead the creation of a International Safe Zone that ended up sheltering and protecting 200,000 Chinese people (men, women, and children) from the roving bands of Japanese soldiers bent on finding women to violate and men to murder. In addition, Rabe, knowing that he possessed special authority being a German national and a member of its diplomatic corps, made regular trips on foot around the city to rescue women who were in the midst of being sexually assaulted by gangs of Japanese soldiers and to safety conduct whole groups of people back to the safe zone. The Japanese knew better than to risk harming a German citizen, especially one as connected as Rabe so he operated with a kind of god-like aura around him that saved the lives of countless people. He’s known, ironically, as the Oskar Schindler of Nanking. Rabe regularly pleaded with his counterparts back in Berlin in an attempt to rouse Hitler to intervene with Tokyo to stop this most “egregious and anti-Christian barbarity.”

The point I’m making here is that a label such as “Nazi” doesn’t really tell the whole story about an individual like “liberal” doesn’t tell the whole story about the men of today’s age such as a Harvey Weinstein who was a the nexus of Left-Wing causes and political fund-raising for the likes of Hilary Clinton and who was himself a star of liberal crusades against such things as sexual harassment, equal pay, gun control, etc. I’m not excusing Rabe for being a member of the Nazi party, but being a member of a party doesn’t mean you’re entirely evil either. Obviously, Nazis such as Himmler, Heydrich, Eichman, Goering, and Hitler himself were quite horrific people because, as

we know, they not only knew about the extent of the atrocities they presided over but endeavored actively to put them into effect. History, their actions, and ample evidence brought forth since amounts to a picture of people who had no excuse other than malevolence to behave as they did. But, does the labeling get so easy down to the level of clerk or army private? Or, in Rabe's case, an industrialist far from home? Furthermore, are we so arrogant to think that we as twenty-first century pillars of morality would be immune to the demagoguery and ideology of the people who succumbed to these movements in their respective countries? It's almost like evil is being viewed as a disease that some people have and some others don't; and those that don't just need to quarantine themselves in order to remain "good people," when in reality, given the right social and historical conditions, any one of us could be those Japanese soldiers or members of those German police battalions that carried out the final solution in Poland.

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Re: Historical Amnesia: Repercussions of Forgetting History

by [Sadie Baker](#) - Tuesday, May 15, 2018, 12:21 PM

I actually had to ponder for a while as to why it is such a crime to distort history. After all, the past is in the past, right? What difference does it make whether people know about everything that happened before them? In the particular case of Nanking being glossed over, what might be different if Japanese didn't know what happened? I think that perhaps in this case, there are two reasons the Japanese would like to pretend the Nanking Massacre wasn't as bad as it was or that it didn't happen. First, it just feels uncomfortable to be associated with such horrors. And second, it would be easier for the people to trust a government system that wasn't responsible for something like that. But if people are unaware of the rape of Nanking and more importantly, the factors which caused the Japanese masses of troops to actually commit such atrocities, they are more apt to blindly fall victim to the same causes in other situations. And obviously, if the people don't have reason to believe their government is capable of corruption and cruelty, they will not be able to tell if there are flaws in their country's system or leadership. Events like Nanking are important because they give us insight into how crimes of great magnitude can happen, and so we can use that knowledge to avoid letting the same factors lead to other sorts of crimes. Forgetting history sets us back by robbing us of the wisdom that comes from experience.

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Re: Historical Amnesia: Repercussions of Forgetting History

 by [Carly Minow](#) - Tuesday, May 15, 2018, 6:29 PM

The issue of tampering with the past is that we build upon our pasts. As you said, there is the “wisdom that comes from experience” and we as people, societies, and nations use that wisdom to the extent we feel comfortable with. For example, a major historical event that the United States glosses over is the only successful coup d’état in the US: the Wilmington Coup of 1898. Politically and racially motivated white supremacists forced themselves into the North Carolina town’s government, created a small dictatorship, and terrorized and killed black residents. (<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93615391>)

The fact that this is one of many, many negatives left out from American history books proves that we must acknowledge our issues to further our futures. If Japan cannot get past the uncomfortable realization that the Rape of Nanking did occur, then they as both a people and a country will hinder themselves in the near future. After the many atrocities we have committed, we still mostly trust our government, even with parties and opinions butting heads. What’s to say that the same will not happen in Japan if the education of Nanking becomes mandatory? If people do not know of a past issue, it is not so much that they will repeat it but remain ignorant.

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Re: Historical Amnesia: Repercussions of Forgetting History

 by [Sadie Baker](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 3:08 PM

Thank you for sharing your point of view. its very well stated and I think you are absolutely right. You said that we use histrical wisdom only to the extent that we feel comfortable with, which I haven't thought about before, but certainly makes sense. I had never heard of the Wilmington Coup before, and it almost seems unbelievable that such a thing could happen in America from the perception that I have of our country. It is interesting that omitting uncomfortable stories like that from our education has served to cultivate an grossly idealised image of our country in my mind, even as one who believes our country is certainly flawed. The same must be the case for every other country, which is to be expected since it is natural for humankind to want to see themselves in the best light. But I wonder how much progress would be made in every country if people were to focus on their mistakes as much as they do their successes?

I also wonder if there would be less division between political parties, governments. and countries were everyone to own up to their faults instead of

hiding them. It would help people to see the bigger picture, that even the culture or political party which they see as superior or good is capable of the same level of monstrosity as the one which they detest. It might teach us that because humans are all equally capable of evil, we must not idealise or condemn based on generalizations such as party affiliation, but rather weed out the bad and build up the good on every side.

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Re: Historical Amnesia: Repercussions of Forgetting History

by [Carly Minow](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 6:20 PM

Thank you for your thoughtful response! I really liked the points and questions you presented. I hadn't quite considered the humanity in political acknowledgement of faults and the question of if governments would be any different is interesting. The blurring of political divisions is an encouraging idea. I hope our divided factions of government and people can put aside differences and work to function in a fair, bipartisan way.

I think that if something or someone or some people are willing to admit that they made mistakes, the remorse wouldn't become the only characteristic they are known for. For example, American leaders have apologized multiple times for the internment of Japanese-Americans (one example being President Bush's apology shown during lecture). While it is a definite scar on our history, along with many others, we aren't only remembered for being the country that imprisoned its own citizens. We tend to notice mistakes while applauding our successes. Although Japan has not apologized for Nanking, it most certainly would not hurt their government or popularity to do so.

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Re: How to move on rather than forget

by [Mirissa Hicks](#) - Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 5:36 PM

From watching the videos and reading the articles it is easy to tell that both countries have a major concern that the Rape of Nanking is being forced to be forgotten about. In the *Rape of Nanking* video David Cook talks about how this massacre was "an international embarrassment to the Japanese" (2:30) but I do not see this as a reason for it to be a forgotten part of history. I do think that no matter how bad war has been that it's important to remember and learn for the tragedies that occurred, rather than to

forget them all together because of a countries pride. I think without realizing or even knowing about the mistakes that where made it really hurts how a country can evolve and learn to not make those tragedies repeat itself. I can understand why the Japanese government want to eliminate this from their history with the comparison of what was happening in Germany at this time. I know for my own experiences learning about WWII the main focus of who was the worst enemy was Hitler and the holocaust. I can understand no country wants a reputation like that on their hands, but at the same time the mistakes Germany had made the government had taken responsibility and could start healing and moving forward after, whereas Japan and China still have tension in that area of history and hasn't been able to heal together. I really like the point that is made at the end of the article *China Says Japanese Textbooks Distort History* "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" (Maochun Yu)

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Re: How to move on rather than forget

by [Kayla Hadden](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 4:17 PM

I think it is really great that China is not going to let Japan forget about what happened and get away with it. The fact that China keeps not voting for Japan to join the United Nations Security Council is great. At first I thought it was slightly childish, but as I thought about it I realized that it's really not. Maochun Yu is right when he says Japan must first take responsibility and gain the people's trust back before being considered for the spot. Japan needs to own up to their mistakes and accept that they did something wrong. It wouldn't be right if they were allowed to act like the Rape of Nanking did not happen.

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forgetting how it actually happened

by [Cam Burnett](#) - Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 9:37 PM

Historical amnesia for me is a big deal as a lot of people like to look over the past or say it doesn't matter. The idea of overlooking historical facts is very un logical to me. And while something like the holocaust is looked at as myth is a tragedy, now the holocaust was horrible i don't think we should look over it, it happened and we must learn from it, just like the Rape of Nanking. It's something that can be learned from and can't just be censored. As we saw with the opening of the museum or the censorship of textbooks that it can very much make history not what it is. If we look over what

happened and how it happened history becomes more of a interpretation than concrete facts and should be preserved in the way it happened and not censor it because it was a horrible thing.

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Re: Historical Amnesia big mistake

by [Scott Carpenter](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 7:08 PM

Keeping history from the people: should we be truthful or lie and be ignorant of the facts. What happened in Nanking is very unlikely to ever happen again, but in order for us or anyone else from doing terrible atrocities like this, one must be accountable for their actions. Countries have different opinions on what is kept from their citizens during war time, that's all well and done. But what about when we not at war. but in the class rooms throughout Schools; the truth is what is important. we should be teaching our identity as if we are proud of it and will thank twice before doing an act of hide and seek as the norm. we can learn from mistakes.

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Re: Historical Amnesia big mistake

by [James Croxton](#) - Thursday, May 17, 2018, 7:21 PM

I agree that Nations or whatever groups commit atrocities should be held accountable. That's a given.

For me, it it's more important for a them to accept that accountability.

Sum of ratings: 0 (1)

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Historical Amnesia

by [Chris Castro](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 5:57 PM

On what authority can "codes of war" be written? More importantly, how should they be enforced?

It's hard to think of an authority that could make and enforce a "code of war" effectively. I say this because throughout history we have seen "codes of war" try to be made and enforced but they either end up being broken or changed/ eliminated. The first example

that comes to mind for this is germany, who during WW2 signed the treaty saying they wouldn't go to war with england. This is a different kind of code but it still applies to the "codes of war" because your not supposed to betray your allies. However germany broke this quickly. If the "codes of war" were to be written and applied to the world they would also have to be carried out by the world. All countries would have to sign on. This way if a certain country breaks them the rest of the world could agree to condemn them and, it sounds harsh but, eliminate the country from existence. This type of fear would deter countries from breaking the codes since they dont want to be condemned and essentially erased off the planet.

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danger of Historical Amnesia

by [Alexander Thompson](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 6:04 PM

I think the biggest concern of historical amnesia, by China, Japan or any country, is the possibility of repeating past mistakes. If countries are unwilling to take responsibility for, and learning from past mistakes, what is to stop them from doing bad things again? Granted in today's world, what happened in Nanking is very unlikely to happen again. However, pretending like it NEVER happened, could mean a lack of complete honesty coming from a country in war or crisis.

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Codes of war

by [Alexander Thompson](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 6:26 PM

It really comes down to the world leaders to decide what "codes of war " are. On the other hand it is up to the people involved in a war to follow these rules, AND THEN, on the third hand it is up to other world leaders to decide whether or not to enforce their rules. But if they chose not to enforce the rules they create, then no one will be inclined to follow them. The UN was created for this situation. As group of nations they decided on a certain set of rules for war, that if broken, the perpetrator will be subject to punishment by all of the nations involved. As you might expect, it's complicated. But so is war. I think to enforce these rules, rather than threatening to destroy the country that is on trial, their government should be taken over, for a period of time, by the other governments involved in the treaties.

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**Blocking out the negative**by [Jordan Lopez](#) - Friday, May 18, 2018, 10:23 PM

I was unaware of the massacre of Nanking which means that the spread of information of that massacre was limited in comparison to events such as the Holocaust. I believe the amnesia of Japan's history being the biggest concern. However, it is understandable that a nation will try to look past such massacre. Every country has done their fair share of altering information of the past to curve their nations perspective. Tamaki Matsuoka and others like her are not giving up and being persistant activist fighting the ultranationalist and nationalist that are even threatning opposition. Japan's new textbooks were altering or not including information regarding the war with China. I can understand those individuals who take part in the content and material that is being taught in school probably weren't taking part in such events. During the interview with some of the soilders and victims you can see that some individuals didnt want to speak or show their face. It shows me that in Japan today their past haunts them. It can be somewhat understandable to want to forget or not include this event in furthur teachings. It shows me that each country just has its own method to dealing with their past. In many European nations the denial of the Holocaust is illegal just to show you the total oppisite when it comes to Japan since their denial is legal. China responded the way they naturally feel on the subject and thats totally understandable to. However to deny a seat in the U.N security council for the very reason might be a topic of its own debate.

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