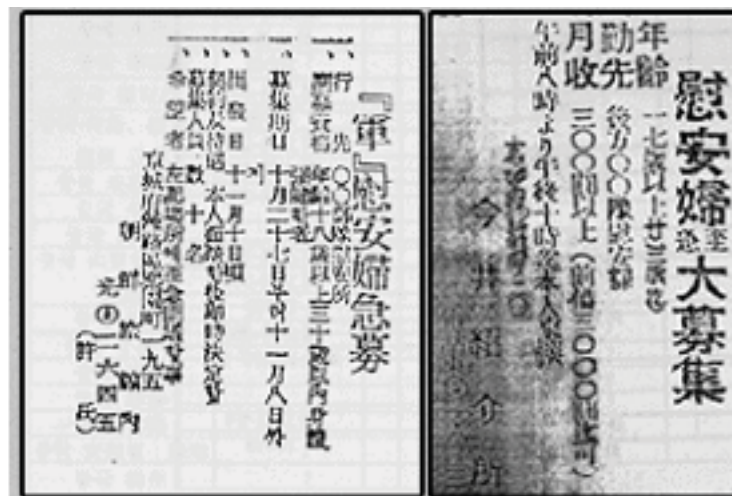




Unit Five

Military Sex Slaves



朝鮮總督府機關紙
“毎日新報”
1944年10月27日広告

新聞“京城日報”
1944年7月26日

Recruitment advertisements for comfort women
by the Japanese Imperial Army. Wikimedia Commons

The Nanking Massacre and Other Japanese Military Atrocities, 1931-1945

INTRODUCTION to UNIT 5

The Military System of Sexual Slavery

The systematic violation, exploitation, and degradation of women by the Japanese military during the Asia-Pacific War must be counted as one of the most horrific crimes against humanity during World War II. About 400,000 Asian (and some Caucasian) women were systematically raped and kept in captivity servicing the Japanese military. Some were held captive for up to three and a half years.

These women were known as “Comfort Women,” a euphemism that has come into general use, in spite of its inaccuracy, to refer to those who were forced into the Japanese military system of sexual enslavement to service the Japanese troops during the Asia-Pacific War, 1931-1945. The majority of these women (up to 80%) were Korean girls and women. The rest were Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, Malaysian, Filipina, Indonesian, and Dutch women.

These women were placed in so-called “Comfort Stations,” barrack-like stalls, or even homes taken over by the Japanese army, where they were kept as prisoners. The number of these comfort stations was estimated to be as high as 2,000. These women were subjected to constant degradation, verbal and physical abuse, and the torture of being repeatedly raped or gang-raped by anywhere from ten to forty men daily.

The following is the testimony of Kim Young-shil—a military sex slave from Korea:

The officer shouted. “You obey my orders. I will kill you if you don’t. He then held me down and raped me. I was a virgin until that moment. From the following day on, I was forced to service sex to 10-20 soldiers every day, and 40-50 on Sundays. We were exhausted, weakened, and some of us could not even eat meals. We were in the state of “half-dead.” (Sangmie Choi Schellstede 48-51)

This form of abuse during war has come to be known as the “hidden horror” because women who suffered this kind of abuse have endured in silence even after the war because of their shame and humiliation. Furthermore, many were ostracized by their own society. For more than fifty years these women have suffered in silence, afraid to speak out.

It was not until August of 1991 that the first Korean military sex slave, Kim Haksun, spoke out. She was in her late 60’s and led a miserable, wretched life after her return to Korea at the end of the war. With nothing to lose and not much to look forward to, she wanted to let the world know what she had endured.

After Kim Haksun spoke out, in November 1991, The Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan was founded and a telephone line was set up to encourage other military sex slaves to call to tell their stories.

In recent years, a number of books have been published, including interviews with these military sex slaves. One recent publication in English contains twenty interviews with Korean military sex slaves: *Comfort Women Speak: Testimony by Sex Slaves of the Japanese Military*, edited by Sangmie Choi Schellestede, published in 2000.

The most extensive account of the life of the comfort women is the autobiography of a Filipina woman by the name of Maria Rosa Henderson titled, *Comfort Women: A Filipina’s Story of Prostitution and Slavery under the Japanese Military* published in 1999. Now that these women have come forth to tell their stories, the Japanese government can no longer deny that this form of systematic degradation and assault on Asian and Western women is a crime against humanity.

Although military prostitution has existed throughout history, the extent of it and the systematic and brutal way it was carried out by the Japanese military was unprecedented.

Students who study this unit will discover the depths of the Comfort Women system set up by the Japanese government. They will discover the reasons “comfort stations” were set up, the locations of some of these stations, the treatment of the women, and the extent of Japan’s denial of the system and its responsibility.

In addition, students will have the opportunity to read, and even hear and see the testimonies of a few of the survivors of the horrors of being forced into the Comfort Women System.

The Nanking Massacre and Other Japanese Military Atrocities, 1931-1945

Unit 5 – Violence Against Women: Chinese Women Held As Military Sex Slaves of the Japanese during the Asia Pacific War (1931-1945)

BRIEF SUMMARY OF UNIT: An estimated 200,000 to 400,000 women in Japanese occupied territories were forced by the Japanese military to service the soldiers in sex stations. Only about 30% of the women survived the war.

LINK TO CONTENT STANDARDS:

See Appendix C for the common core standards for Writing, Reading, Language, and Speaking and Listening in Social Studies.

6.2.12.A.6.a	Evaluate the role of international cooperation and multinational organizations in attempting to solve global issues.
6.2.12.A.6.b	Analyze the relationships and tensions between national sovereignty and global interest in matters such as territory, economic development, use of natural resources, and human rights.
6.2.12.C.4.c	Assess the short- and long-term demographic, social, economic, and environmental consequences of the violence and destruction of the two World Wars.
6.2.12.D.4.i	Compare and contrast the actions of individuals as perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers during events of persecution or genocide, and describe the long-term consequences of genocide for all involved.
6.2.12.D.4.j	Analyze how the social, economic, and political roles of women were transformed during this time period.
6.3. 4.A.4	Communicate with students from various countries about common issues of public concern and possible solutions.
6.3. 4.D.1	Identify actions that are unfair or discriminatory, such as bullying, and propose solutions to address such actions.
6.3.12.A.1	Develop a plan for public accountability and transparency in government related to a particular issue(s) and share the plan with appropriate government officials.
8.1.8.E.1	Gather and analyze findings using data collection technology to produce a possible solution for a content-related or real-world problem.
8.2.8.C.2	Compare and contrast current and past incidences of ethical and unethical use of labor in the United States or another country and present results in a media-rich presentation.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS THAT WILL FOCUS TEACHING AND LEARNING:	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:	ASSESSMENT (EVIDENCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING?)
<p>• How did the system operate that provided sex slaves to the Japanese military?</p> <p>• What was daily life like for the sex slaves of the Japanese?</p> <p>• How widespread was the system?</p> <p>• Why is it unacceptable to use the Japanese euphemisms “comfort women” or “comfort stations” to refer to the women and the places where they were violated?</p> <p>• Besides the Chinese victims, what other countries did women come from that suffered the atrocities of the Japanese military sex slave system?</p> <p>• Why have many women not spoken about their rape by the Japanese soldiers? Why are some women speaking now – over 50 years later?</p> <p>• What is the response of the Japanese government to demands for compensation and apology on behalf of the survivors of the military sex slave system in China, Korea, and elsewhere?</p> <p>• What instances of violence against women are occurring in the world today?</p> <p>• What can you do to call for justice and reconciliation on behalf of the women who were forced to be military sex slaves by the Japanese during WW2 and/or women who are victims of rape and violence today?</p> <p>GUIDING QUESTIONS:</p> <p>• After learning about Japanese atrocities against the women of China and other countries during World War II, why is it important to study this history?</p> <p>• Why is survivor testimony critical to understanding this subject?</p> <p>• Why is it crucial to get justice for the victims of the military sex slave system even more than 70 years later?</p>	<p>A: STUDENTS WILL KNOW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the women were forced or tricked into being military sex slaves. • How the Japanese sex slave system operated. • Japanese military set up military sex slave stations wherever Japanese soldiers were stationed, and women from many different countries were enslaved. • The response of the Japanese government to demands for an apology and compensation for the women today. <p>B: STUDENTS WILL UNDERSTAND THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is inaccurate to refer to the women as “comfort women” since this is a Japanese euphemism which is misleading. • Women who are raped, whether in China during World War II, Nazi occupied Europe during the same time, or in places like Sudan today, do not speak about their rape because of shame and humiliation. <p>C: STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the operation of the military sex slave system of the Japanese during World War II. • Examine eyewitness testimony by responding to both survivor testimony and the testimony of Japanese soldiers who served during the Asia Pacific War. • Investigate the response of other nations like the United States to the call for an apology and justice for the Japanese military sex slaves. 	<p>STUDENTS WILL:</p> <p>Keep a journal</p> <p>Answer the essential questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use internet and other reliable sources to answer questions that students would like to know more about in relation to the essential question and report to class. • Engage in active and meaningful participation in classroom discussions and activities including cooperative learning tasks. • Create artwork or creative writing piece that demonstrates knowledge. • Respond to visuals including film, photographs, primary source documents, and survivor accounts by following guided assignment. • Respond to selected readings by scholars and survivors of the Holocaust through guided questions, discussions, and journal reflections. • Outline the organization and operation of the Japanese military sex slave system during the Asia- Pacific War. • Discuss the experience of Chinese women and others who were recruited to be military sex slaves by the Japanese military. • Research the nationalities of the women victimized by the Japanese Imperial Army. • Identify the importance of eyewitness testimonies in studying the sexual enslavement of women during the Asia Pacific War 1931-1945. • Research the response of Japan to call for justice by the former military sex slaves today.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that violence against women is a human rights issue in areas of the world today (ex. Sudan, Congo). • Discuss ways that students can speak for the victims of violence and act to end violence against women in the world today. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the response of the United States and other countries to this call for justice and an apology. • Investigate instances of violence against women in the world today. • Discuss related ethical issues such as actions students can take to speak against violence against women and whether they have a responsibility to speak for the victims.
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SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER RESOURCES:

- Students will learn about the organization and operation of the Japanese military sex slave stations by referring to Handout 5.1 and the following references:

Yoshimi, Yoshiaki. *Comfort Women*. Columbia UP, New York. 2002.

Iris Chang: The Rape of Nanking. DVD.

Nanking. DVD.

- Students will read and respond to testimony of a surviving military sex slave, Mme. Lei Gui-Ying. Her testimony was transcribed by Karen Simmonds, North Delta School District, British Columbia, Canada, 2006. (Handout 5.3).
- Students will refer to Handouts 5.2, 5.4 to learn about the responses of the Japanese and United States government responses to the issue of military sex slaves.
- Students will extend knowledge of military sex slaves during the Asia Pacific War and also related issues today by conducting independent research using multiple sources.
- Students will conduct research using multiple sources on contemporary issues related to violence against women.

Unit 5—Handout 1

Organization and Operation of Military Sex Slave Stations

The 1998 United Nations Commission on Human Rights reported that 200,000 women were forced to be military sex slaves for the Japanese Imperial Army (JIA) during the Asia-Pacific War from 1931 to 1945. Based on the latest research and estimates, most scholars agree that at least 400,000 were victimized when victims of all nationalities are considered.

Women and girls were kidnapped or tricked into becoming sex slaves to service the Japanese soldiers. When the Japanese military occupied an area, residents were rounded up. The “pretty” girls were taken by force and sent to military sex slave stations that were established by the military. In other instances, women who were barely surviving economically were lured by a promise of work and then found themselves forced to be sex slaves to the Japanese soldiers. They were forced to service the soldiers.

Sex Slave Stations were barrack-like stalls or even homes that were taken over by the Japanese army where the women and girls were kept as virtual prisoners. The number of these stations has been estimated to be as high as 2,000. These women were subject to constant degradation, verbal and physical abuse, and the torture of being repeatedly raped or gang raped by many soldiers each day.

The procedure at a typical military sex slave station:

- Soldier paid a fee
- Soldier obtained a ticket and a condom
- Soldier was admitted to a woman's space

Dr. Chen was nine-years old when the Japanese commandeered her family home in Shanghai for military sex slave housing. She and her mother lived in the servant quarters. They saw the Japanese officers and enlisted men who came to have sex with the women and girls forced to service them. According to Dr. Chen, the “pretty girls” were in the rooms in the front and were saved for the officers who could stay overnight. The “ugly girls” were in the rooms in the rear, and they were for the enlisted men. Dr. Chen remembers the girls and women singing sad and soulful songs as they sat on the balcony. She testified to a group of American teachers in 2008 that she felt this was a sign to her that these women had lost their spirit. They were dead inside!

Professor Su of the Chinese “Comfort Women” Research Center at Shanghai Normal University has suggested evidence and artifacts that prove the existence of military sex slave stations:

- Japanese door etchings and lettering
- Condoms – over 10 million were manufactured by the Japanese during the war years.
- Xinmigaol – drug to treat venereal disease
- Potassium Pomegranate particles – disinfectant used to wash women's genitals
- Japanese military map dated August 15, 1937, which shows locations of the military sex slave stations (Japanese referred to as “comfort stations”).
- Photos taken by journalists which are available for download on the internet.

Unit 5—Handout 2

Survivor Testimony of Lei Guiying, Victim of the Japanese Military Sex Slave System, Interviewed in 2006

I am 78 years old. I am the eldest in my family and I had a younger brother. I was seven years old and my brother was five when my father passed away. After my father passed away, my mom worked as a cotton quilt worker. She was then kidnapped, taken to be the wife of someone else. My brother went with her, but I was left behind.

In 1937, I was nine years old. I lived with a family, but they had many children to feed and I was often left starving. One day, I could see the villagers were running away. The men were in the front, followed by women who were carrying their babies. One of the babies started to cry. The baby was thrown into a pond to make it stop crying. I was shocked to see this.

I found my way to my mother's new home. By this time, my mother had a new baby. I tried to help and carry the baby, but one day while I was carrying the baby, the baby's nose was hurt. My mother's new husband blamed me. He hated me and would beat me, hurt me.

I eventually left and started begging in the street. One day, I came across an old woman in the street. The woman told me about a place that was owned by a Japanese man who needed some help. His name was Yarimoto, and he owned a "comfort" house. He had a family; an older boy who was six years old and a younger girl who was three. I was thirteen. Yarimoto took me on and I served as a nanny to his two kids. I was safe and fed for a while.

In the "comfort" house, there were thirteen women, all of whom were Chinese. I later found out that all of the women there were either abducted or cheated into being there. The Japanese soldiers would usually show up on Saturdays and Sundays. You could tell who was a soldier and who was an officer because the officers had long swords while the soldiers only had bayonets.

As days went by, some of the "comfort women" escaped. Eventually, there were only three or four left. They were all opium addicts and very thin. The Japanese soldiers started to notice me.

I would often go out and get groceries for the family, which meant I was allowed a pass that got me through checkpoints. One day, I was out getting groceries with the young boy I cared for. A Japanese soldier found me and tried to rape me. I screamed for the young boy to help me and get his dad, which he started to do. The Japanese soldier, upon hearing who I was with, stopped and left (after having already taken off his pants to prepare to rape me).

The next time, Mr. Yarimoto was not around. A Japanese soldier forced me to go with him by hitting me on the head with the sheath of his sword. He then raped me. Another time, a group of Japanese soldiers worked together to rape me. They bayoneted me in the back. I still have the scars. They covered my mouth. I know the Chinese Nationalist soldiers heard me, but they did not come to my aid. After this, I was forced to become a "comfort woman". I was raped six to seven times a day. When Mr. Yarimoto was around, he would often protect me from the soldiers raping me, but if there were officers there, he would do nothing. The children were kind to me, but they were too young to help.

I stayed there for six months. I then decided to try and escape. At this time, I was a "comfort woman", but I was still working as a nanny and running errands so I had a pass to get me out. I used the pass to go pick up vegetables for the house and I escaped.

I tried to return to my mom's place. She took me in for awhile. I never told her any of what had happened to me.

When I was sixteen, I returned to my original village and made a living looking after the children of others.

At the "comfort" house, I saw many women gang-raped. The women would scream so loudly, then fall

silent. They were then found dead.

I also saw two Chinese POWs beheaded. They bravely faced death, loudly singing Chinese opera in the face of death.

Another incident I saw was of a young girl who was gang raped so badly that her whole belly was swollen. The father of the girl found her eventually. He massaged her belly to calm her down until there was a massive discharge of semen and blood from her private parts.

When I escaped, I took with me some cleaning products that the “comfort women” used. I kept that to use as disinfectant.

I married later in life, but I was unable to bear children so I adopted a son. I adopted him when he was very young, just born. He is now grown up and has many children. I now have a large family.

The first time I spoke about this was only four years back when Professor Jing was in Nanjing doing research. The first time I spoke in public was in April of 2006. My son encouraged me to speak out after he observed that I felt better after having spoken about my experiences.

It is impossible to compensate me. All I want is an apology. I want to make sure there is no more war in the future and no invasions.

There is an Asian Woman's Fund set up by the Japanese government and private funds. It was set up as a charity and the fund does not have an apology attached. Because of this, some women see it as a second insult and therefore, many are not taking it, including Mme. Lei. Many of these women live in very poor conditions which makes their decision to turn down such money even more difficult. In some places, local governments are helping to support former military sex slaves in their area.

Unit 5—Handout 3

Survivor Testimony of Tan Yuhua, Victim of the Japanese Military Sex Slave System, Interviewed on July 4, 2008, Shanghai



In the spring of 1944, Japanese soldiers came to Tan Yuhua's home village, Yao Jia Wan village, on Hainan Island, south of Hong Kong. In her village were about two hundred people. When the Japanese entered the village, many farmers escaped into the mountains. Airplanes dropped bombs on them as they were escaping. These farmers had little food with them; therefore, later they had to return to the village or starve. In August when the farmers returned home, they were captured. One farmer, Chu, was killed when the Japanese set their dogs on him when he returned; he was bitten to death.

The Japanese stationed sentries in trees in order to have an overview of the area and the people. Military dogs were with them. In addition to the sentries, they had big trenches dug where they could stay so that the Chinese soldiers would not see them.

The Japanese went around the village looking for food and money. They had set up a committee to maintain order in the village. They ordered this committee to gather pigs and foodstuffs for the soldiers. The crops were just sprouting. All food crops and livestock were sent to the village committee. The harvest was so bountiful that the Japanese could not possibly have used all the food.

The Japanese looted, burned, and killed. Mrs. Tan witnessed the murders of teachers and farmers. She saw babies murdered when the Japanese pierced them with their bayonets.

When the Japanese opened fire, Mrs. Tan's family hid under a table and covered themselves with quilts for protection. Among the many that the Japanese murdered was her father. He was slightly handicapped; the Japanese killed him with a sword.

There were twenty members in her household that were captured. All the females in the household were raped by the Japanese soldiers—from the oldest, her sixty-five year old grandmother, to the youngest granddaughter, fifteen years old.

A young neighbor, twelve or thirteen years old, was captured and raped by a number of the soldiers. After she was gang-raped, her father rescued her so that she would not die.

Mrs. Tan was captured and forced to be a sex slave. Two classmates from her village were also captured.

Mrs. Tan saw about thirty plus neighbors from the area who were captured and forced to become military sex slaves. Her husband's sister, twenty-six years old, was captured and forced to be a sex slave. All these women were assaulted sexually by one hundred plus Japanese soldiers. One week later the Japanese freed the older women, but kept captive seven younger women who were under twenty, including Mrs. Tan. Most of the women were in their teens; a few were twenty years old. One woman refused to go; they dragged her and she had blood blisters all over her body.

Mrs. Tan was kept as a sex slave for over a month in a so-called "comfort station." Several women were put into one room of a fairly new house. They were given food but could not eat anything. When the Japanese soldiers came into the room they were beastly—barbarous. They behaved badly toward the Chinese women. She does not recall how many raped her. Most of the women were timid and fearful of the Japanese. However, one woman was brave and defiant. If women did not submit to rape, they were beaten. One young woman escaped but was captured. The Japanese dug a hole and buried her up to her chest. She suffocated and died.

Before the Japanese surrendered, the women were sent home because the head of the village committee told them to do this. They were released on guarantees. Two of Mrs. Tan's relatives had children from these rapes. There were no bad feelings when the women returned to their village; after all, they had been forced at gun point to leave with the soldiers.

Mrs. Tan was beaten by these soldiers. She still has backaches from the beatings. In addition, she has emotional pain: nightmares, headaches, and difficulty facing people. She has since then felt bad about her own body, shame—she couldn't raise her head in front of her neighbors who know her story.

Mrs. Tan wants people to know her story; it is the truth. She wants her story to stand as evidence of what happened. The Japanese caused a lot of suffering and death in her village alone. She hopes someday to find justice—an apology for what the Japanese did to innocent girls and women.

Unit 5—Handout 4

Discussion Questions

1. How does a thirteen year old nanny become a sexual slave? How does that become acceptable?
2. Mme. Lei was encouraged to speak by her son, but many other “comfort women” have hesitated to come forward with their stories because of fear bringing shame on their families. One woman’s husband even said to her that a “used dog was better than a used woman.” What can be done to encourage families to support “comfort women” survivors in their families?
3. What aftereffects did the women experience?
4. How can sharing an experience help one heal from it? Is this always the case?
5. In recent years, rape has been used as a war tactic in Bosnia and in the Sudan. Is there anything the international community can do to prevent this from happening now and in the future?
6. Is rape during war and genocide classified as a “crime against humanity”?

Unit 5—Handout 5

United States Response: House Resolution 121, 2007

United States Response to Japan's refusal to apologize for wrong committed during WW II regarding Japan's military sex slaves :

Congressman Honda of California introduced House Resolution 121 during the 110th Congress in 2007. It stated:

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as "comfort women," during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II.

Whereas the "comfort women" system of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan, considered unprecedented in its cruelty and magnitude, included gang rape, forced abortions, humiliation and sexual violence resulting in mutilation, death, or eventual suicide in one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century;

Now, therefore be it resolved, that it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan—

- should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as "comfort women" . . . ;
- should have this official apology given as a public statement presented by the Prime Minister of Japan in his official capacity;
- should clearly and publicly refute any claims that the sexual enslavement and trafficking of the 'comfort women' for the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces never occurred; and
- should educate current and future generations about this horrible crime while following the recommendations of the international community with respect to the "comfort women."

After reading the Resolution write a response paper.

Unit 5—Handout 6

Japanese Government Response

When the war was over in 1945, the women who were held as military sex slaves did not talk about their experiences because of the shame and embarrassment for themselves and their families.

It was not until 1991 that former military sex slaves from Korea filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government.

Since 1992, “Korean Grandmas” (affectionate term for those who were held as military sex slaves) have held a demonstration every Wednesday in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, Korea. At the “Wednesday Demonstrations,” these women and their supporters are continuing to call for an apology from the Japanese government for the crimes committed against them during WW II. They continue to assemble each Wednesday.

In 1993, Filipina women filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government.

In 1995 the Japanese government set up the Asian Women’s Fund. This is a private organization established to compensate the former military sex slaves known as “comfort women.” Many former military sex slaves refuse to accept compensation since there is no official apology from the Japanese government.

As of 2009, the Japanese government has not officially accepted responsibility or apologized for holding hundreds of thousands of women as military sex slaves during World War II. Their response is either denial or silence.

Today, Japanese school textbooks do not have any mention of military sex slaves during WW II, and present and future generations are not being educated about the past.

After reading the above, write a response paper.

Discuss this response and the response to handout 6 in groups.

Unit 5—Suggested Bibliography

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