

TEACHER'S RESOURCE SERIES NO. 1

CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES FOR  
“COMFORT WOMEN”  
EDUCATION

(For High School)

[www.ComfortWomenEducation.org](http://www.ComfortWomenEducation.org)



*Taken Away by Soon-duk Kim. 1995*

KOREAN AMERICAN FORUM OF CALIFORNIA  
COMFORT WOMEN JUSTICE COALITION

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**Curriculum and Resources for  
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More information is available at  
*www.ComfortWomenEducation.org*

This resource guide has been jointly created by Korean American Forum  
of California and Comfort Women Justice Coalition.

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*Special thanks to House of Sharing.*

*O*ur worst fear is that  
*our painful history during World  
War II will be forgotten.*

—A “Comfort Woman” survivor

**WINNERS OF THE "COMFORT WOMEN" POSTER CONTEST IN 2018  
(HIGH SCHOOL)**



Jin Kim, Crescenta Valley High School (11th)



Christine Joo, West Ranch High School (12th)



Cloe Maurer, South Pasadena High School (9th)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### “Why should we teach and learn about the “Comfort Women”?”

The reasons for learning about the “Comfort Women” are no different from the reasons for learning about historical atrocities like American Slavery, the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust—to examine the painful lessons of the past and prevent similar tragedies in the future.

“Comfort Women” is a euphemistic term coined by the Imperial Armed Forces of Japan, and it refers to the largest case of human trafficking and systemic sex slavery in modern history that was created and controlled by the Imperial Japanese government during 1932 and 1945. Through the use of force, abductions, and false promises of paid work for the wartime effort, the Japanese military coerced hundreds of thousands of women and children, including girls as young as 12 years old, into sex slavery. The euphemism of “Comfort Women” was widely used to refer to the victims, but the policy of providing sex for soldiers was a deliberate part of military strategy and aggression. To this day, the Japanese government refuses to acknowledge official responsibility for the system or that it constituted a war crime or a crime against humanity.

No one knows exactly how many girls and women were victimized because the Japanese military destroyed most of the evidentiary documents when surrender was imminent. But the surviving documents and the testimonies of victims and witnesses, such as military officers and soldiers, demonstrate the existence and scale of the sex slavery system.

In the 1990s, historians estimated that the number of victims ranged from 50,000 to 200,000 with the majority being Korean girls. However, recent research by Chinese scholars indicates that the estimate may be as high as 400,000 including an overwhelming number of girls from China. (*Chinese Comfort Women*, Qui, Su and Chen, Oxford University, 2014.) Because of the Japanese empire’s geographical reach, the nationalities of the victims spanned more than a dozen occupied territories, including Korea (South and North), China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, and East Timor—as well as countries with a military and civilian presence in those regions, like the Netherlands, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In 2016, the California Board of Education included an explanation of the Japanese imperial sex slavery system in the revised 10th Grade History/Social Science Framework:

*“Comfort Women” is a euphemism that describes women who were forced into sexual service by the Japanese Army in occupied territories before and during the war. Comfort Women can be taught as an example of institutionalized sexual slavery; estimates on the total number of Comfort Women vary, but most argue that hundreds of thousands of women were forced into these situations during Japanese occupation. On December 28, 2015, the governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea entered into an agreement regarding the issues of Comfort Women. Two translations of this document can be found at [http://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/na/kr/page4e\\_000364.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000364.html) (accessed June 29, 2017) and [http://www.mofa.go.kr/ENG/press/ministrynews/20151228/1\\_71575.jsp?menu=m\\_10\\_10](http://www.mofa.go.kr/ENG/press/ministrynews/20151228/1_71575.jsp?menu=m_10_10) (accessed June 29, 2017).*

The end of this section, which refers to a verbal agreement announced by Japanese and South Korean Foreign Ministers in 2015 at a joint press conference, was slipped in without public knowledge after the Japanese government lobbied the California Department of Education. At the time, the verbal agreement was declared to have “finally and irreversibly” resolved the issue, but it has since been widely criticized for the failure to consult with victims and is now on the brink of being dismantled.

There is much more progress to be made, but the survivors’ campaign for dignity and human rights, starting with their courageous decision to break the silence, illustrates the slow but steady tide of change. After the survivors of the wartime sex slavery system began telling their stories, other victims of sexual violence and their supporters from around the world were inspired to speak out. In the 1990s, international courts began enforcing rape as a war crime and a crime against humanity in relation to genocide. In 2007, the United States House of Representatives unanimously passed House Resolution 121 urging the Japanese government to formally acknowledge and accept historical responsibility for the sex slavery system. In Seoul, the weekly demonstrations in front of the Japanese embassy by the Korean survivors known as the “grandmothers” continue every Wednesday at noon, as they have for the past 27 years.

As of this date, more than 70 years have passed since World War II ended and 27 years have passed since Korean survivor Hak-soon Kim gave the first public testimony in 1991 about enduring as a military sex slave under the Japanese empire. Yet the epidemic of sexual violence against women during armed conflict is ongoing and worldwide. The stories of victims are challenged or silenced or, even worse, do not result in prompt intervention or redress. Learning about the grandmothers’ experience from this perspective is important for gaining a critical analysis of the past in relation to current events. The stories of their courage and struggle for human dignity will inspire students to stay conscientious and proactive against injustice.

The grandmothers’ experience is a study not only in human survival, but also of a larger struggle for justice, historical accuracy, and civic responsibility in the face of the potential abuse of power resulting from conflicts among nations. The history of the grandmothers is still largely unknown in the United States, but the lessons it carries across disciplines are fundamental to the awareness, education, and compassion of future generations.

Phyllis Kim  
Executive Director of KAFC  
Executive Committee of CWJC



## 2. PRIMARY EVIDENCE



### Background Information of the Japanese Military 'Comfort Women' System's Establishment: Explanation of the Source Material

#### 1 War Journal of the 9th Brigade Ground Force (July, 1938)

It demands tightened control and establishment of comfort stations to prevent an anti-Japanese mood due to Japanese soldiers' rape crimes against women in the occupied area.

Credit: Yoshiaki Yoshimi Source: Defense Institute Library, Japanese Defense Agency, Japan

#### 2 Unique Phenomena of War and Its Countermeasure (June, 1939)

Japanese army Lieutenant Torao Hayao's thesis, "A Study of War Psychology" reveals the establishment of comfort stations to prevent rapes and reports actual cases of rape incidents.

Credit: Yoshiaki Yoshimi Source: Defense Institute Library, Japanese Defense Agency, Japan

Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))



1 Chinese 'comfort women' sitting on a temporary bed at the American POW camp in Myanmar.  
Credit: Imperial War Museum, England.

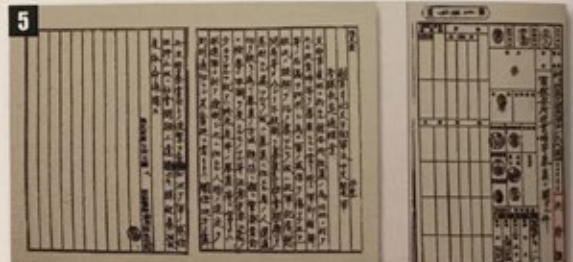
2 'Comfort women' in transit to a new location by truck.  
Credit: Aya Murase

3 Chinese 'comfort women' at the American POW camp in Myanmar.  
Credit: Imperial War museum, England.



#### 4 Travel Certificate (Sep.2, 1940)

The certificate requests the authority to provide convenience for a comfort station owner since 'comfort women' are absolutely necessary for the military. Credit: Hirofumi Hayashi

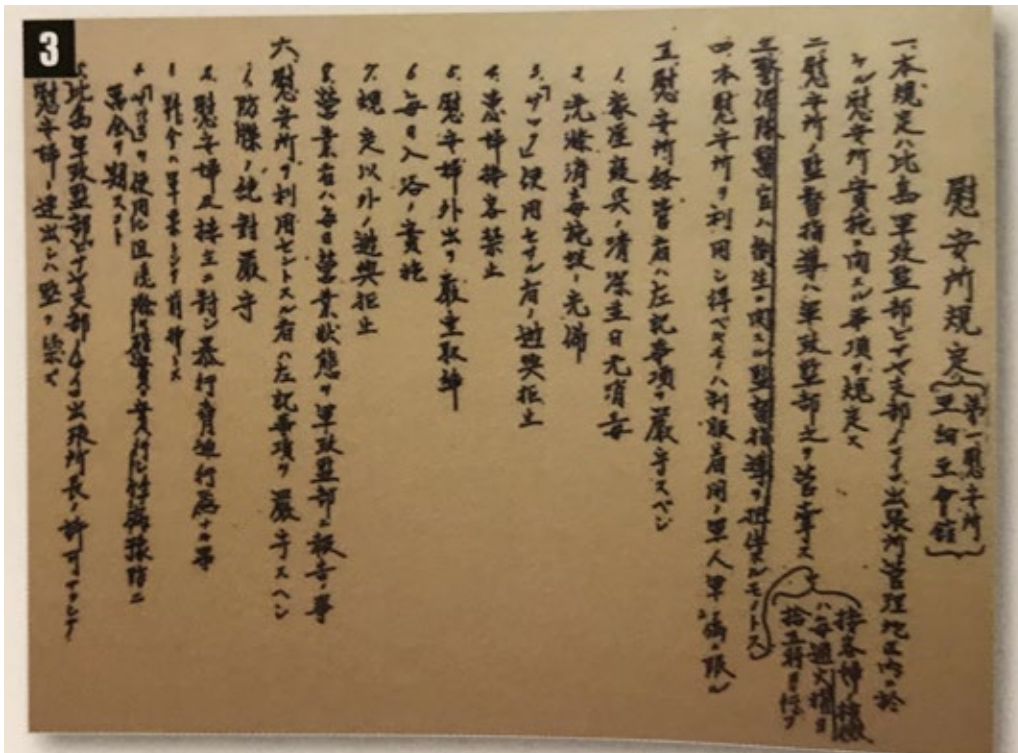


#### 5 An official document regarding the recruitment of the Japanese military 'comfort women' (Mar.4, 1938)

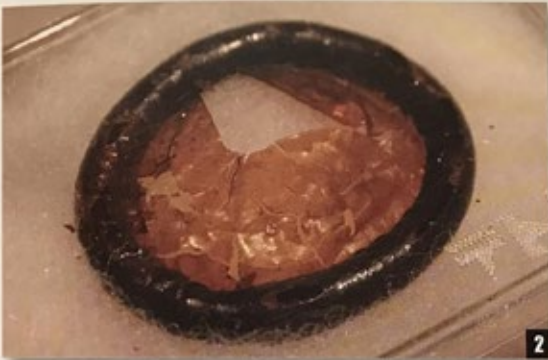
Prepared by the department of military affairs of the Japanese army; they claim that military control is necessary to prevent the side effects of recruiting 'comfort women.'

Credit: Yoshiaki Yoshimi Source: Office of Diplomatic Archives, Department of Foreign Affairs, Japan.

Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))




Regulations of comfort stations (July 20, 1942). Document created at the clinic, Irorio Logistic Support Branch. Credit: Hirofumi Hayashi/Source: Defense Institute Library, Defense Agency, Japan. Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))




**2**

**1 Military scrip**  
The Japanese military issued military scrip to soldiers who used it as currency within the military area in which they were stationed. The scrip was also used at the comfort stations. The scrip on display was issued in China and the Philippines respectively.  
Donor: Isamu Kuniyoshi.



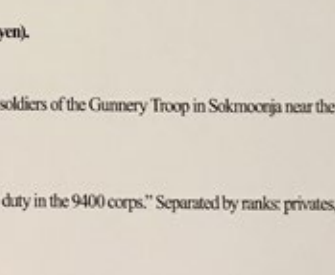
**3**

**2 Satku (condom)**  
The Japanese military called a condom a "satku," and the brand they used was called *dotsugeki ichiban* (number one attack). A Japanese local historian Isamu Kuniyoshi found the *satku* displayed here inside an underground tunnel (a former Japanese military supply storage space) under the Shuri hill in Okinawa, Japan.  
Donor: Isamu Kuniyoshi.



**4**

**3 Front and back of military scrip (10 yen).**  
Credit: Rumiko Nishino.



**5**

**4 Special discount slip, 1941**  
A comfort station discount slip, used by soldiers of the Gunnery Troop in Sokmoorija near the Russian-Manchurian border until 1945.  
Credit: Rumiko Nishino.

**5 Comfort station ticket**  
Included in the "list of soldiers on active duty in the 9400 corps." Separated by ranks: privates, petty officers, and officers.  
Credit: Rumiko Nishino.

Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))

## PUBLIC MEMORIALS IN THE UNITED STATES



Palisades Park, New Jersey (2010)



Bergen County Courthouse, New Jersey (2013)



Glendale, California (2013)



Union City, New Jersey (2014)

### Inscription of the Glendale Peace Monument

#### PEACE MONUMENT

In memory of more than 200,000 Asian and Dutch women who were removed from their homes in Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, East Timor and Indonesia, to be coerced into sexual slavery by the Imperial Armed Forces of Japan between 1932 and 1945

And in celebration of proclamation of "Comfort Women Day" by the City of Glendale on July 30, 2012, and of passing of House Resolution 121 by the United States Congress on July 30, 2007, urging the Japanese Government to accept historical responsibility for these crimes

It is our sincere hope that these unconscionable violations of human rights shall never recur. July 30, 2013



Fairfax County Building, Virginia (2014)



Brookhaven, Georgia (2017)



San Francisco, California (2017)



Fort Lee, New Jersey (2018)

## Inscription of the San Francisco Memorial "Comfort Women" Column of Strength

*"Our worst fear is that our painful history during World War II will be forgotten" —former "Comfort Woman"*

This Monument bears witness to the suffering of hundreds of thousands of women and girls, euphemistically called "Comfort Women," who were sexually enslaved by the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces in thirteen Asian Pacific countries from 1931 to 1945. Most of these women died during their wartime captivity. This dark history was largely hidden for decades until the 1990s, when the survivors courageously broke their silence. They helped move the world to

declare that sexual violence as a strategy of war is a crime against humanity for which governments must be held accountable.

This memorial is dedicated to the memory of these women, and to eradicating sexual violence and sex trafficking throughout the world.

Gift of the "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition

Collection of the City and County of San Francisco

## 4. REVIEWS AND COMMENTS

### Lisa Shek

Ms. Shek is a veteran educator who has dedicated 31 years in education in the San Francisco Unified School District as a classroom teacher, resource teacher, and a school principal. She currently hosts a monthly community service radio program in a local Chinese radio station on family and school.

Ms. Shek's review of the lesson plan is as follows;

*The curriculum writing team has thoughtfully utilized an Inquiry Design Model that facilitates the teaching and learning of "Comfort Women," a complex subject to be explored by high school students for the first time in their classrooms.*

*In addition, the best instructional practices, such as formative and summative tasks and cooperative group works, are utilized to help students understand the dark history of "Comfort Women" during WWII and engage them in meaningful discussions and reflective thinking of their social responsibility in stopping sexual violence against women in present days.*

*This unit study is a pioneer of its kind and I am excited that it has found a place in the social studies curriculum of our schools.*

### Julie Tang

Judge Tang is a retired judge and a co-chair of the "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition;

*The KAFC and CWJC's digital curriculum provides the substantive aspect of the "Comfort Women" history with a strong emphasis on its effects on modern-day sex trafficking. The comprehensive curriculum materials present a compelling case of the use of sexual slavery by the Japanese military as a war strategy and why this phenomenon is still relevant today as we witness wide scale sex trafficking and enslavement of women and girls in different parts of the world.*

*The unique aspect of this curriculum guide is that it presents the academic necessity of a curriculum, and stays true to objective learning by providing a clear path, without editorializing or politicization, for the student to understand and appreciate the hidden history of the "Comfort Women."*

## 5. FULL CURRICULUM (IDM STYLE)

### 10<sup>th</sup> Grade “Comfort Women” Inquiry

Who were the “Comfort Women” and Why is it so important to know about their struggle for justice?



Korean “comfort women” who survived and were protected in Lameng, Yunnan, September 3, 1945. The US National Archives

#### Developed by:

- Beverly Milner (Lee) Bisland: Ed.D. in Social Studies Education, Associate Professor at Queens College, City University of New York
- Sunghee Shin: Ed.D. in Instructional Technology and Media, Associate Professor at Queens College, City University of New York
- Jimin Kim: Ph.D. in Korea history

**[SESSION 1]**

1. Who were the “Comfort Women” and how was the “Comfort Women” system established? What did the “Comfort Women” go through?

**[SESSION 2]**

2. How are the crimes against the “Comfort Women” an ongoing issue? How have they struggled to be heard?
3. Why is this history relevant to us today? What can we do to stop ongoing institutionalized sexual violence against women?

[Summative Performance Task] Who were the “Comfort Women” and why is it so important to know about their struggle for justice?

**[TAKING INFORMED ACTION]**

See Table on the next page.

Inquiry Design Model (IDM) Blueprint™		
<b>Compelling Question</b>	Who were the “Comfort Women” and why is it so important to know about their struggle for justice?	
<b>Staging the Question</b>	<p>Discuss the meaning of “comfort” and its application to sexual exploitation during wartime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ “Section I. Definition,” from UN rapporteur’s special report on Comfort Women, 1996 (paragraphs 6–10)</li> </ul> <p>Using two maps of the Japanese Empire during World War II, ask students to assess geographic and economic differences in the various locations and how these factors might affect conditions for “Comfort Women” and the exploitation of local populations to provide “Comfort Women” for the Japanese military.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Map of Comfort Station locations (Source: WAM)</li> <li>■ Map of the Japanese Empire: 1942</li> </ul>	
<b>Supporting Question 1</b>	<b>Supporting Question 2</b>	<b>Supporting Question 3</b>
Who were the “Comfort Women” and how was the “Comfort Women” system established? What did the victims go through?	How are the crimes against the “Comfort Women” an ongoing issue? How have the survivors struggled to be heard?	Why is this history relevant to us today? What can we do to stop ongoing institutionalized sexual violence against women?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Watch a video and in small groups, discuss about what you thought and what you would like to learn about this issue.</li> <li>■ During the Powerpoint lecture, take notes and list five important things that you have learned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Read the New York Times article. Highlight five sentences that jump out at you and write down why. List three things that you would like to understand better.</li> <li>■ Read the House of Representatives Resolution 121 and testimonies of former “Comfort Women.” In groups, role-play the congressional hearing into the effects of sexual slavery on the women who testified.</li> </ul>	<p>In groups, conduct a project to actively remember and support the “Comfort Women” survivors and today’s human trafficking victims.</p> <p>Possible projects include, but are not limited to, 1) creating a story book or a flowchart of a comfort woman’s life from WWII to today, 2) creating a brochure, flyer, or poster that reports about the history of sex slavery, and 3) writing a letter to the survivors or to the organizations advocating justice for the “Comfort Women.”</p>
<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>
<p>Video: Her Story</p> <p>Video: In the Name of the Emperor</p> <p>Video: Comfort Women Wanted</p>	<p>US House of Representatives Resolution 121</p> <p>Article on the current issues regarding the “Comfort Women”: “The Comfort Women and Japan’s War on Truth” (New York Times)</p> <p>Video: Asian American Life</p>	<p>Testimony of Ms. Yong Soo Lee, from U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on February 15, 2007 (pages 17–23)</p> <p>Testimony of Ms. Jan Ruff O’Herne, from U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on February 15, 2007 (pages 23–28)</p> <p>Testimony of Ms. Zhou Fenying, from Chinese “Comfort Women” (2013) (pages 89–93)</p>
<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	<b>Argument</b>	<p>Who were the “Comfort Women” and why is it so important to know about their struggle for justice?</p> <p>Construct an argument (e.g. detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses a compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from sources while acknowledging competing views.</p>
	<b>Extension</b>	<p>Work collaboratively to write an argument outlining why it is important to know about “Comfort Women” and their struggle for justice.</p>
<b>Taking Informed Action</b>	<p><b>Understand:</b> Research an incident of sexual exploitation and/or trafficking today.</p> <p><b>Assess:</b> Determine different groups’ and individuals’ responsibility for exploitation and how they might be held accountable for their actions.</p> <p><b>Act:</b> Contact NGOs, such as Crisis Aid, that help victims of sex trafficking, in order to conduct a discussion in your class of ways in which communities and individuals can combat this problem either globally or locally.</p>	



## OVERVIEW

During this inquiry, students will investigate the “Comfort Women” system of human trafficking and sexual slavery organized by the Japanese military during WWII. Students will come to understand the importance of remembering these atrocities and how they connect to similar incidents of sexual exploitation today. The crimes inflicted on the “Comfort Women,” including human trafficking and sexual slavery, constitute one of the most serious human rights violations in world history. Estimates vary as to how many women were involved, but most agree that hundreds of thousands of women were victimized. A majority of the women were from Korea and China, although many women from Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, East Timor, and the Dutch East Indies, as well as European women in Japanese-occupied territories, were forced into sexual slavery. “Comfort Stations” were located in Japan, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Macau, and what were then Malaya, Burma, New Guinea, and French Indochina. It is the responsibility of our global civil society to recognize and give voice to those who have suffered from inhumane crimes, to defend their human rights, and to restore their dignity. By remembering the victims we can help to stop the occurrence of another Holocaust or system of sexual slavery.

Through this inquiry, students will investigate the nature of the “Comfort Women” system established by the Japanese Imperial Military during WWII and how the survivors have become activists while struggling to restore their human rights and dignity. During their investigation, students will learn both the history and the ongoing debate around the “Comfort Women” in order to grasp the importance of this issue. As an extension, students will research human trafficking today and relate it to the “Comfort Women.” They will consider how these ongoing human rights violations can be opposed in today’s world.

## STRUCTURE OF THE INQUIRY

In addressing the compelling question “Who were the “Comfort Women” and why is it so important to know about them and their struggle for justice?” students will work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument with evidence while acknowledging competing perspectives.

## STAGING THE COMPELLING QUESTION

As a full class students will consider the meaning of the word comfort and how it is used in the euphemism “Comfort Women.” For reference, they can read the “Definition” section from the UN Rapporteur’s report on “Comfort Women” in 1996.

To judge the extent of the system they will view two maps: one showing Japanese expansion by 1942 and the other showing comfort station locations throughout the Japanese Empire.





## SUPPORTING QUESTIONS AND FORMATIVE PERFORMANCE TASKS

### [SESSION 1]

**Supporting Question 1.** Who were the “Comfort Women” and how was the “Comfort Women” system established? What did the “Comfort Women” go through?

**Purpose:** This session introduces the “Comfort Women” system as a case of wartime atrocity and gender-based violation against human rights during World War II to students.

**Objective:** Students will be able to determine the meaning of the term “Comfort Women,” and learn about their experiences through reading and video materials. They will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the issue in group discussion.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.4.3, 10.7, 10.8.6

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH<sub>4</sub>, 9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.1-8; PII. 1-2

The first supporting question—Who were the “Comfort Women” and how was the “Comfort Women” system established? What did the “Comfort Women” go through? – introduces students to the background history and the nature of the “Comfort Women” system. Students will learn what “Comfort Women” victims went through, not only during the war, but also long after the war ended.

Teachers begin by giving a lecture using the Powerpoint file. The lecture should help students understand the “Comfort Women” system within the context of WWII—how the Japanese empire expanded beginning in the 1930s and how the Japanese military established and managed the “Comfort Women” system during the war. Students will take notes during the lecture and list five important things that they have learned or would like to learn about the issue.

Then students will watch one of the featured videos (choose from A, B, or C) regarding “Comfort Women.” The videos will help students to understand how these women were forced or tricked into sexual slavery, what their experiences were, and how much shame and degradation they felt—so much that they did not come forward for decades. Testimonies in the videos are graphic, but necessary to fully understand the human rights violations that the women endured. Students will work in pairs and discuss what they thought or felt about the video.

Featured Powerpoint for background history

Featured Video A: *Her Story—Animated video of testimony of Seo-Woon Chung* (10:54)

Featured Video B: *In the Name of the Emperor* (by Nancy Tong. 08:47)

Featured Video C: *Comfort Women Wanted* (by Chang-jin Lee. 09:37)

### QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Did the women deserve the treatment and suffering they went through? Why and why not?
- Explain what made the life for the survivors difficult when they came back?
- Why do you think the survivors remained silent for so long?
- Do victims of sexualized violence today still face shame and stigma from society?

## [SESSION 2]

**Supporting Question 2.** How are the crimes against the “Comfort Women” an ongoing issue? How have the survivors struggled to be heard?

**Purpose:** This session will let students see the effect of the forced sexual slavery system on the victims. Students will learn that the “Comfort Women” system is not only history in the past, but an on-going issue.

**Objective:** Students will be able to compare different points of view on the “Comfort Women” issue and assess the reasoning and evidence of each view.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.4.3; 10.7, 10.8.6

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH6, 8, 9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI. 1, 3-9, 11, 12; PII. 1, 2, 6, 7

The second supporting question—How are the crimes against the “Comfort Women” an ongoing issue? How have the survivors struggled to be heard? – allows students to further understand the effects of forced sexual exploitation on “Comfort Women” after their liberation, as well as denials of what happened and other issues today. Students will learn how former “Comfort Women” transformed themselves from victims to activists – how they remained in silence for decades, came forward to tell their stories, and struggled to make their voices heard. They have become activists advocating women’s human rights. Teachers can use the Powerpoint’s section 17, “Ongoing Issues,” to introduce current issues regarding “Comfort Women.”

### Performance Task Option (1)

Students will read Mindy Kotler’s article from the New York Times (Featured Source A), highlight five sentences that jump out at them, and explain why. They may also compose three questions about issues that they would like to understand better. In small groups, students will share their lists and discuss them. If time permits, they can read other articles or watch a video (Featured Sources B to H) for reference. Their questions and discussion will be a useful source in creating a project in the third Performance Task and writing an essay in the Summative Performance Task.

Featured Source A: *The Comfort Women and Japan’s War on Truth*—article on the position of Japan under Prime Minister Abe (by Mindy Kotler, The New York Times: November 14, 2014)

Featured Source B: *An Uncomfortable Legacy*—article on the 2015 agreement and its aftermath (by Alexis Dudden, The Indian Express: January 14, 2016)

Featured Source C: *Why This Statue of a Young Girl Caused a Diplomatic Incident*—article on the attitude of activists (from CNN: February 10, 2017)

Featured Source D: *Official Statement of WCCW, Inc.* (Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues)—Position of a non-profit US activist group (Appendix 1)

Featured Source E: *Japan’s Stance on “Comfort Women” Issue Violates Victims’ Rights*—UN official Statement of the United Nations (from UN website)

Featured Source F: *Recommendations on the “Comfort Women” issue* (pages 7–8) from UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Report, 2016

Featured Source G: *Asian American Life*—video showing “Comfort Women” survivors speaking out against the 2015 agreement

## Performance Task Option (2)

This option allows students to examine the role of the United States House of Representatives in investigating the suffering of the “Comfort Women.” Students will read the U.S. House of Representatives Resolution 121 (Featured Source B) on “Comfort Women” and testimonies of survivors at the congressional hearing. In groups, the students will reenact the House of Representatives hearings by taking on the roles of “Comfort Women” survivors testifying and members of the House, who have different attitudes on the US role, questioning the witnesses. Articles and videos from Performance Task Option (1) may be used to support their opinions in the role-play.

Featured Source A: *US House of Representatives Resolution 121*

Featured Source B: *Testimony of Ms. Yong Soo Lee, from U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on February 15, 2007 (Appendix 2, pages 17-23)*

Featured Source C: *Testimony of Ms. Jan Ruff O’Herne, from U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on February 15, 2007 (Appendix 2, pages 23-28)*

Featured Source D: *Testimony of Ms. Zhou Fenyng, from Chinese Comfort Women (2013) (pages 89-93)*

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Why do you think the “Comfort Women” is still an ongoing issue?
- What do you think is the most important redress for the “Comfort Women” survivors?
- Explain different views on the “Comfort Women” issue.
- Do you think the “Comfort Women” movement failed because the survivors have not gotten an apology from the Japanese government? Why and why not?

**Supporting Question 3.** Why is this history relevant to us today? What can we do to stop ongoing institutionalized sexual violence against women?

**Purpose:** This activity helps students understand what it means to obtain justice for the “Comfort Women” victims and why and how it is important for the “Comfort Women” victims to gain recognition and reparations.

**Objective:** Students will work on projects in group, making connections between historical events (“Comfort Women”) and today’s issues.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.4.3, 10.7, 10.8.6

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: WHST.2, 7

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.1-3, 5, 9-11; PII.3-7

The third supporting question—Why is this history relevant to us today? What can we do to stop ongoing institutionalized sexual violence against women? – asks students to consider the reasons that we have to learn this history, leading them to see connections between history and current issues. In groups, students engage in projects to support the “Comfort Women” victims in their quest to restore their human rights and dignity and to stop today’s human trafficking crimes. “Comfort Women” survivors’ testimonies [Featured Sources B to E from Supporting Question 2, Task Option (2)] can be referred to and quoted. Students may select one of the following options, but are also free to create their own projects.

**Example 1**

Create a story book or a flowchart of a Comfort Woman survivor's life from her perspective. Please include her experiences during the war as well as her activities today in raising her voice to gain the world's attention.

**Featured Website A:** *www.storybird.com* — Free online storybook tool

**Featured Website B:** *www.poppet.com* — Free graphic organizer

**Example 2**

Create a brochure, flyer, or poster about the history of sex slavery to make the issue known to a public audience. Students can include other examples of human trafficking and war crimes against women, both historical and contemporary.

**Featured Website C:** *www.canva.com* — Free online brochure program

**Example 3**

Write a supportive letter to “Comfort Women” survivors or to organizations advocating justice for “Comfort Women.” There are many such non-profit organizations in the U.S., Korea, Japan, Taiwan, China, the Philippines, and other countries.

**QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS**

- How can the atrocity such as “Comfort Women” be prevented? What would be the first step?
- Do you feel that what happened to these women can happen again in today's world? Why and why not?

**Summative Performance Task**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate understanding of the “Comfort Women” issue through their written work with specific evidence.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: WHST<sub>1</sub>, 4

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.10-12; PII.2-7

At this point in the inquiry, students have explored the impact on individual lives of the Japanese “Comfort Women” System during World War II, the Japanese government's involvement in its establishment and maintenance, and the position of different governments and international groups towards the issue of recognition and reparations. This exploration has introduced students to the complexity and differing attitudes involved in an international debate over war atrocities. In this task, students should construct an evidence-based argument responding to the compelling question, “Why is it so important to know about “Comfort Women” and their struggle for justice?” Students should be able to demonstrate the extent of their understanding of the issue as well as an ability to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. The arguments can take different forms, including a detailed outline, poster, or essay.

Although students' opinions will vary, they could include any of the following arguments:

- Although these atrocities occurred seventy years ago and most of the victims are deceased, the incidents should be given recognition.
- Learning about “Comfort Women” is important to prevent such crimes in the future. It is vital to educate the young generation about crimes against human rights.
- An official and sincere apology and appropriate compensation should be awarded to victims for their suffering, both during and after World War II, from those involved in the comfort system. This action will help lessen the shame of the victims and their families and partly make up for the difficulty they experienced integrating back into their home societies after the war. By learning about this history, we will be able to support “Comfort Women” survivors as they restore their dignity.
- It is an important history to remember, not only because of the atrocities involved in the “Comfort Women” system, but also due to the survivors' struggles, which have changed our view of war and crimes against women.
- Civilized society has a moral obligation to remember, to give voice to those victims of human rights violation, and to defend their human rights. Like the Holocaust, the crimes against the “Comfort Women” are a powerful illustration of why we need to defend human rights.

### Taking Informed Action

**Objective:** By researching on human trafficking cases today, students will be able to write informative texts, citing specific evidence to support their research and related actions.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH.1; WHST.2, 8, 9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.1-6, 9-II; PII.3-7

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by investigating an incident of sexual exploitation and/or trafficking in today's world, either internationally or domestically. They should show that they understand the issue by researching how sexual exploitation affects the lives of the victims both during their exploitation and afterwards, when they attempt to reintegrate into society. They may extend their argument by contrasting victims' silence vs. speaking out and by discussing how to resolve the issue. They exhibit their ability to assess by examining the relationship between war and sexual violence in both the “Comfort Women” system and today's atrocities against women. They act by contacting an NGO, such as Crisis Aid, that helps victims of sex trafficking, in order to conduct a discussion in class of the ways in which communities and individuals can combat the problem of sexual exploitation and/or trafficking, either globally or locally.

### QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Why is the “Comfort Women” issue a social justice case? How is the issue relevant to us?
- How would you compare the “Comfort Women” case with today's cases of human trafficking and sexualized violence?



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## 6. SHORT LESSON PLANS

### A. Reading and Understanding Life of “Comfort Women”

**Purpose:** This activity allows students to find historical facts from stories of “Comfort Women” in their own words. In addition to understanding historical background, students will see what these women went through and learn the nature of “Comfort Women” system during WWII.

**Objective:** Students will read or watch the experiences of “Comfort Women” survivors. They will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the issue and learn how to deal with those personal stories (primary sources) as historical evidence.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.4.3, 10.7, 10.8.3, 10.8.6

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH2, 3, 6, 8, 9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.1-9, PII.1, 2, 6, 7

#### Procedure:

\* **NOTE:** Warn the class ahead of time that testimonies in the videos or documents contain sexual violence. These are graphic, but are necessary to fully understand the human rights violations that the women endured.

- Teachers assign students reading of “Comfort Women” testimony. Depending on the class’ size and condition, teachers can assign the same testimony to the entire class, or divide the class into small groups and assign different testimonies to different groups.
- Students, based on their reading, fill out the Analyzing a Document Worksheet.
- Teachers assign questions for students can answer in small groups. Suggested questions include:
  - ▲ How did she become a military sex slave?
  - ▲ What was her experience like?
  - ▲ What feelings did she have about her experience?
  - ▲ Did she, or other “Comfort Women” resist or attempt to escape?  
What happened if they did?
  - ▲ How did she survive?
  - ▲ How would you describe her life after the war ended?
- Teachers lead a whole class discussion about the testimonies. Students will be able to share what they filled out in the worksheet, what they discussed in small groups, and what they felt and thought about the survivor’s experience. They will discuss why it is important to learn about this history.
- Teachers can use the following discussion questions for students to gain a deeper understanding of the “Comfort Women” system:
  - ▲ How did the recruitment and deception of the “Comfort Women” relate to other aspects of wartime mobilization in Japan?
  - ▲ For a long time, the history of the “Comfort Women” was not widely known or discussed. What reasons may there have been for the silence?

## Materials / Handouts

- *Analyze a Testimony Document Worksheet* (see next page)

### Teachers can select testimonies from the following readings:

- ▲ Testimony of Ms. Yong Soo Lee, from U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on February 15, 2007 (pages 17-23)
- ▲ Testimony of Ms. Jan Ruff O’Herne, from U.S. House of Representatives Hearing on February 15, 2007 (pages 23-28)
- ▲ Testimony of Ms. Zhou Fening, from Peipei Qiu, Zhiliang Su, & Lifei Chen eds., *Chinese Comfort Women – Testimonies from Imperial Japan’s Sex Slaves* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) (pages 89-93)
- ▲ Sangmie Choi Schellstede eds., *Comfort Women Speak: Testimony by Sex Slaves of the Japanese Military* (Holmes & Meier Publishers, 2000)
- ▲ Jan Ruff-O’Herne, *Fifty Years of Silence* (Mehta Publishing House, 2011)

## Analyze a Testimony Document

### Observe

a. Who is the author?

b. List three things the author said that you think are important.

c. What was happening at the time in history the author mentions?

### Reflect

d. Why do you think the author talked about her experience?

e. What evidence in the testimony helps you know why it was written?  
Quote from the document.

f. What is the significance of this testimony?

### Use it as historical evidence

g. What did you find out from this testimony that you might not learn anywhere else?

h. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document.

i. What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this issue?

Modified from *Written Document Analysis Worksheet* from the National Archives and Records Administration website; and *Teacher's Guide, Analyzing Oral Histories* from the Library of Congress Website.

#### \*Sources:

[https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/worksheets/written\\_document\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/worksheets/written_document_analysis_worksheet.pdf) (accessed November 15, 2018)

[http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing\\_Oral\\_Histories.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Oral_Histories.pdf) (accessed November 15, 2018)

## B. Learning the History of “Comfort Women” through Paintings

**Purpose:** This activity allows students to understand emotions of “Comfort Women” victims with visual images and to know why this is a significant issue for us today.

**Objective:** Students will see paintings on the “Comfort Women.” They should be able to gain a deeper understanding of the ordeal that the victims went through.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.4.3, 10.7, 10.8.3, 10.8.6

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH2, 6

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.1-9, PII.3-5

### Procedure:

\* **NOTE:** Warn the class ahead of time that the contents may contain graphic sexual violence. These are graphic, but are necessary to fully understand the human rights violations that the women endured.

- Teachers briefly explain history of the “Comfort Women.” Alternatively to a lecture, teachers can show one of the short video clips (listed below) regarding “Comfort Women” as background history.
- Teachers project images of “Comfort Women” paintings. Allow students time to observe and respond to observation questions. An alternative to projecting them in the whole class is preparing sets of painting copies and have students see and share in small groups.

### Suggested observation questions include:

Take a moment to look closely. What appears to be happening in this painting? What do you see that makes you say that?

- ▲ How would you describe the mood? Why?
- ▲ Take turns sharing one word that comes to mind when viewing each painting.
- ▲ Why did you choose that word to describe the painting?
- ▲ Select one figure in the scene and take a closer look. What do you notice about his/her facial expression and posture? What might he/she thinking or feeling?

(Some questions were modified from lesson plans on the Metropolitan Museum website: <https://www.metmuseum.org/learn/educators/lesson-plans>, assessed on November 15, 2018)

- Teachers can lead a whole class discussion about the paintings. They can use discussion questions, including the following:
  - ▲ What kinds of symbols, implications, or feelings did you recognize in the paintings? What is the relationship between figures in a painting?
  - ▲ What do you think the artist hoped to convey? What do you see that makes you think that?
  - ▲ What are some feelings and reactions you had while viewing these paintings?
  - ▲ Which painting was the most powerful for you? Why?
  - ▲ What emotions and perspectives do you see in the paintings by the survivors (Kim and Kang)? How are their views common or different from the paintings by professional painters?

## Materials / Handouts

- ▲ Paintings by Christian Poirot
- ▲ Paintings by Steven Cavallo, <https://www.stevecavallo.com/comfort-women>
- ▲ Paintings by “Comfort Women” survivors

## Videos on the background history of “Comfort Women”

- ▲ Video clip from “In the Name of the Emperor” (8:47): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V-udsQM\\_mj4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V-udsQM_mj4&feature=youtu.be)
- ▲ Animated depiction of a testimony, “Her Story” (10:54): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oC-mWdrLv3fI>

(1)



“The Ones Who Said No”  
by Christian Poirot

(Source: China Features, <http://www.icrosschina.com/news/2017/1014/27100.shtml>, accessed on November 15, 2018)

(2)



Three of the eight portraits in the 'Eulogies' series by Steve Cavallo.

From left, captions read: "I was taken from my home at an early age. I was raped over and over again, before I started menstruating!" "I was taken from my home at an early age. I was buried in a shallow grave." "I was taken from my home at an early age. I was too ashamed to return home." (Source: <https://www.stevecalvallo.com/comfort-women>)

(3)



"Come from the Shadows"  
by Steve Cavallo  
(Source:  
<https://www.stevecalvallo.com/comfort-women>)

(4)



*“These days I suffer more since I have begun to tell my testimony. It started up my heart. I suffer even today from nightmares. But I will tell my story again and again because Japanese cruelty must not be forgotten. They cannot invade us and do this again to my grandchildren in the future.”*

(from interview with Soon-duk Kim, a former comfort woman, May 1994)

“Unblossomed Flower” by Soon-duk Kim (a survivor) (1995)  
 Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))

(5)



“Taken away,”  
 by Soon-duk Kim (a survivor)  
 Courtesy of House of Sharing  
 ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))



(6)



"Punish the Responsible" by Duk-gyeong Kang (a survivor)  
Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))

(7)



"Stolen Chastity" by Duk-gyeong Kang (a survivor)  
Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))

(8)



"Girls being burnt" by Il-chul Kang (a survivor)  
Courtesy of House of Sharing ([www.nanum.org](http://www.nanum.org))

### C. Justice for “Comfort Women”

**Purpose:** This activity allows students to consider what is justice for “Comfort Women” and how they have struggled until today to obtain justice long after the war had ended.

**Objective:** Students will learn about the 2015 Republic of Korea-Japan agreement on “Comfort Women” issue and how it is different from what the survivors / activists have demanded. Students will be able to see differences and to discuss what justice means for the victims of human rights violations.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.8.3, 10.8.6

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.1-12, PII.1-7

#### Procedure

- Teachers give a lecture on the movement supporting “Comfort Women” survivors and the controversy following the 2015 South Korea-Japan Agreement on “Comfort Women” issue. Using the power-point files, teachers can explain major actions and different views from governments, international organizations, human rights activists, survivors, and others, from the 1990s to present. Teachers also can use news articles, if applicable (links are provided below).
- Students read (1) Japan’s position (2) South Korea’s position (in the 2015 agreement), and (3) WCCW (Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues)’s statement on the agreement. Students highlight major points of each statement.
- In small groups, students share what they highlighted in the material and discuss, by answering the following questions:
  - ▲ How are the views of the two governments different from the position of WCCW (and the survivors)?
  - ▲ Can you imagine how the survivors responded to the agreement?
- Teachers lead a whole class discussion about what is justice for the “Comfort Women” victims. They can use the following discussion questions:
  - ▲ Do you think that the “Comfort Women” survivors achieved justice? Why, or why not?
  - ▲ What would constitute justice for the survivors?
  - ▲ What have been achieved and what should be done for redress?
  - ▲ Do you think Japanese textbooks and curriculum should include the issue of “Comfort Women”? Why, or why not?

**Materials / Handout**

- ▲ Powerpoint files, (1) on background (2) on “Comfort Women” movement (downloadable at [www.ComfortWomenEducation.org](http://www.ComfortWomenEducation.org))
- ▲ Republic of Korea-Japan Agreement on “Comfort Women” issue (2015)
- ▲ Statement by Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues (2016)
- ▲ “Japan’s Apology to South Korea Shows What Public Apologies Should (Not) Do,” from *Huffington Post* (January 29, 2016), [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-tolbert/japans-apology-to-south-k\\_b\\_9111566.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-tolbert/japans-apology-to-south-k_b_9111566.html)
- ▲ “In the #MeToo Era, Women Used as Sex Slaves by Japanese in WW II Are Still Seen as Prostitutes, Not Victims,” from *CBC/Radio-Canada* (July 7, 2018), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/comfort-women-japan-apology-metoo-1.4732458>
- ▲ “South Korea: World’s Longest Protest over “Comfort Women,”” from *Al Jazeera* (September 7, 2017), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/south-korea-world-longest-protest-comfort-women-170908024721239.html>
- ▲ “Shinzo Abe Rebuked over Japan’s Stance on “Comfort Women,”” from *Financial Times* (May 6, 2015), <https://www.ft.com/content/a8499dao-f45e-11e4-bd16-00144feab7de>

## **ANNOUNCEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTERS OF JAPAN AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ON DECEMBER 28, 2015**

### **1. Foreign Minister Kishida (Japan)**

The Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) have intensively discussed the issue of comfort women between Japan and the ROK at bilateral meetings including the Director-General consultations. Based on the result of such discussions, I, on behalf of the Government of Japan, state the following:

- (1) The issue of comfort women, with an involvement of the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women, and the Government of Japan is painfully aware of responsibilities from this perspective. As Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Abe expresses anew his most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.
- (2) The Government of Japan has been sincerely dealing with this issue. Building on such experience, the Government of Japan will now take measures to heal psychological wounds of all former comfort women through its budget. To be more specific, it has been decided that the Government of the ROK establish a foundation for the purpose of providing support for the former comfort women, that its funds be contributed by the Government of Japan as a one-time contribution through its budget, and that projects for recovering the honor and dignity and healing the psychological wounds of all former comfort women be carried out under the cooperation between the Government of Japan and the Government of the ROK.
- (3) While stating the above, the Government of Japan confirms that this issue is resolved finally and irreversibly with this announcement, on the premise that the Government will steadily implement the measures specified in (2) above. In addition, together with the Government of the ROK, the Government of Japan will refrain from accusing or criticizing each other regarding this issue in the international community, including at the United Nations.

### **2. Foreign Minister Yun (Republic of Korea)**

The Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Government of Japan have intensively discussed the issue of comfort women between the ROK and Japan at bilateral meetings including the Director-General consultations. Based on the result of such discussions, I, on behalf of the Government of the ROK, state the following:

- (1) The Government of the ROK values the GOJ's announcement and efforts made by the Government of Japan in the lead-up to the issuance of the announcement and confirms, together with the GOJ, that the issue is resolved finally and irreversibly with this announcement, on the premise that the Government of Japan will steadily implement the measures specified in 1. (2) above. The Government of the ROK will cooperate in the implementation of the Government of Japan's measures.
- (2) The Government of the ROK acknowledges the fact that the Government of Japan is concerned about the statue built in front of the Embassy of Japan in Seoul from the viewpoint of preventing any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity, and will strive to solve this issue in an appropriate manner through taking measures such as consulting with related organizations about possible ways of addressing this issue.
- (3) The Government of the ROK, together with the Government of Japan, will refrain from accusing or criticizing each other regarding this issue in the international community, including at the United Nations, on the premise that the Government of Japan will steadily implement the measures it announced.

## **OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF WCCW, INC. (WASHINGTON COALITION FOR COMFORT WOMEN ISSUES),** March 8, 2016

After last year's joint agreement issued by the Republic of Korea and Japan on the issues of the "comfort women," WCCW members have been appalled by the Japanese government's continued denial and whitewashing of the historical facts that had already been acknowledged by their previous officials. Their recent statement proves that the agreement was not sincere and genuine. True reconciliation would not be possible without real and perpetual efforts in a clear and unequivocal manner.

WCCW, an organization whose mission is to advocate for the rights of wartime victims- military sex slaves- and their lawful reparation, expected and hoped for progress in terms of the lawful reparation and official treatment followed by the agreement of two countries, but the recent activities of the Japanese government failed to reveal this hope is headed for the right direction. We support the recent recommendation by CEDAW (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women).

1. WCCW envisions "Comfort Women" issues as a global human rights issue and women's rights movement that stretch over 11 nations who had experienced similar atrocities as well as today's violations of women's rights around the globe. Therefore, we do not narrow down the issue to solely a Korean-Japanese political agenda. Rather, we will continue to advocate, research, and educate the importance of human rights through this history.
2. The agreement made no provisions whatsoever for comfort women survivors from North Korea, China, Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia, Dutch-Indi, Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, East Timor, Guam, India, and Vietnam. The agreement must include restitution and sincere apology from the Japanese government for all comfort women of all nationalities.
3. WCCW will make sure that these women occupy a prominent place in the annals of history and are provided with legal reparations not only to honor their bravery and endurance but also to commemorate the importance of human dignity. If the agreement is sincere and unequivocal, the world will see that the Japanese government will open their archival records concerning wartime and postwar treatment, create policies to reconcile with the comfort women, and cease to rewrite the past history; the Japanese government will contribute to writing of accurate accounts of the history and will promote educating its own people and the future generation about the war crimes against humanity.
4. WCCW hopes to watch the issue be resolved by a series of gradual, ongoing, and sincere accomplishments toward all victimized nations, not through a single political deal with the expression "finally and irreversibly." Although WCCW promotes a peaceful reconciliation and is eager to see the final and completed resolution, we do not believe that one bilateral agreement cannot and must not cease or delete the whole history of the war or stop activities by human rights advocates and NGO's.
5. WCCW expresses deep regrets to see that the agreement includes the possible removal or relocation of the Girl statue in front of the Embassy of Japan in Seoul that has a huge symbolic value for Koreans, the victims, and importance of civil rights.
6. WCCW would like to see the end of the Japanese government's diplomatic and publicity efforts to humiliate comfort women survivors and to revise the past, or to interfere with people's right to study, research, and speak out about their experiences and opinions. That is precisely the reason that WCCW launched the "Webinar Project" through which we research, archive, and publish the unarguable historical material about comfort women.

WCCW has been so honored to fight for and be the voice for these voiceless women for the last 23 years since 1992. We cannot possibly imagine their sufferings, but we have learned from and been inspired by the survivors. We sincerely hope that these women will finally find what they have been seeking: peace and dignity.

*wccwcontact@gmail.com | www.comfort-women.org*

## D. Extension Activity

**Objective:** The extension activity allows students to approach the “Comfort Women” as an on-going issue. Students will be able to understand how it is relevant to us today and how we will be able to prevent it to be repeated.

CA HSS Content Standards: 10.8.3, 10.8.6, 10.9

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH 1-6

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.4-12, PII.3-7

- Teachers explain recent issues of sexual exploitation and violence against women, such as sex slaves of ISIS and Nigeria, American gymnastics sexual abuse case, and controversy of sexual assault allegations at the U.S. Supreme Court nomination hearing. Teachers can also explain about the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winners who have worked against sexual violence.
- Students write a short *New York Times* style op-ed article on the justice for the “Comfort Women” survivors and why is it relevant to us. They can consider answer to the following suggested questions in writing an op-ed:
  - ▲ Who were the “Comfort Women”? What actions and resolutions were taken to redress the issue?
  - ▲ What is justice for “Comfort Women”?
  - ▲ Consider what is justice for a survivor on a personal level, and also what we global citizens and nations should do to prevent sexual violence occurs.

## 7. SUPPORTING MATERIALS

### A. Excerpt from UN Report

United Nations, Commission on Human Rights, Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, “Report on the Mission to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and Japan on the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery in Wartime” (4 January 1996)

### I. DEFINITION

The Special Rapporteur would like to clarify at the outset of this report that she considers the case of women forced to render sexual services in wartime by and/or for the use of armed forces a practice of military sexual slavery.

In this connection, the Special Rapporteur is aware of the position of the Government of Japan conveyed to her during her visit to Tokyo, which states that the application of the term “slavery” defined as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised” in accordance with article 1 (1) of the 1926 Slavery Convention, is inaccurate in the case of “comfort women” under existing provisions of international law.

The Special Rapporteur, however, holds the opinion that the practice of “comfort women” should be considered a clear case of sexual slavery and a slavery-like practice in accordance with the approach adopted by relevant international human rights bodies and mechanisms. In this connection, the Special Rapporteur wishes to underline that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in its resolution 1993/24 of 15 August 1993, noting information transmitted to it by the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery concerning the sexual exploitation of women and other forms of forced labour during wartime, entrusted one of its experts to undertake an in-depth study on the situation of systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during wartime. The Sub-Commission further requested the expert in the preparation of this study to take into account information, including on “comfort women,” which had been submitted to the Special Rapporteur on the right to restitution, compensation and rehabilitation of victims of gross violations of human rights.

Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur notes that the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, at its twentieth session, welcomed information received from the Government of Japan on the issue of “women sex slaves during the Second World War” and recommended that such practices as “treatment akin to slavery” be settled through the establishment of a Japanese administrative tribunal.

Finally, for the purpose of terminology, the Special Rapporteur concurs entirely with the view held by members of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, as well as by representatives of non-governmental organizations and some academics, that the phrase “comfort women” does not in the least reflect the suffering, such as multiple rapes on an everyday basis and severe physical abuse, that women victims had to endure during their forced prostitution and sexual subjugation and abuse in wartime. The Special Rapporteur, therefore, considers with conviction that the phrase “military sexual slaves” represents a much more accurate and appropriate terminology.

## B. House of Representatives Resolution 121 (2007)

### In the House of Representatives, U. S., July 30, 2007.

- Whereas the Government of Japan, during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II, officially commissioned the acquisition of young women for the sole purpose of sexual servitude to its Imperial Armed Forces, who became known to the world as *ianfu* or “comfort women”;
- 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;
- Whereas some new textbooks used in Japanese schools seek to downplay the “comfort women” tragedy and other Japanese war crimes during World War II;
- Whereas Japanese public and private officials have recently expressed a desire to dilute or rescind the 1993 statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the “comfort women”, which expressed the Government’s sincere apologies and remorse for their ordeal;
- Whereas the Government of Japan did sign the 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children and supported the 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security which recognized the unique impact on women of armed conflict;
- Whereas the House of Representatives commends Japan’s efforts to promote human security, human rights, democratic values, and rule of law, as well as for being a supporter of Security Council Resolution 1325;
- Whereas the United States-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of United States security interests in Asia and the Pacific and is fundamental to regional stability and prosperity;
- Whereas, despite the changes in the post-cold war strategic landscape, the United States-Japan alliance continues to be based on shared vital interests and values in the Asia-Pacific region, including the preservation and promotion of political and economic freedoms, support for human rights and democratic institutions, and the securing of prosperity for the people of both countries and the international community;
- Whereas the House of Representatives commends those Japanese officials and private citizens whose hard work and compassion resulted in the establishment in 1995 of Japan’s private Asian Women’s Fund;
- Whereas the Asian Women’s Fund has raised \$5,700,000 to extend “atonement” from the Japanese people to the comfort women; and
- Whereas the mandate of the Asian Women’s Fund, a government-initiated and largely government-funded private foundation whose purpose was the carrying out of programs and projects with the aim of atonement for the maltreatment and suffering of the “comfort women”, came to an end on March 31, 2007, and the Fund has been disbanded as of that date:  
Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan—

- (1) should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces’ 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;
- (2) would help to resolve recurring questions about the sincerity and status of prior statements if the Prime Minister of Japan were to make such an apology as a public statement in his official capacity;
- (3) 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
- (4) should educate current and future generations about this horrible crime while following the recommendations of the international community with respect to the “comfort women.”



### C. Testimony of Jan Ruff O'herne at the House of Representatives Hearing (2007)

## Chairman Faleomavaega and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for this holding this congressional hearing on the plight of "Comfort Women". I am pleased to join with survivors Ms. Yong-Soo Lee of Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Japanese Military Sexual Slavery and Ms. Koon-Ja Kim of the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium to share our stories before you today.

I would also like to thank Representative Michael Honda for introducing House Resolution 121, which demands that the Japanese government "officially and unambiguously" apologize and to "take historical responsibility". And I thank Chairman Eni F.H Faleomavaega for inviting the witnesses to speak, to tell our stories to the world in the hope that it will bring us justice.

My experience as a woman in war is one of utter degradation, humiliation and unbearable suffering. During World War II, I was forced to be a so-called "Comfort Woman" for the Japanese military, a euphemism for sex slave.

#### The Forgotten Ones

I was born in Java, in the former Dutch East Indies (now known as Indonesia) in 1923 of a fourth generation Dutch colonial family. I grew up on a sugar plantation and had the most wonderful childhood. I was educated in Catholic schools and graduated from Franciscan Teacher's College in Semarang, Java.

When I was 19 years old in 1942, Japanese troops invaded Java. Together with thousands of women and children, I was interned in a Japanese prison camp for three and a half years. Many stories have been told about the horrors, brutalities, suffering and starvation of Dutch women in Japanese prison camps. But one story was never told, the most shameful story of the worst human rights abuse committed by the Japanese during World War II: The story of the "Comfort Women", the *jugun ianfu*, and how these women were forcibly seized against their will, to provide sexual services for the Japanese Imperial Army.

I had been in the camp for two years, when in 1944 high ranking Japanese officers arrived at the camp. The order was given: all single girls from seventeen years up, had to line

up in the compound. The officers walked towards us, and a selection process began. They paced up and down the line, eyeing us up and down, looking at our figures, at our legs, lifting our chins. They selected ten pretty girls. I was one of ten. We were told to come forward, and pack a small bag, as we were to be taken away. The whole camp protested, and our mothers tried to pull us back. I embraced my mother not knowing if I was ever going to see her again. We were hurled into an army truck. We were terrified and clung to our bags and to each other.

The truck stopped in the city of Semarang, in front of a large Dutch Colonial house. We were told to get out. Entering the house we soon realized what sort of a house it was. A Japanese military told us that we were here for the sexual pleasure of the Japanese. The house was a brothel.

We protested loudly. We said we were forced to come here, against our will. That they had no right to do this to us, and that it was against the Geneva Convention. But they just laughed at us and said that they could do with us as they liked. We were given Japanese names and these were put on our bedroom doors.

We were a very innocent generation. I knew nothing about sex. The horrific memories of "opening night" of the brothel have tortured my mind all my life. We were told to go to the dining room, and we huddled together in fear, as we saw the house filling up with military. I got out my prayer book, and led the girls in prayer, in the hope that this would help us. Then they started to drag us away, one by one. I could hear the screaming coming from the bedrooms. I hid under the table, but was soon found. I fought him. I kicked him with all my might. The Japanese officer became very angry because I would not give myself to him. He took his sword out of its scabbard and pointed it at me, threatening me with it, that he would kill me if I did not give into him. I curled myself into a corner, like a hunted animal that could not escape. I made him understand that I was not afraid to die. I pleaded with him to allow me to say some prayers. While I was praying he started to undress himself. He had no intention of killing me. I would have been no good to him dead.

He then threw me on the bed and ripped off all my clothes. He ran his sword all over my naked body, and played with me as a cat would with a mouse. I still tried to fight him, but he thrust himself on top of me, pinning me down under his heavy body. The tears were streaming down my face as he raped me in a most brutal way. I thought he would never stop.

When he eventually left the room, my whole body was shaking. I gathered up what was left of my clothing, and fled into the bathroom. There I found some of the other girls. We were all crying, and in total shock. In the bathroom I tried to wash away all the dirt and the shame off my body. Just wash it away. But the night was not over yet, there were more Japanese waiting, and this went on all night, it was only the beginning, week after week, month after month.

The house was completely guarded, there was no way to escape. At times I tried to hide, but was always found, and dragged back to my room. I tried everything, **I even cut off all my hair, so I was totally bald. I thought if I made myself look ugly**, nobody would want me. But it turned me into a curiosity object; they all wanted the girl that had cut off her hair. It had the opposite effect.

**Never did any Japanese rape me without a fight. I fought each one of them. Therefore, I was repeatedly beaten. In the so-called "Comfort Station" I was systematically beaten and raped day and night.** Even the Japanese doctor raped me each time he visited the brothel to examine us for venereal disease. And to humiliate us even more the doors and windows were left open, so the Japanese could watch us being examined.

During the time in the "Comfort Station", the Japanese had abused me and humiliated me. I was left with a body that was torn and fragmented everywhere. The Japanese soldiers had ruined my young life. They had stripped me of everything. They had taken away my youth, my self-esteem, my dignity, my freedom, my possessions, and my family. But there was one thing that they could never take away from me. It was my religious faith and love for God. This was mine and nobody could take that away from me. It was my deep Faith that helped me survive all that the Japanese did to me.

**I have forgiven the Japanese for what they did to me, but I can never forget. For fifty years, the "Comfort Women" maintained silence; they lived with a terrible shame, of feeling soiled and dirty. It has taken 50 years for these women's ruined lives to become a human rights issue.**

**The war never ended for the "Comfort Women". We still have the nightmares.** After the war I needed major surgery to restore my body.

In 1992 the Korean "Comfort Women" broke their silence. Ms. Kim Hak Sun was the first to speak out. I watched them on TV as they pleaded for justice, for an apology and compensation from the Japanese government. I decided to back them up. I broke my silence at the International Public Hearing on Japanese War Crimes in Tokyo in December 1992 and revealed one of the worst human rights abuses of World War II, the forgotten holocaust.

For the past 15 years, I have worked tirelessly for the plight of "Comfort Women" in Australia and overseas, and for the protection of women in war. Now the time is running out. After sixty years the "Comfort Women" deserve justice. They are worthy of a formal apology from the Japanese government, from Prime Minister Shinzo Abe himself. The Japanese government must take full responsibility for their war crimes.

**In 1995 they established the Asian Women's Fund, to compensate the victims. This Fund was an insult to the "Comfort Women" and they, including myself, refused to accept it. This fund was a private fund, the money came from private enterprise, and not from the government. Japan must come to terms with its history, and acknowledge their war time atrocities. They must teach the correct history of the mistakes made in the past.**

It is important that the surviving "Comfort Women" tell their stories. Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I thank you for this opportunity to share my story. I hope that by speaking out, I have been able to make a contribution to world peace and reconciliation, and that human rights violation against women will never happen again.

Thank you.

## D. Testimony of Zhou Fenying [Excerpts]

*After the fall of Nanjing, Japanese forces advanced into the adjacent areas. In March 1938, the Japanese army occupied Rugao, a small county about 280 kilometres east of Nanjing. Japanese soldiers raped women indiscriminately, including young girls of eight or nine and seventy-year-old women. At the same time, the troops established comfort stations both inside and outside Rugao city limits. Zhou Fenying was kidnapped and taken to one of the military comfort stations in the area during this period.*

... I was born in the Lunar Fifth Month [1917]. My parents already had four sons when I was born, and the family was often starving. Seeing no way to provide for another child, my parents thought I might be able to survive if they could give me away...

When I turned five I was sold to the Ni family in nearby Yangjiayuan Village to be a "child-daughter-in-law," as was commonly done at the time. [A child-daughter-in-law would be treated as an adopted child first and then become the wife of their son when she reached adulthood.]... Jincheng and I weren't married until 1936, when he was twenty-four and I was nineteen...

The Japanese army occupied Rugao about two years after we were married... I clearly remember the day when the Japanese troops came into our village. It was in the spring of 1938 and that day was my cousin Wu Qun's birthday. She was about my age and also good-looking. My husband was away from home working in the fields. We heard that the Japanese troops accompanied by local traitors had come to kidnap girls. All the women in the village ran desperately trying to escape. My cousin and I ran for our lives. We crossed a little river and hid ourselves behind a millstone in a villager's courtyard, but the Japanese troops chased after us and found us. Later we learned that the Japanese troops had been looking for good-looking girls to put in their comfort station. Because my cousin and I were known for our good looks, we had been targeted. The Japanese soldiers tied our feet with ropes so that we could not run away. Then they had us loaded into a wheelbarrow, one on each side, where they tied us tightly with more ropes. They forced some villagers to push the wheelbarrow to the Town of Baipu. The ropes and the jolting of the wheelbarrow hurt our bodies like hell all the way.

At Baipu we were unloaded at Zhongxing Hotel. The owner of the hotel had fled before the Japanese army came, and the Japanese troops made the hotel their comfort station. We were scared to death and couldn't even cry. When I looked around, I saw about twenty girls were already there. The barracks held about fifty Japanese troops, who kidnapped dozens of young women from nearby villages to be their comfort women. ...

We were not allowed to step out of the station... I was extremely frightened when I was forced to service the Japanese troops. I had heard that Japanese soldiers would stab every Chinese man and rape every Chinese woman they found. On the first day I could not stop crying and my mind fell into a trance, so one of the cleaning women stayed in my room with me until a Japanese soldier came in. The soldier became very angry when he saw me crying. He pushed his bayonet against my chest, snarling in a low voice. I thought he was going to kill me and I almost passed out. The Japanese soldier then raped me.

The Japanese troops came to the station about every seven days, and we were made to do other jobs when the soldiers didn't come. Many of the soldiers had two or three stripes on their epaulettes, so I guessed they were officers. They paid the old woman with military money to buy tickets before coming to pick girls. Quite a few of them would pick me, and some came to my room regularly. I cried every day, hoping that my husband could free me from this place. However, the place was closely guarded by the soldiers and there was no way for him to rescue me.

I was kept in the comfort station for about three months... When I was released my mother-in-law did not want me to return home. She could not take the widespread gossip in the village, where people were saying that I had been defiled by the Japanese troops. However, my husband, Jincheng, accepted me. ... He brought me home despite what the villagers and my mother-in-law said. Still, he was deeply humiliated because they looked down on me. I could sense that his heart was filled with anger and hatred toward the Japanese troops... One morning when I woke up I found he was gone... I knew he went fight against the Japanese forces. Jincheng never returned home...

...In 2007, my son read in a newspaper article that comfort station survivor Lei Guiying had died... He also learned that the Japanese high court had just rejected two cases filed by former Chinese labourers and comfort women. I cried when my son told me that... The Japanese government refuses to take responsibility for the crimes Japanese soldiers committed against Chinese women during the war, but I can be one of the witnesses. I let my son send letters to people telling of my experience in the comfort station... My son told me that the right-wing activists in Japan want to cover up the crimes committed by the Japanese military, but we cannot let them have their way. Although Lei Guiying died, I will continue her efforts.

Excerpt from Peipei Qiu, Su Zhiliang, and Chen Lifei, *Chinese Comfort Women* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 89~93

## E. An Opinion Article on the *New York Times* (November 15, 2014)

### “The Comfort Women and Japan’s War on Truth”

By Mindy Kotler (The director of Asia Policy Point, a nonprofit research center in Washington DC)

In 1942, a lieutenant paymaster in Japan’s Imperial Navy named Yasuhiro Nakasone was stationed at Balikpapan on the island of Borneo, assigned to oversee the construction of an airfield. But he found that sexual misconduct, gambling and fighting were so prevalent among his men that the work was stalled.

Lieutenant Nakasone’s solution was to organize a military brothel, or “comfort station.” The young officer’s success in procuring four Indonesian women “mitigated the mood” of his troops so well that he was commended in a naval report.

Lieutenant Nakasone’s decision to provide comfort women to his troops was replicated by thousands of Imperial Japanese Army and Navy officers across the Indo-Pacific both before and during World War II, as a matter of policy. From Nauru to Vietnam, from Burma to Timor, women were treated as the first reward of conquest.

We know of Lieutenant Nakasone’s role in setting up a comfort station thanks to his 1978 memoir, “Commander of 3,000 Men at Age 23.” At that time, such accounts were relatively commonplace and uncontroversial—and no obstacle to a political career. From 1982 to 1987, Mr. Nakasone was the prime minister of Japan.

Today, however, the Japanese military’s involvement in comfort stations is bitterly contested. The government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is engaged in an all-out effort to portray the historical record as a tissue of lies designed to discredit the nation. Mr. Abe’s administration denies that imperial Japan ran a system of human trafficking and coerced prostitution, implying that comfort women were simply camp-following prostitutes.

The latest move came at the end of October when, with no intended irony, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party appointed Mr. Nakasone’s own son, former Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone, to chair a commission established to “consider concrete measures to restore Japan’s honor with regard to the comfort women issue.”

The official narrative in Japan is fast becoming detached from reality, as it seeks to cast the Japanese people—rather than the comfort women of the Asia-Pacific theater—as the victims of this story. The Abe administration sees this historical revision as integral to restoring Japan’s imperial wartime honor and modern-day national pride. But the broader effect of the campaign has been to cause Japan to back away from international efforts against human rights

abuses and to weaken its desire to be seen as a responsible partner in prosecuting possible war crimes.

A key objective of Mr. Abe’s government has been to dilute the 1993 Kono Statement, named for Japan’s chief cabinet secretary at the time, Yohei Kono. This was widely understood as the Japanese government’s formal apology for the wartime network of brothels and front-line encampments that provided sex for the military and its contractors. The statement was particularly welcomed in South Korea, which was annexed by Japan from 1910 to 1945 and was the source of a majority of the trafficked comfort women.

Imperial Japan’s military authorities believed sex was good for morale, and military administration helped control sexually transmitted diseases. Both the army and navy trafficked women, provided medical inspections, established fees and built facilities. Nobutaka Shikanai, later chairman of the Fujisankei Communications Group, learned in his Imperial Army accountancy class how to manage comfort stations, including how to determine the actuarial “durability or perishability of the women procured.”

Japan’s current government has made no secret of its distaste for the Kono Statement. During Mr. Abe’s first administration, in 2007, the cabinet undermined the Kono Statement with two declarations: that there was no documentary evidence of coercion in the acquisition of women for the military’s comfort stations, and that the statement was not binding government policy.

Shortly before he became prime minister for the second time, in 2012, Mr. Abe (together with, among others, four future cabinet members) signed an advertisement in a New Jersey newspaper protesting a memorial to the comfort women erected in the town of Palisades Park, N.J., where there is a large Korean population. The ad argued that comfort women were simply part of the licensed prostitution system of the day.

In June this year, the government published a review of the Kono Statement. This found that Korean diplomats were involved in drafting the statement, that it relied on the unverified testimonies of 16 Korean former comfort women, and that no documents then available showed that abductions had been committed by Japanese officials.

Then, in August, a prominent liberal newspaper, *The Asahi Shimbun*, admitted that a series of stories it wrote over 20 years ago on comfort women contained errors. Reporters

had relied upon testimony by a labor recruiter, Seiji Yoshida, who claimed to have rounded up Korean women on Jeju Island for military brothels overseas.

The scholarly community had long determined that Mr. Yoshida's claims were fictitious, but Mr. Abe seized on this retraction by *The Asahi* to denounce the "baseless, slanderous claims" of sexual slavery, in an attempt to negate the entire voluminous and compelling history of comfort women. In October, Mr. Abe directed his government to "step up a strategic campaign of international opinion so that Japan can receive a fair appraisal based on matters of objective fact."

Two weeks later, Japan's ambassador for human rights, Kuni Sato, was sent to New York to ask a former United Nations special rapporteur on violence against women, Radhika Coomaraswamy, to reconsider her 1996 report on the comfort women—an authoritative account of how, during World War II, imperial Japan forced women and girls into sexual slavery. Ms. Coomaraswamy refused, observing that one retraction did not overturn her findings, which were based on ample documents and myriad testimonies of victims throughout Japanese-occupied territories.

There were many ways in which women and girls throughout the Indo-Pacific became entangled in the comfort system, and the victims came from virtually every settlement, plantation and territory occupied by imperial Japan's military. The accounts of rape and pillage leading to subjugation are strikingly similar whether they are told by Andaman Islanders or Singaporeans, Filipino peasants or Borneo tribespeople. In some cases, young men, including interned Dutch boys, were also seized to satisfy the proclivities of Japanese soldiers.

Japanese soldiers raped an American nurse at Bataan General Hospital 2 in the Philippine Islands; other prisoners of war acted to protect her by shaving her head and dressing her as a man. Interned Dutch mothers traded their bodies in a church at a convent on Java to feed their children. British and Australian women who were shipwrecked off Sumatra after the makeshift hospital ship *Vyner Brooke* was bombed were given the choice between a brothel or starving in a P.O.W. camp. Ms. Coomaraswamy noted in her 1996 report that "the consistency of the accounts of women from quite different parts of Southeast Asia of the manner in which they were recruited and the clear involvement of the military and government at different levels is indisputable."

For its own political reasons, the Abe administration studiously ignores this wider historical record, and focuses instead on disputing Japan's treatment of its colonial Korean women. Thus rebuffed by Ms. Coomaraswamy, the chief cabinet secretary, Yoshihide Suga, vowed to continue advocating in international bodies, including the United Nations Human Rights Council, for Japan's case, which is to seek to remove the designation of comfort women as sex slaves.

The grave truth about the Abe administration's denialist obsession is that it has led Japan not only to question Ms. Coomaraswamy's report, but also to challenge the United Nations' reporting on more recent and unrelated war crimes, and to dismiss the testimony of their victims. In March, Japan became the only Group of 7 country to withhold support from a United Nations investigation into possible war crimes in Sri Lanka, when it abstained from voting to authorize the inquiry. (Canada is not a member of the Human Rights Council but issued a statement backing the probe.) During an official visit, the parliamentary vice minister for foreign affairs, Seiji Kihara, told Sri Lanka's president, "We are not ready to accept biased reports prepared by international bodies."

Rape and sex trafficking in wartime remain problems worldwide. If we hope to ever reduce these abuses, the efforts of the Abe administration to deny history cannot go unchallenged. The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—all of whom had nationals entrapped in imperial Japan's comfort women system—must make clear their objection to the Abe government's perverse denial of the historical record of human trafficking and sexual servitude.

The United States, in particular, has a responsibility to remind Japan, its ally, that human rights and women's rights are pillars of American foreign policy. If we do not speak out, we will be complicit not only in Japanese denialism, but also in undermining today's international efforts to end war crimes involving sexual violence.

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