ENGLISH II SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

***NOTE: THIS ASSIGNMENT IS DUE THE SECOND WEEK OF SCHOOL.***

For your summer assignment, please read the following texts and complete the THREE tasks that follow:

1. “The Perils of Indifference” Speech by Elie Wiesel
2. “Abolishing Slavery: The Efforts of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln” by Mike Kubic
3. “Boko Haram and The Chibok Schoolgirls Kidnapping” by Barrett Smith

Task 1:

Answer the following Text-Dependent Questions. When answering each question, please be sure to cite textual evidence.

“Elie Wiesel’s “The Perils of Indifference” Speech”

1. What is the central idea of the text? Cite three pieces of textual evidence that supports your answer.
2. Why does Elie Wiesel believe indifference is the most dangerous emotion?
3. In the context of the speech, what are the effects of following the crowd? How were the actions of the Nazi Party, as well as the indifference that the United States showed Jews, examples of following the crowd? Cite evidence to support your answer.

“Abolishing Slavery: The Efforts of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln”

1. What is the central idea of the text? Cite three pieces of textual evidence that supports your answer.
2. How did Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass differ in their approaches to abolishing slavery? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.
3. In the context of the text, what are the effects of prejudice? How was Abraham Lincoln influenced by his own personal prejudices towards African Americans? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.

“Boko Haram and The Chibok Schoolgirls Kidnapping”

1. Focusing on the key details of the text, compose a paragraph summary.
2. What is the relationship between social media and actions taken to help the kidnapped Chibok schoolgirls?
Task 2:

As you read all three texts, complete an annotation chart with evidence from the texts that shows examples of indifference. Create this chart on a blank piece of paper with a **MINIMUM OF SEVEN** pieces of evidence from all three texts. Please see the format below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location- Text name and paragraph number</th>
<th>Evidence- Write the evidence that you are using to show indifference.</th>
<th>Explain- What is the evidence saying?</th>
<th>Elaborate- How does this piece of evidence help show indifference?</th>
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Task 3:

1. You have just read “The Perils of Indifference” Speech by Elie Wiesel, “Abolishing Slavery: The Efforts of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln” by Mike Kubic, and “Boko Haram and The Chibok Schoolgirls Kidnapping” by Barrett Smith. Write an essay that defines the meaning of indifference and analyzes various examples of indifference throughout each text. Construct your essay by providing textual evidence from all three texts while using standard English. Your essay can either be typed or handwritten, but if you choose to handwrite your essay, please make sure your best handwriting is portrayed.

Grading:

The summer assignment will be graded using the rubric below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer Reading Project</th>
<th>Advanced: 100%</th>
<th>Proficient: 85%</th>
<th>Basic: 70%</th>
<th>Below Basic: 50%</th>
<th>Did Not Complete: 0%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>ALL parts of the assignment are completed and responses show evidence of a <strong>DEEP UNDERSTANDING</strong> of the texts.</td>
<td>ALL parts of the assignment are completed and responses show evidence of a <strong>BASIC UNDERSTANDING</strong> of the texts.</td>
<td>SOME parts of the assignment are completed and responses show evidence of a <strong>BASIC UNDERSTANDING</strong> of the texts.</td>
<td>FEW parts of the assignment were completed with LITTLE TO NO UNDERSTANDING of the texts.</td>
<td>NO parts were completed with NO UNDERSTANDING of the texts.</td>
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Elie Wiesel's “The Perils of Indifference” Speech
By Elie Wiesel
1999

Eliezer “Elie” Wiesel (1928-2016) was a Romanian-born, Jewish American writer, Nobel Laureate, political activist, and Holocaust survivor. On April 12, 1999, First Lady Hillary Clinton invited Wiesel to speak at the White House to reflect on the past century. While introducing Wiesel, Hillary Clinton discussed the parallels of Wiesel's experiences during the Holocaust and the events in Kosovo, which was experiencing ethnic cleansing at the time. In this speech, Wiesel discusses the consequences of indifference in the face of human suffering and his hopes for the future. As you read, identify the events that shaped Wiesel's perspective on indifference and suffering.

[1] Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton, members of Congress, Ambassador Holbrooke, Excellencies, friends:

Fifty-four years ago to the day, a young Jewish boy from a small town in the Carpathian Mountains woke up, not far from Goethe’s beloved Weimar, in a place of eternal infamy called Buchenwald. He was finally free, but there was no joy in his heart. He thought there never would be again. Liberated a day earlier by American soldiers, he remembers their rage at what they saw. And even if he lives to be a very old man, he will always be grateful to them for that rage, and also for their compassion. Though he did not understand their language, their eyes told him what he needed to know — that they, too, would remember, and bear witness.

And now, I stand before you, Mr. President — Commander-in-Chief of the army that freed me, and tens of thousands of others — and I am filled with a profound and abiding gratitude to the American people. “Gratitude” is a word that I cherish. Gratitude is what defines the humanity of the human being. And I am grateful to you, Hillary, or Mrs. Clinton, for what you said, and for what you are doing for children in the world, for the homeless, for the victims of injustice, the victims of destiny and society. And I thank all of you for being here.

1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was a German writer and politician who lived in Weimar, Germany.
2. Infamy (noun): the state of being well known for some bad quality or act
3. a German Nazi concentration camp
We are on the threshold of a new century, a new millennium. What will the legacy of this vanishing century be? How will it be remembered in the new millennium? Surely it will be judged, and judged severely, in both moral and metaphysical terms. These failures have cast a dark shadow over humanity: two World Wars, countless civil wars, the senseless chain of assassinations (Gandhi, the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Sadat, Rabin), bloodbaths in Cambodia and Algeria, India and Pakistan, Ireland and Rwanda, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Sarajevo and Kosovo; the inhumanity in the Gulag and the tragedy of Hiroshima. And, on a different level, of course, Auschwitz and Treblinka. So much violence; so much indifference.

What is indifference? Etymologically, the word means “no difference.” A strange and unnatural state in which the lines blur between light and darkness, dusk and dawn, crime and punishment, cruelty and compassion, good and evil. What are its courses and inescapable consequences? Is it a philosophy? Is there a philosophy of indifference conceivable? Can one possibly view indifference as a virtue? Is it necessary at times to practice it simply to keep one’s sanity, live normally, enjoy a fine meal and a glass of wine, as the world around us experiences harrowing upheavals?

Of course, indifference can be tempting more than that, seductive. It is so much easier to look away from victims. It is so much easier to avoid such rude interruptions to our work, our dreams, our hopes. It is, after all, awkward, troublesome, to be involved in another person’s pain and despair. Yet, for the person who is indifferent, his or her neighbor are of no consequence. And, therefore, their lives are meaningless. Their hidden or even visible anguish is of no interest. Indifference reduces the Other to an abstraction.

Over there, behind the black gates of Auschwitz, the most tragic of all prisoners were the “Muselmänner,” as they were called. Wrapped in their torn blankets, they would sit or lie on the ground, staring vacantly into space, unaware of who or where they were — strangers to their surroundings. They no longer felt pain, hunger, thirst. They feared nothing. They felt nothing. They were dead and did not know it.

Rooted in our tradition, some of us felt that to be abandoned by humanity then was not the ultimate. We felt that to be abandoned by God was worse than to be punished by Him. Better an unjust God than an indifferent one. For us to be ignored by God was a harsher punishment than to be a victim of His anger. Man can live far from God — not outside God. God is wherever we are. Even in suffering.

Even in suffering.

In a way, to be indifferent to that suffering is what makes the human being inhuman. Indifference, after all, is more dangerous than anger and hatred. Anger can at times be creative. One writes a great poem, a great symphony. One does something special for the sake of humanity because one is angry at the injustice that one witnesses. But indifference is never creative. Even hatred at times may elicit a response. You fight it. You denounce it. You disarm it.

4. “Metaphysical” refers to abstract thought or subjects.
5. a network of German Nazi concentration camps
6. the study of the history of words, their origins, and how their form and meaning have changed over time
7. Harrowing (adjective): extremely distressing or difficult
8. Anguish (noun): severe emotional or physical pain
9. a German term used by concentration camp prisoners to refer to inmates who were on the verge of death
10. Elicit (verb): to draw or bring out
Indifference elicits no response. Indifference is not a response. Indifference is not a beginning; it is an end. And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor — never his victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten. The political prisoner in his cell, the hungry children, the homeless refugees — not to respond to their plight, not to relieve their solitude by offering them a spark of hope is to exile them from human memory. And in denying their humanity, we betray our own.

Indifference, then, is not only a sin, it is a punishment.

And this is one of the most important lessons of this outgoing century’s wide-ranging experiments in good and evil.

In the place that I come from, society was composed of three simple categories: the killers, the victims, and the bystanders. During the darkest of times, inside the ghettos\(^{11}\) and death camps — and I’m glad that Mrs. Clinton mentioned that we are now commemorating\(^{12}\) that event, that period, that we are now in the Days of Remembrance — but then, we felt abandoned, forgotten. All of us did.

And our only miserable consolation was that we believed that Auschwitz and Treblinka\(^{13}\) were closely guarded secrets; that the leaders of the free world did not know what was going on behind those black gates and barbed wire; that they had no knowledge of the war against the Jews that Hitler’s armies and their accomplices waged as part of the war against the Allies. If they knew, we thought, surely those leaders would have moved heaven and earth to intervene. They would have spoken out with great outrage and conviction. They would have bombed the railways leading to Birkenau,\(^{14}\) just the railways, just once.

And now we knew, we learned, we discovered that the Pentagon knew, the State Department knew. And the illustrious\(^{15}\) occupant of the White House then, who was a great leader — and I say it with some anguish and pain, because, today is exactly 54 years marking his death — Franklin Delano Roosevelt died on April the 12th, 1945. So he is very much present to me and to us. No doubt, he was a great leader. He mobilized the American people and the world, going into battle, bringing hundreds and thousands of valiant and brave soldiers in America to fight fascism,\(^{16}\) to fight dictatorship, to fight Hitler. And so many of the young people fell in battle. And, nevertheless, his image in Jewish history — I must say it — his image in Jewish history is flawed.

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11. "Ghettos" were areas of a city where Jews were previously required to live.
12. **Commemorate** *(verb)*: to recall and show respect for someone or something in a ceremony
13. an extermination camp built by Nazi Germany
14. Birkenau, also known as Auschwitz II, was a combination of an extermination camp and a concentration camp.
15. **Illustrious** *(adjective)*: well known, respected, and admired for past achievements
16. a political system headed by a dictator in which the government controls business and labor, and opposition is not permitted
The depressing tale of the St. Louis is a case in point. Sixty years ago, its human cargo — nearly 1,000 Jews — was turned back to Nazi Germany. And that happened after the Kristallnacht\(^ {17}\), after the first state sponsored pogrom,\(^ {18}\) with hundreds of Jewish shops destroyed, synagogues burned, thousands of people put in concentration camps. And that ship, which was already in the shores of the United States, was sent back. I don’t understand. Roosevelt was a good man, with a heart. He understood those who needed help. Why didn’t he allow these refugees to disembark? A thousand people — in America, the great country, the greatest democracy, the most generous of all new nations in modern history. What happened? I don’t understand. Why the indifference, on the highest level, to the suffering of the victims?

But then, there were human beings who were sensitive to our tragedy. Those non-Jews, those Christians, that we call the “Righteous Gentiles,”\(^ {19}\) whose selfless acts of heroism saved the honor of their faith. Why were they so few? Why was there a greater effort to save SS\(^ {20}\) murderers after the war than to save their victims during the war? Why did some of America’s largest corporations continue to do business with Hitler’s Germany until 1942? It has been suggested, and it was documented, that the Wehrmacht\(^ {21}\) could not have conducted its invasion of France without oil obtained from American sources. How is one to explain their indifference?

And yet, my friends, good things have also happened in this traumatic century: the defeat of Nazism, the collapse of communism, the rebirth of Israel on its ancestral soil, the demise of apartheid,\(^ {22}\) Israel’s peace treaty with Egypt, the peace accord in Ireland. And let us remember the meeting, filled with drama and emotion, between Rabin and Arafat\(^ {23}\) that you, Mr. President, convened in this very place. I was here and I will never forget it.

And then, of course, the joint decision of the United States and NATO\(^ {24}\) to intervene in Kosovo\(^ {25}\) and save those victims, those refugees, those who were uprooted by a man, whom I believe that because of his crimes, should be charged with crimes against humanity.

\[20\] But this time, the world was not silent. This time, we do respond. This time, we intervene.

Does it mean that we have learned from the past? Does it mean that society has changed? Has the human being become less indifferent and more human? Have we really learned from our experiences? Are we less insensitive to the plight of victims of ethnic cleansing and other forms of injustices in places near and far? Is today’s justified intervention in Kosovo, led by you, Mr. President, a lasting warning that never again will the deportation, the terrorization of children and their parents, be allowed anywhere in the world? Will it discourage other dictators in other lands to do the same?

17. Kristallnacht, also known as the Night of Broken Glass, took place on November 9-10, 1938. Conducted by Nazi paramilitary members and German citizens, Kristallnacht resulted in the destruction of numerous Jewish-owned businesses, buildings, and synagogues, as well as many deaths.
18. A “pogrom” is an organized massacre of a particular ethnic group.
19. non-Jewish people who risked their lives to save Jewish people from the Nazi Party
20. The SS, also known as the Schutzstaffel was a semi-militarized organization that was controlled by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party.
21. the armed forces of Nazi Germany from 1935 to 1946
22. “Apartheid” was the system of racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa.
23. referring to the first face-to-face agreement between the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization
24. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental military alliance, in which member states agree to a mutual defense in response to an attack by an external party.
25. referring to the Kosovo War (during which ethnic groups were targeted for their ethnicity) that was ended by the military intervention of NATO
What about the children? Oh, we see them on television, we read about them in the papers, and we do so with a broken heart. Their fate is always the most tragic, inevitably. When adults wage war, children perish. We see their faces, their eyes. Do we hear their pleas? Do we feel their pain, their agony? Every minute one of them dies of disease, violence, famine.

Some of them — so many of them — could be saved.

And so, once again, I think of the young Jewish boy from the Carpathian Mountains. He has accompanied the old man I have become throughout these years of quest and struggle. And together we walk towards the new millennium, carried by profound fear and extraordinary hope.

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Abolishing Slavery: The Efforts of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln

By Mike Kubic
2017

The American Civil War (1861-1865) was fought within the United States between the Union and the Confederacy. While there were several causes for the conflict between the North and South, the South’s desire to maintain slavery was a major point of disagreement. Frederick Douglass, who was born a slave and became an abolitionist, often discussed abolishing slavery with President Abraham Lincoln. This informational text further discusses the relationship between Douglass and Lincoln, and their efforts to abolish slavery. As you read, take notes on Douglass’ and Lincoln’s perspectives on the abolition of slavery.

[1] For the Union soldiers and civilians during the American Civil War, the majestic Battle Hymn of the Republic spoke of assurance that, in President Abraham Lincoln’s immortal words, “a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, can endure.”

But for America’s nearly four million oppressed and exploited Black people, the song’s solemn vow that “The Truth is Marching on!” had, above all, an intensely personal meaning; it promised them freedom from slavery. It was their good fortune that for one of them, an outstanding leader named Frederick Douglass, the truth was marching too slowly, and he made it his life’s mission to make it move faster.

Born as a slave on a Maryland plantation, he shared the suffering and indignities of his millions of peers: he did not know who was his father (but believed that it was his white master); and he rarely saw his mother because she worked on a distant farm, and died young.

But he was exceptionally bright; his grandmother, who raised him, taught him the alphabet; and he learned how to read. Douglass fell in love with — and mastered — the English language. He was strong, decisive, and at the age of 17, while working in a Baltimore shipyard, he decided to escape his bondage to one of the free states in the North.

[5] He borrowed a sailor’s uniform and a freed Black seaman’s papers, and with $17 in his savings he took a train, a steamboat and a ferry all the way to New York. He felt, he wrote in his memoir, “like one who had escaped a den of hungry lions.”
In the next four years, according to Benjamin Quarles, one of Douglass' biographers, a young Douglass "took whatever jobs that came his way, sawing wood, digging cellars, shoveling coal, blowing bellows, and stevedoring," but he also began attending and increasingly speaking up at meetings of abolitionists — whites and blacks who were opposed to slavery.

In August, 1841, Douglass gave a speech for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society that was so eloquent and stirring that he was hired on the spot as the group's lecturer and spokesman. He was now addressing large audiences, and he gained prominence by boldly speaking up on such sensitive issues as the church leaders' timidity on slavery, demanding its abolition in the federal District of Columbia, and protesting the annexation of Texas as a slave state.

By 1860, when Lincoln was elected president, Douglass was recognized at home and abroad as an important American leader. He had written the first of his three memoirs that became bestsellers in America and in Europe; spent 21 months giving speeches and lecturing about slavery in England, Ireland and Scotland; and launched a newspaper where for 15 years he published his views.

It added to his stature that he frequently supported issues of importance to white liberals, such as the temperance movement and the rights of women. Although still not a citizen, his growing prestige gave him resonance in politics, where he eventually joined the then liberal Republican Party, and put his faith in Abraham Lincoln.

**The Douglass-Lincoln Relationship**

[10] Even before the Southern states seceded from the Union, Douglass opened a dialogue with the president-elect by urging him in his newspaper, the Douglass Monthly, to "enlist Negroes," freed and slave, into a 75,000-strong "liberating army," and send it to the South to free the slaves.

This was not an idea that Lincoln was likely to favor: he was known to oppose slavery as the cause that was tearing apart the Union, but he wanted to destroy the institution piecemeal, and without a war.

Speaking in 1858 at Ottawa, Lincoln expressed hope that the involuntary servitude will wither away as "the opponents of slavery arrest the further spread of it" to the new states in the West. Regarding the freed slaves and other American blacks, Lincoln favored their removal to a colony in Africa.

For Douglass, this amounted to a proslavery policy. In his newspaper, he bluntly accused Lincoln of "admitting the right to hold men as slaves" and after Lincoln's election predicted that "Whoever lives through the next four years will see [him] and his Administration attacked more bitterly for their proslavery truckling, than for doing any anti-slavery work."

1. a device constructed to provide a strong blast of air
2. Stevedoring is the loading and unloading of cargo at the docks.
3. the incorporation of a territory within the domain of a state
4. a social movement against the consumption of alcoholic beverages
5. one piece at a time; gradually
This was Douglass' opening salvo against the president's agenda, which at first was to preserve the Union and the Constitution, and silence any mention of the divisive issue of slavery. Thus on August 30, 1861, Lincoln cancelled General John C. Fremont's order to free some slaves in Missouri. "I think there is great danger," Lincoln wrote the general, "...that liberating slaves of traitorous owners will alarm our Southern Union friends, and turn them against us..."

And in May 1862, after General David Hunter issued an order to emancipate all slaves in the South Military Region, Lincoln emphatically announced that "I, Abraham Lincoln... proclaim and declare, that the government of the United States, had no knowledge, information, or belief, of an intention on the part of General Hunter to issue such a proclamation...and that the supposed proclamation... in question... is altogether void."

Douglass, who was travelling throughout the free states urging young black men to sign up for an anti-slavery militia, was furious. He repeatedly criticized Lincoln for downplaying the slavery issue, and urged him to "turn the war into a crusade to rid the land once and for all of the hated institution." Eventually, his arguments began to make headway.

As the "events during the first half of 1862 pushed moderates toward the radical position," wrote James McPherson in his Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era, Lincoln — while still maintaining that his main goal was to save the Union — began coming closer to Douglass' positions.

In August 1861, he signed the first Confiscation Act, stipulating that all slaves who had fought for the Confederacy could be confiscated from their owners and freed. Next March, he prohibited the Union Army or Navy from returning fugitive slaves to their owners. And in April, he signed a bill abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia.

The next month, Lincoln struck a major blow against slavery by in effect revoking the Fugitive Act, a law under which the Northern states were obligated to return fugitive slaves to their Southern owners. His policy ultimately freed all slaves who crossed the Northern lines.

And in the summer of 1862 — while complaining that he was under "heavier and heavier" pressure — Lincoln raised the subject of emancipation with his Cabinet. His mind was already made up, but on the advice of Secretary of State William Seward, Lincoln decided to wait with any announcement until the Union Army won a significant victory.

The delay triggered a bitter outcry from Douglass who was already incensed by what Lincoln had told a small group of black leaders on August 14, 1862. While briefing his guests on his plan to emancipate the slaves, the president also blamed the blacks for the war, and made no secret of his wish to expel them to a colony. "But for your race among us there could not be war," Lincoln said, "although many men engaged on either side [of it] do not care for you one way or the other."

6. a spirited attack
7. of no legal force or effect
8. (in the US) a body of advisers to the president, composed of the heads of the executive departments of the government
9. incensed (adjective): enraged
Douglass was hurt and infuriated, and he rudely attacked Lincoln in an article titled "The President and His Speeches." "The President," he wrote in the Douglass Monthly, "... seems to possess an ever-increasing passion for making himself appear silly and ridiculous, if nothing worse." Lincoln's statements were not only "illogical and unfair," he added, but also showed his racism.

In another issue, the monthly charged that Lincoln "says to the colored people: 'I don't like you, you must clear out of the country," and accused him of not being able "to muster courage and honesty enough to obey and execute... his antislavery testimonies."

Douglass' frustration with Lincoln subsided after the Union Army's victory at Antietam on September 22, 1862 which led to the Emancipation Proclamation that, from January 1, 1863, gave freedom to all slaves in the Confederacy. Douglass was so delighted he wrote a friend that he wished "one could strike December from the calendar" so that the Proclamation would go into effect sooner.

Lincoln also changed his mind about black soldiers — in May 1863, the Union Army established a Bureau of Colored Troops to manage black enlistment — and the two men's relationship changed dramatically. Douglass visited the White House three times, and each time was received with utmost respect by Lincoln.

"I at once felt myself in the presence of an honest man," Douglass later wrote about their first meeting, "one whom I could love, honor, and trust without reserve or doubt." During their second meeting, Lincoln left a political ally in the waiting room while talking with Douglass: "Tell Governor [of Rhode Island, William] Buckingham to wait," Lincoln instructed his secretary, "for I want to have a long talk with my friend Frederick Douglass."

Following his second Inaugural Address, Lincoln asked Douglass what he thought of it. In his memoir, Douglass quoted the president as saying, "there is no man in the country whose opinion I value more than yours." No other black leader received similar treatment until 1901, when President Teddy Roosevelt invited Booker T. Washington for dinner in the White House.

When Lincoln died, he left Douglass his most favorite walking staff as a sign of his profound appreciation. Douglass showed his own fondness for Lincoln by hanging his portrait in his home in Washington D.C. And on the 11th anniversary of the president's death, Douglass delivered an emotional tribute to Lincoln's leadership in which he indirectly apologized for his own criticism of the slow progress to the Emancipation Proclamation.

"Had [Lincoln] put the abolition of slavery before the salvation of the Union, he would have inevitably driven from him a powerful class of the American people and rendered resistance to rebellion impossible," Douglass said, adding:

"Mr. Lincoln seemed tardy, cold, dull and indifferent; but measuring him by the sentiment of his country... he was swift, zealous, radical, and determined. Though Mr. Lincoln shared the prejudices of his white fellow-countrymen against the Negro... in his heart of hearts he loathed and hated slavery."

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Boko Haram & The Chibok Schoolgirls

Kidnapping

By Barrett Smith

2017

On April 14th, 2012, a terrorist organization that goes by the name Boko Haram kidnapped 276 Chibok girls from their school. In this informational text, Barrett Smith details the girls’ kidnapping, the world’s response, and where the girls are today. As you read, take notes on how people responded to the Chibok schoolgirls’ kidnapping.

[1] On the evening of April 14th, 2014, the village of Chibok, in northeast Nigeria, was invaded by a large group of men. They rushed in on motorcycles and bicycles and began to open fire on the village residents. They burned down the houses in the village and kidnapped 276 girls from a boarding school dormitory. The men loaded the girls into trucks bound for the northeast region of the country. Fifty-seven girls managed to escape. The rest would be forced into marriage and, if Christian, forced to convert to Islam.

The attack brought worldwide attention to Boko Haram, a terrorist group that controls northeast Nigeria. Up until the kidnapping, they had been well known in Nigeria for their terrorist acts, but less known internationally. According to a CNN news report, Boko Haram’s leader at the time, Abubakar Shekau, admitted to the kidnappings. He claimed that it was in response to the Nigerian government imprisoning Boko Haram members and their families. The news report quoted him as stating that Allah told him to sell the girls in the market as brides. According to a report written from interviews with Boko Haram survivors, the group believes that no girl is too young for marriage.

1. the common name for “God” in Islam
This was not the first time Boko Haram kidnapped children. In fact, thousands of Nigerians have died or been taken away from their homes at the hands of the group. Boko Haram was founded in 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf, a leader of a Muslim sect.\(^2\) Their first known attack was in 2003, when they attacked multiple police stations, killing police officers and stealing weapons. The name Boko Haram is a mix of Arabic and the Nigerian Hausa dialect. It translates to “Western education is forbidden.” Boko Haram is fighting to turn Nigeria into an Islamic state and purge\(^3\) the country of anything they consider to be of Western influence, such as schools and churches. They claim to have ties with ISIS (The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), a terrorist group with the same goal in Iraq and Syria. On the heels of a Boko Haram uprising, in 2009, Yusuf was captured and killed by the Nigerian military. Since his death, the group has grown more violent and have made attempts to try and overthrow the government. As Boko Haram grew, it started controlling more and more land in Northeast Nigeria. At its peak, the land they controlled was almost as large as the state of Maryland.

The Nigerian government initially denied that the 2014 kidnapping happened. They stated that it was *staged in an attempt to embarrass the government.* Parents of the missing girls claimed that the government said this because the Chibok village had voted against the President in the election. These parents set out to look for their children themselves when the government wouldn’t. They went into forests controlled by Boko Haram that the military refused to go into. They also held marches and protests, and told the world about how distraught they were about the ordeal.

International uproar and support was generated around the rallying cry “bring back our girls” — a quote taken from a speech that a former government minister, Oby Ezekwesili, made on TV. It turned into a powerful term, traveling around the world as a hashtag on social media. It became a movement to bring attention to the kidnapping, and demand the return of the girls. People all over the world supported the campaign. Former First Lady, Michelle Obama, recorded a video clip informing people about the kidnapping and promising that the U.S. government would help to find the missing girls. Former Prime Minister of Britain, David Cameron, activist Malala Yousafzai, and many others around the world also showed their support.

In 2015, the new Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari, promised to rescue the hostages from Boko Haram. Buhari reclaimed a lot of land that Boko Haram had captured in the previous years. In 2016, one of the girls escaped and was found in the forest with her baby. She said that most of the other girls were still alive. The Swiss government and the International Committee of the Red Cross helped with negotiations between the Nigerian government and Boko Haram. In October 2016, 21 of the girls from Chibok were released and in May 2017, another 82 were released in exchange for 5 Boko Haram suspects.

However, 113 girls from Chibok remain missing, as well as hundreds of other children that Boko Haram have been suspected of kidnapping. But those that have been released or escaped remain a symbol of hope. The government is assisting the kidnapped victims with medical treatment, and many of them are returning home to their families.

*“Boko Haram & The Chibok Schoolgirls Kidnapping” by Barrett Smith. Copyright © 2016 by CommonLit, Inc. This text is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.*

2. a group of people with somewhat different religious beliefs from the larger group to which they belong
3. to get rid of something unwanted