(Dis)Regarding Violence and Difference in the Commemorative Landscape

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Landscapes reveal much about the people who inhabit them and their (seemingly) collective view of the past. This presentation discusses three different communities—rural Colorado, Lawrence, Kansas, and Kent State University—and their approaches to recognizing their heritage amidst either significant social change or how they have come to deal with violent tragedy. These communities have in various ways obfuscated their pasts and thus limited opportunities to truly bear witness to the social change and loss of life they have experienced. In the end, I propose that a more critical view of landscape may be helpful in understanding why these commemorative landscapes refrain from being more inclusive about their pasts in ways that could achieve greater commemorative justice.