



The Promise of Never Again

The Struggle to Prevent Genocide in the Post-Holocaust Era

Students Handouts and Supporting Materials for Teachers

Lesson 3: Never Again or Again and Again? Barriers to Preventing Genocide since the Holocaust

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Background on “The Holocaust Series: Sur-Rational Paintings” by Fritz Hirschberger

Name(s): _____

About the Artist

Fritz Hirschberger was born in 1912 in Dresden, Germany to a Jewish father and a Catholic mother, who raised him as a Jew. In October 1938 Fritz and his family were arrested and, with thirty minutes notice, deported to Poland. When Hitler attacked Poland in 1939, Hirschberger fought the Nazi invasion with a Polish artillery unit and later fled to the Soviet Union after the collapse of the Polish army. He was arrested in the Ukraine and sentenced to 20 years in a Soviet prison near the Arctic Circle for having “illegally entered the country” and for being a member of a Zionist organization. Following Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union, Hirschberger was classified as a political prisoner and was released in 1941 to serve in the Polish army, where he fought in the Middle East, North Africa, Italy, and Germany. He was decorated five times by the British and Poles. Hirschberger was the only member of his family to survive the Holocaust. Following the war, he studied art in London and married a woman named Gisela, who was an old friend from Dresden. They eventually moved to the United States, where Fritz pursued a career in both manufacturing and painting. In 1991, he was awarded the Bronze Cross by President Lech Walesa of Poland. Fritz Hirschberger died in 2004.

About the Exhibit

The paintings in this collection represent an attempt by the artist, a Holocaust survivor, to depict what he and his family went through during the period from 1938 through the end of World War II in 1945. The images tell stories through the combination of painting with text based on the medieval German “moritat” or song of “deadly deed.” The lyrics of the moritat were usually based on a heinous crime and performed by strolling minstrels in combination with illustrations painted on a banner, similar to comic strips of the contemporary era. Hirschberger’s paintings are not “factual,” but do contain historical references and are intended to make a strong metaphorical impact. They ask questions of the viewer that demand to be answered.

Style of the Paintings

Hirschberger paints in a style that is derived from the German expressionism tradition of the 1920s and also from what is termed a “naive” or primitive style. The figures sometimes appear cartoonish, but are subverted by the seriousness of the themes. The paint used is transparent, an effect that is heightened by glazing with an oil-based medium. Color plays an important role in these works. Purples and reds are dominant—colors one would not expect in paintings about the Holocaust—and give the work a religious quality. Many of the works explore the relationship between Judaism and Christianity in the form of Jesus (the Jew) as well as saintly figures. In a sense, the paintings in this series might be taken as a modern iconography about the passion of the Jewish people.

Do the Paintings Accuse?

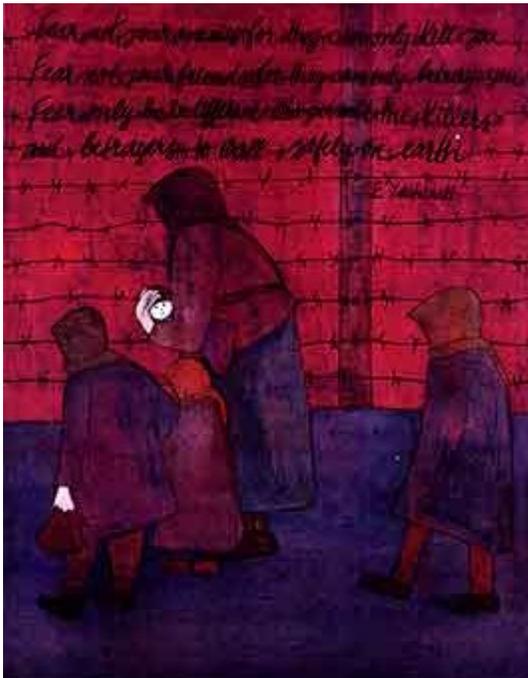
Occasionally, commentators accuse the artist of being unforgiving or placing too much blame for the Holocaust on the Church. In fact, the first exhibition of these paintings was supported by the Archbishopric of Dresden, Germany. Some of the strongest supporters of the exhibit have been Catholic Colleges and seminaries. This is probably because of the Papal Encyclical, “We

Remember,” from 1998, which admits Christian failure during the Holocaust. Hirschberger’s paintings, however, do speak to an essential truth: that had Jesus been alive in 1943, he would have wound up at Auschwitz, as he had four Jewish grandparents and was, according to Nazi law, a racial Jew. However, the artist asserts that the paintings are not anti-Christian. They merely pose difficult and troubling questions that have to be thought through and answered. Hence, the paintings become the basis for conversation or dialogue.

Text and art by Fritz Hirschberger are from “The Holocaust Series: Sur-Rational Paintings” and reprinted with permission of the Regis Foundation, Minneapolis, MN. Fritz Hirschberger’s full series of art work on the Shoah can be found at http://www.chgs.umn.edu/Visual_Artistic_Resources/Fritz_Hirschberger/fritz_hirschberger.html and http://www.chgs.umn.edu/Visual_Artistic_Resources/Fritz_Hirschberger2/fritz_hirschberger2.html. For more information, contact the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies: Dr. Stephen Feinstein, Director, tel: (612) 626-2235, email: feins001@umn.edu, web: <http://www.chgs.umn.edu>.

Indifference by Fritz Hirschberger

Name(s): _____



Fear not your enemies,
for they can only kill you.

Fear not your friends,
for they can only betray you.

Fear only the indifferent,
who permit the killers and

betrayers to walk safely on earth.

The poem by Edward Yashinski—a Jewish poet who survived the Holocaust only to die in a Communist prison in Poland—suggests the isolation and hopelessness of the Jewish situation. The image is based upon a photograph taken by the Nazis at Auschwitz. It raises questions about Holocaust representation. It is an effective painting, but whose image is it the artist's? The Nazi's? Does the artistic interpretation of a photograph help to redeem it? Note the victims in this image are women and children. During the Holocaust, 1.5 million Jewish children were killed. Thus, the focus on children helps to answer the question of why the Jews were targeted. According to the racial ideology of the Nazis, their crime was simply being born a Jew.

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**The Last Supper at Evian OR
The Fish Stinks First from the Head
by Fritz Hirschberger**

Name(s): _____



The title of this painting derives from an old Greek proverb and suggests that the problem of indifference to the plight of the Jews originated from world leaders.

Delegates from over thirty nations met at Evian, France, from July 6-14, 1938 to find a solution to the plight of the “involuntary immigrants” (Jews who had fled Nazi Germany to save their lives). With the exceptions of Denmark and the Netherlands, the refugees were either refused admittance or only accepted in small numbers under limited quotas. The Dominican Republic offered to take in 100,000 Jews, but only 645 refugees actually arrived on the island. (Ironically, the Dominican Republic agreed to admit the Jewish refugees in part as compensation for a 1937 order that led to the slaughter of 25,000-30,000 illegal immigrants from Haiti, and which was considered to be an act of genocide by some).

The Evian conference represents a critical turning point in Hitler’s policy toward the Jews. It confirmed his suspicion that the rest of the world would not act with force to protect them. Emigration for German and Austrian Jews soon became difficult, and Nazi plans later turned from the removal of Jews to the “Final Solution”—extermination.

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Global Indifference to the Holocaust

Name(s): _____

The following are just a few examples of world indifference during the Holocaust or outright resistance to the rescue of European Jews from the Nazi onslaught.

The USS St. Louis— The USS St. Louis, one of the last ships to leave Nazi Germany before the war, set sail for Cuba in May 1939. The 937 Jewish refugees on board each carried a valid visa for temporary entry into Cuba. Unknown to them, their landing permits, issued by the corrupt Cuban director of immigration, had already been invalidated by the Cuban government and the passengers were refused entry. The refugees appealed to the United States, but were refused admittance due to a restrictive immigration policy and a reluctance to interfere with Cuban affairs. After waiting for 12 days in the port of Havana and off the Miami coast, the boat was forced to return to Europe. Fearful of returning to Germany, the passengers pleaded with world leaders to offer them refuge. Belgium offered to take in 200 refugees and the British, French and Dutch governments each agreed to grant temporary asylum to the refugees until homes in other countries could be found. With the German occupation of Western Europe in the ensuing years, most of the former passengers once again fell under Nazi rule and were subject to anti-Jewish legislation. A fortunate few succeeded in emigrating or escaping, but by the end of 1941 it became virtually impossible for Jews to flee the continent. Starting in 1942, the Nazis began deportations from Western Europe to the killing centers in the east.

Wagner-Rogers Legislation — Legislation was introduced in the United States Congress in 1939 by Rep. Robert Wagner to admit a total of 20,000 Jewish children over a two-year period above the refugee quota applicable at the time. The legislation was inspired by similar efforts by the Dutch and British government to save Jewish children from Nazi terror. The legislation was amended in committee to admit the 20,000 children only if the number of Jewish refugees admitted under the regular quota was reduced by 20,000. The bill died in the House after the sponsor withdrew his support for the bill in frustration.

Bermuda Conference — As the Germans advanced through Europe, more Jews and others who were targets of Nazi racial policies came under Nazi control. By 1943 the war had created millions of refugees in Europe. The Bermuda Conference, jointly sponsored by the United States and Great Britain, was held in April 1943 to discuss solutions to the refugee problem. When the Conference finally wrapped up its 12 days of secret deliberations, very little had been achieved. The delegates' list of proposals included: the decision "that no approach be made to Hitler for the release of potential refugees;" suggestions for helping refugees leave Spain; and a declaration on the postwar repatriation of refugees. Even though the conferees decided to keep their report secret, they did make it clear to the press that most of the proposals submitted to the conference had been rejected. Following the conference, one Jewish organization took out a three-quarter page advertisement in "The New York Times" with the headline "To 5,000,000 Jews in the Nazi Death-Trap Bermuda Was a 'Cruel Mockery.'"

Sources: "America and the Holocaust," from PBS at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/holocaust/>; "Immigration Policies," from Jewish Virtual Library at <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/grobim.html>; "SS St. Louis" by Anthony Blechner at <http://www.blechner.com/ssstlouis>; "Voyage of the St. Louis," from United States Holocaust Museum at <http://www.ushmm.org/stlouis>

Background and Resources

Cambodian Genocide, 1975-1979

Cumulative Civilian Death Toll: 2 million

Name(s): _____

In 1975 the Khmer Rouge (KR), a communist rebel group, defeated the U.S. backed Lon Nol democratic regime. At first, many Cambodians welcomed the overthrow of the corrupt Lon Nol government. However, the KR soon began a ruthless campaign to reconstruct Cambodia into a collective of farms according to the communist model of Mao's China. Under threat of death, the residents of cities and towns were forced to relocate to the countryside where they would live in communes and work as unpaid laborers under impossible conditions. Those who refused to leave their homes or didn't vacate quickly enough (including the sick and elderly) were killed. Factories, schools and hospitals were shut down and people were stripped of all civil rights. Religion was banned and temples were destroyed. Music and radios were forbidden. Anyone perceived to be in opposition—including doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other educated and professional people—were eliminated along with all “un-communist” elements of Cambodian society. People were shot for simply knowing a foreign language or wearing glasses, and were discouraged from forming personal relationships or expressing affection. The country was “cleansed” of Vietnamese, Chinese, and Thai nationals as well as Muslims and Buddhist monks. Children were taken from their parents and placed into forced labor camps, where they were “reeducated.” In 1978 Vietnam invaded Cambodia to stop Khmer Rouge border attacks and defeated the murderous regime in two weeks. By that time, approximately two million people had died from execution, starvation, disease, and exhaustion, making the Cambodian genocide one of the most devastating in human history.

Web Resources:

- Cambodia 1975 (Peace Pledge Union)
http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_cambodia.html
- Cambodia: Oral Histories and Biographies (The Mekong Network)
http://www.mekong.net/cambodia/oral_hst.htm
- Cambodian Genocide (Father Ryan High School)
<http://www.fatherryan.org/holocaust/cambodia/JOE/INDEX.htm>
- The Cambodian Genocide (Historywiz.com)
<http://www.historywiz.com/cambodia.htm>
- Cambodian Genocide Group
<http://www.cambodiangenocide.org/front.htm>
- Cambodian Genocide Program (Yale University)
<http://www.yale.edu/cgp/index.html>
- Cambodian Killing Fields (The Digital Archive Of Cambodian Holocaust Survivors)
<http://www.cybercambodia.com/dachs/index.html>
- From Sideshow to Genocide: Stories of the Cambodian Holocaust (EdWeb)
<http://www.edwebproject.org/sideshow/>
- Pol Pot in Cambodia (United Human Rights Council)
http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/Genocide/pol_pot.htm
- Pol Pot in Cambodia 1975-1979 2,000,000 Deaths (The History Place)
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/genocide/pol-pot.htm>

Books

Clay Marble by Minfong Ho

In the late 1970s twelve-year-old Dara joins a refugee camp in war-torn Cambodia and becomes separated from her family. *1993, 163 pages, grades 5-9, Farrar, Straus and Giroux*

First They Killed My Father: A Girl of Cambodia Remembers by Loung Ung

Ung was the child of a high-ranking government official in Phnom Penh, who was five when the Khmer Rouge stormed the city and her family was forced to flee. Her story of starvation, forced labor, beatings, attempted rape, separations, and the deaths of her family members is one of horror and brutality. *2001, 256 pages, grades 10 & up, HarperCollins*

Heaven Becomes Hell: A Survivor's Story of Life under the Khmer Rouge by Y Ly

A first-hand account of four years (1975-80) of survival and death in Khmer Rouge labor camps. Included are a map of Cambodia, family photos, and freedom papers for US resettlement. *2000, 232 pages, grades 10 and up, Yale University Southeast Asia Studies*

The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-79 by Ben Kiernan

An account of the Khmer Rouge revolution that shows how an ideological preoccupation with racist and totalitarian policies led a group of intellectuals to impose genocide on their own country. *2002, 477 pages, grades 10 and up, Yale University Press*

Stay Alive My Son by Pin Yatlay

The author's memoir details his family's mistreatment in Khmer Rouge Cambodia and their courageous escape into Thailand. *1988, 264 pages, grades 10 & up, Simon & Schuster*

The Stone Goddess by Minfong Ho

After the Communists take over Cambodia and her family is torn from their city life, twelve-year-old Nakri and her older sister attempt to maintain their hope as well as their classical dancing skills in the midst of their struggle to survive. *2003, 208 pages, grades 6-10, Scholastic*

The Stones Cry Out: A Cambodian Childhood, 1975-1980 by Molyda Szymusiak

The memoir of the daughter of a high Cambodian official, who was twelve years old when Khmer Rouge radicals seized the capital and drove all its inhabitants into the countryside. The author kept her identity a secret, assuming a "revolutionary" name to avoid being branded as an aristocrat, and was one of only three family members to survive. *1999, 245 pages, grades 10 & up, Indiana University Press*

Teenage Refugees from Cambodia Speak Out by Stephanie St. Pierre

Following a brief description of each country's history and culture are six to eight interviews with native teenagers who are now living in the U.S. The young people talk about their lives here and in their homeland, their trip to the U.S., and the adjustments they have made. *1995, 64 pages, grades 8 & up, Rosen Publishing Group*

Background and Resources

Al-Anfal Campaign, Iraq, 1987-1988

Cumulative Civilian Death Toll: 180,000

Name(s): _____

The Al-Anfal campaign was an organized attempt by the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein to stamp out Kurdish efforts toward political independence. At the end of the Iran-Iraq war, the Kurdish region in northern Iraq was the scene of an attempt by Iranian forces allied with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan to capture Iraqi territory. Iraq had already begun to use chemical weapons in 1987 to battle the Kurdish opposition, and this brutal repression became an organized and institutionalized genocide in 1988. Throughout the Al-Anfal campaign, the Iraqis used chemical weapons and heavy bombardments to slaughter civilian populations. The operation also involved the destruction of villages, mass executions, and deportations of civilians including women and children. Those who sought medical attention in the urban centers for the treatment of exposure to chemical agents were rounded up and “disappeared.” In all an estimated 180,000 Kurds lost their lives and/or disappeared as a result of the genocidal campaign. In addition, hundreds of thousands of Kurdish civilians were displaced from their homes as approximately 4,000 villages were destroyed. The most widely publicized incident occurred in the Kurdish town of Halabja, where on March 16, 1988 an estimated 5,000 men, women and children lost their lives. Over 10,000 were wounded and to this day suffer the effects caused by exposure to chemical agents.

Web Resources

- Al-Anfal campaign (Iraq Museum International)
http://www.baghdadmuseum.org/ref/index.php?title=Al-Anfal_campaign
- Anfal (International Monitor Institute)
<http://www.imisite.org/iraq.php>
- The Anfal Offensives 1987-1988 (INDICT)
<http://www.indict.org.uk/crimedetails.php?crime=Anfal>
- Case Study: The Anfal Campaign (Iraqi Kurdistan), 1988 (Gendercide Watch)
http://www.gendercide.org/case_anfal.html
- Ethnic Differences and Relations: Ethnic Cleansing (The Iraq Journalism Project)
http://courses.washington.edu/com361/Iraq/ethnic_differences/ecleansing.htm
- The Forgotten People: The Attack at Halabja (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation)
<http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/kurds/attack.html>
- Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds (Human Rights Watch)
<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/iraqanfal/>
- Genocide in Kurdistan (Gendercide Watch)
<http://www.gendercide.org/genocideinkurdistan.html>
- Kurds at the Crossroads (Frontline, PBS)
<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/iraq203/crossroads03.html>

Books

Journey through Kurdistan by Mary Ann Smothers Bruni, Ali Atatas, Texas Memorial Museum

When the Kurds came to the world's attention in April 1991, Bruni spent the next two years documenting the Kurds and their ability to adapt and continue their lives under difficult, often tragic, circumstances. The text and photographs reflect the Kurds' struggle, land, and lifestyle. *1997, 224 pages, grades 6-10, University of Texas Press*

Kiss the Dust by Elizabeth Laird

Her father's involvement with the Kurdish resistance movement in Iraq forces thirteen-year-old Tara to flee with her family over the border into Iran, where they face an unknown future. *1994, 279 pages, grades 6-8, Penguin Books*

Kurdistan: Region under Siege (World in Conflict Series) by Kari Bodnarchuk

Presents background information on the Kurds and examines the history of their ethnic conflict with other peoples in the mountainous regions of southeastern Asia. *2000, 104 pages, grades 7-12, Lerner Publications Company*

Kurds by John King

Profiles of a Kurdish boy in Iraq, a woman in Iran, and a man in Turkey adapting as best they can to the sometimes radically different dominant cultures of their host countries. The history and politics of the people are addressed along with problems they face and a prognosis for a Kurdish state in the future. *1994, 48 pages, grades 5-8, Steck-Vaughn*

Background and Resources

Bosnian Genocide, 1992-1995

Cumulative Civilian Death Toll: 200,000

Name(s): _____

Bosnia is one of several small countries that emerged from the division of Yugoslavia, a country created after World War I and composed of ethnic and religious groups that had long been bitter rivals—the Orthodox Christian Serbs, Catholic Croats, and Muslim Albanians. After the death of the Communist leader, Tito, in 1980, Yugoslavia went through a period of political chaos that resulted in the rise of the Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic, who used religious hatred to gain power and quickly ignited conflict between Serbs and Muslims. After Bosnia—a mostly Muslim nation—declared independence in 1992, Milosevic launched an attack. Innocent civilians were gunned down in the streets of the capitol city, Sarajevo, including over 3,500 children. As the Serbs gained ground, they systematically rounded up and executed Muslims, mass raped women and girls, forced boys and men into concentration camps, and relocated entire towns. In addition, Muslim mosques and historic architecture were destroyed. The term “ethnic cleansing” was coined to describe the reign of terror being waged by Milosevic and the Serbian forces. Beginning in 1993, after failed diplomatic efforts, the U.S. and NATO launched air strikes against the Serbs, who retaliated by taking hundreds of U.N. peacekeepers as hostages and turning them into human shields. During one brutal episode, the infamous General Ratko Mladic led the systematic slaughter of nearly 8,000 men and boys between the ages of twelve and sixty in the “safe haven” of Srebrenica. In 1995 a massive NATO bombing campaign and the advancement of Muslim and Croat troops led ultimately to a peace accord. By this time, however, over 200,000 Muslim civilians had been systematically murdered, more than 20,000 people were missing, and two million people had become refugees.

Web Resources

- Bosnia 1995 (Peace Pledge Union)
http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_bosnia.html
- Bosnia Genocide (United Human Rights Council)
http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/Genocide/bosnia_genocide.htm
- Bosnia-Herzegovina 1992-1995 200,000 Deaths (The History Place)
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/genocide/bosnia.htm>
- Case Study: Bosnia-Herzegovina (Gendercide Watch)
http://www.gendercide.org/case_bosnia.html
- Timeline: Bosnia-Herzegovina; Milosevic’s Yugoslavia (BBC News)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1066981.stm
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/europe/2000/milosevic_yugoslavia/default.stm
- The World’s Most Wanted Man (Frontline, PBS)
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/karadzic/>

Books

Bosnia: Fractured Region by Eric Black

A detailed history of the country and its neighbors from the emergence of ethnic groups through the breakup of Yugoslavia that helps readers understand the tensions in the region and the historical grudges that were used by leaders of each ethnic group to fan the flames of suspicion against others in the 1990s. *1997, 96 pages, grades 9 & up, Lerner Publishing Group*

Bosnia: The Struggle for Peace by Sherry Ricciardi

Presents background information and an explanation for the recent strife in the region, and conveys a sense of the war's impact as well as current efforts to enforce peace. *1996, 64 pages, grades 5-8, Lerner Publishing Group*

Life in War-Torn Bosnia by Diane Yancey

A history of the Balkan Peninsula from A.D. 395 to the present that uses primary sources to explore day-to-day life in Bosnia, the causes of war in the region, and the impact of the war on children and youth. *1995, 112 pages, grades 6 & up, Thomson Gale*

Rebuilding of Bosnia by James P. Reger

The author provides an account of the Yugoslav War and the peace process, and outlines some of the options facing the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims living in Bosnia today. *1997, 112 pages, grades 7 & up, Thomson Gale*

War-Torn Bosnia by Helen Cothran

An introduction to the subject is followed by first-person narratives grouped in topical chapters on the causes of the war, atrocities, the siege of Sarajevo, the media, and the world's response. Many of the pieces are excerpts from books by correspondents or government officials, but there are also selections from the diary of an 11-year-old, memoirs of a prisoner of war, and accounts by others who were directly affected by the war. *2001, 192 pages, grades 9 & up, Thomson Gale*

Young People from Bosnia Talk about War by Harvey Fireside, Bryna J. Fireside

Provides a historical perspective of the Balkan region and briefly explains the recent conflicts among the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. Includes several personal stories of tragedy told by the young people who lived through them. *1996, 104 pages, grades 7 & up, Enslow Publishers*

Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo by Zlata Filipovic

In September 1991, shortly before war broke out on the streets of Sarajevo, 11-year-old Zlata Filipovic began to keep a diary about the deaths of friends, the shortage of food, and days spent in fear. The diary is a compelling plea for peace. *1995, 197 pages, grades 6 & up, Penguin Books*

Background and Resources

Rwandan Genocide, 1994

Cumulative Civilian Death Toll: 800,000

Name(s): _____

Rwanda, a small country in Central Africa, is comprised of two main ethnic groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi. Although the Hutus make up approximately 90 percent of the population, the Tutsis were placed in a more privileged position by the colonial Belgian rulers and dominated the Hutu peasants for decades. Following independence from Belgium in 1962, the Hutu majority seized power and exacted reprisals on the Tutsis through systematic discrimination and violence. As a result, over 200,000 Tutsis fled to neighboring countries and formed a rebel guerrilla army, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). In 1990 the RPF invaded Rwanda, which resulted in a peace accord that established a power sharing arrangement between the Hutus and Tutsis, an agreement that left Hutu extremist factions bitter. In 1994 Hutu President Habyarimana was assassinated when his plane was shot down near Kigali airport. Rwanda erupted immediately into violence as Hutu extremists began executing Tutsi leaders and moderate Hutu politicians. The killings spread to the countryside, where Hutu forces carried out the mass extermination of Tutsi civilians, mostly with machetes and clubs. The Rwandan state radio, controlled by Hutu extremists, further encouraged the killings by broadcasting non-stop hate propaganda and identifying the locations of Tutsis in hiding. Some of the worst massacres took place in churches and hospitals, where Tutsi civilians sought safe haven. Hutu civilians were forced to kill their Tutsi neighbors and Tutsis were forced to kill their own family members. After just over a month, the Red Cross estimated that half a million Tutsis had already been slaughtered, with the rate of killing reaching 10,000 per day. Bodies were now commonly seen floating down the Kigara River into Lake Victoria. Following the murder of ten members of a Belgian peacekeeping force, Western countries evacuated its personnel, leaving the Rwandans virtually alone to deal with the murderous Hutu militia. The killings ended only when armed Tutsi rebels, invading from neighboring countries, defeated the Hutus and halted the genocide in July 1994. By then, over one-tenth of the population—an estimated 800,000 people—had been killed. In the aftermath of the genocide, hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees fled into eastern Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The violence and its memory continue to affect the region.

Web Resources

- 1994 Rwanda Genocide (Father Ryan High School)
<http://www.fatherryan.org/holocaust/rwanda/index.htm>
- Case Study: Genocide in Rwanda, 1994 (Gendercide Watch)
http://www.gendercide.org/case_rwanda.html
- Genocide in Rwanda (United Human Rights Council)
http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/Genocide/genocide_in_rwanda.htm
- Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda (Human Rights Watch)
<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/>
- Rwanda 1994 (Peace Pledge Union)
http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_rwanda.html
- Rwanda 1994, 800,000 Deaths (The History Place)
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/genocide/rwanda.htm>
- Rwanda: And the World Stood By (Historywiz.com)
<http://www.historywiz.com/rwanda.htm>
- The Triumph of Evil in Rwanda (PBS Online)
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/>

Books

Crisis in Rwanda, Vol. 3 by Charles Freeman

Relates events in Rwanda after the murder of President Habyarimana, including the genocide of the Tutsi, the ill-treatment of refugees, and the eventual reconciliation. *1998, 64 pages, grades 6-10, Raintree Publishers*

Hutu and Tutsi by Vincent Emenike Chikwende and Aimable Twagilimana

A Rwandan linguist explains the people of Rwanda and Burundi, and Hutu/Tutsi politics and violence since 1959. *1997, 64 pages, grades 5-9, Rosen Publishing Group*

Rwanda: A Country Torn Apart by Kari J. Bodnarchuk

Describes the history of Rwanda's ethnic conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes, the events that led to the Rwandan civil war, its continuing effect on the people of that country, and efforts to bring peace and reconciliation to the war-ravaged region. *1999, 96 pages, young adult, Lerner Publishing Group*

Speak Rwanda by Julian R. Pierce

The story of ten people—Hutu and Tutsi, civilians and soldiers, mothers, nurses, politicians, herdsman, and orphaned children—as they attempt to survive one of the most violent and deeply disturbing massacres since the Second World War. *2000, 304 pages, grades 10 & up, Picador*

Teenage Refugees from Rwanda Speak Out by Aimable Twagilimana

Teenagers fleeing from Ethiopia and Rwanda relate how they came to be refugees in the United States and Canada. Each title begins with a brief historical survey, followed by profiles of eight young people, who describe the terrible conditions that forced them to leave their homeland; the dangers faced during the actual escapes; and the current challenges they meet in overcoming the language barrier and adjusting to life in an alien culture. *1997, 64 pages, grades 5 & up, Rosen Publishing Group*

Reasons for Global Unresponsiveness To Genocide

Despite the promise of “never again” following the Nazi Holocaust and the approximately 140 signatories to the Genocide Convention, instances of mass slaughter and genocide have occurred numerous times since World War II without adequate intervention by the world community. Though the reasons for nonintervention are complex and vary across situations, the following ideas represent recurring motivations that may provide insight into the problem of global unresponsiveness. A broad articulation of reasons is followed by more specific motivations for four instances of genocide during which the U.S. and the world community did not intervene until hundreds of thousands or even millions of deaths had already occurred—Cambodia, Northern Iraq, Bosnia, and Rwanda. Though an in-depth analysis is beyond the scope of this resource, it is hoped that the detailed listing will provide themes that can be expanded upon in class through further research and investigation.

Political/Economic Factors

- The inviolability of state sovereignty and unwillingness to interfere in what are considered to be the internal matters of an autonomous nation remain sacrosanct principles.
- Political leaders often reason that nonintervention carries no political risk while intervention brings a high risk of public disapproval.
- Political leaders often interpret societal silence as indifference, and fear a lack of public support for intervention.
- Political leaders will often base their decision to intervene on national interests; where there are no political or economic interests, it is frequently considered imprudent to intervene.
- The use of armed force is often deemed acceptable only as a last resort; to protect vital national interests; where winning is certain; and where public support is present.

Moral/Ethical Factors

- Sometimes economic or political interests in a country—even one with a genocidal regime—outweigh moral concerns; intervention may be seen as jeopardizing national interests.
- Arguing moral imperative over national interest is sometimes seen as out of the mainstream.
- The label of genocide is frequently avoided for fear of a moral imperative to act.
- There is sometimes a belief that it is premature or unethical to intervene while information and intelligence are still being gathered, and before there is a “complete picture.”
- There is often a fear that intervention will make things worse for the victims.
- Individual nations are often unwilling to risk the lives of their soldiers.

Flawed Assumptions

- There is sometimes an assumption that Western style diplomacy and peace talks will work, and that official heads of state are credible negotiators (even though they may be part of a genocidal regime).
- A related assumption is that official heads of state are rational actors and will not inflict gratuitous violence upon civilian populations.
- There is often an erroneous belief that a conflict is two-sided, rooted in ethnic or religious “feuds” that have long histories, and are therefore inevitable and unpreventable.
- Sometimes there is a belief that intervention will make things worse for the victims.

- The scope and brutality of genocidal crimes are often unbelievable to authorities, who may deny or question the veracity of refugee claims and reports of atrocities.
- The Holocaust is often the yardstick against which other alleged genocides are measured—situations that are not perceived to be on the same scale are often downplayed.
- Sometimes situations are wrongly categorized as war and genocidal violence is understood to be the “collateral damage” of war; it is often difficult for people to believe that mass murder of a group is a primary aim rather than a consequence of conflict.
- Sometimes the victims of genocide are blamed for bringing on their own repression.
- Sometimes military intervention is seen as the only solution and “soft intervention” or sanctions are dismissed as ineffective.

Public Awareness and Interest

- Individuals and citizen groups with influence do not organize, dissent, and apply public pressure with enough magnitude to force political action.
- Mainstream media coverage often reflects national priorities and public “appetite,” which contributes to a lack of public awareness and sense of urgency.
- There is often a limited expatriate community locally that can represent the interests of the targeted population.

Source: Power, Samantha (2002). “A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide. New York: Perennial

Reasons for Global Unresponsiveness To Genocide: Cambodia

Political/Economic Factors

- Following the Vietnam War, there was a “Southeast Asia fatigue”; the region was considered “unfixable” and world leaders were highly resistant to intervening in Cambodia.
- The United States did not have any compelling political or economic interests in Cambodia and therefore would not consider intervention.
- The U.S. did not intervene out of concern for upsetting relations with Thailand and China, both regional allies of the Khmer Rouge.
- The U.S. opposed Vietnam’s military intervention in Cambodia to stop the genocide because of China’s hostility toward Vietnam and its ally, the Soviet Union. The U.S. planned to restore diplomatic relations with China in 1979 and did not want to undermine relations with the Chinese government.

Flawed Assumptions

- Reports of atrocities by refugees were questioned or denied; disbelief was common and active investigation by media or government was very limited.
- There was a reluctance to publicly condemn the Khmer Rouge or apply sanctions because it was seen as ineffective or because it might result in increased violence and isolation.

Public Awareness and Interest

- The Khmer Rouge was a highly secretive regime; the lack of media access and information was a barrier to involvement.
- “Southeast Asia fatigue” resulted in a diminished desire for news from the region, so the media provided scant coverage.
- There was little organizing or dissent among the general public.
- Non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch were not sufficiently developed at that time to mount an effective global campaign to compel action.

Source: Power, Samantha (2002). “A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide. New York: Perennial

Reasons for Global Unresponsiveness To Genocide: Northern Iraq

Political/Economic Factors

- Since the U.S. backed Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War, there was an initial unwillingness to publicly condemn Saddam Hussein or his use of chemical weapons on the Kurdish people.
- When the U.S. did finally condemn the use of poison gas (only after tens of thousands of refugees fled to Turkey), it still considered the violence an “internal matter” and refused to intervene in the affairs of a sovereign state.
- There was a fear that—as a result of the Iran-Iraq War—Iraq’s oil reserves could fall into Iran’s hands and that Iranian Islamic radicalism could destabilize the pro-U.S. governments of the Middle East. For this reason, the U.S. supported Saddam Hussein even as he brutalized the Kurds.
- Iraq was a major importer of American grain, wheat, and rice. A sanctions bill cutting off agricultural and manufacturing credits to Iraq was rejected, and U.S. financial support of the genocidal regime was actually increased to over \$1 billion per year.

Moral/Ethical Factors

- Countries including West Germany profited from the sale of chemical agents to Iraq, which were used in the manufacture of the poison gas used on the Kurdish people.

Flawed Assumptions

- Despite early intelligence about brutality toward Kurdish civilians, Western policy makers and journalists described the violence as defensive measures against a Kurdish rebellion and collateral damage of the Iraq-Iran War.
- There was initial skepticism about reports of the gassing of Kurds and the large number of people reported dead, resettled or “disappeared.” Iranian sources of information about the genocide were discredited, and there was limited investigation that might confirm the reports of mass violence.
- There was a denial that Iraq was perpetrating wanton violence and targeting the Kurds for extermination; there was a belief that the violence was a result of war and would diminish in due time.
- There was a belief that U.S. investment and influence in Iraq would somehow diminish the violence.
- The Kurdish people were blamed by some for bringing on their own repression. Kurdish rebellion against Iraq, alliances with Iran, and movement toward independence caused some to view the conflict as two-sided, when in fact large numbers of apolitical civilians were being targeted for extermination.

Source: Power, Samantha (2002). “A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide. New York: Perennial

Reasons for Global Unresponsiveness To Genocide: Bosnia

Political/Economic Factors

- Bosnia was viewed by some as “Europe’s problem” and many thought there was nothing to be done by the U.S.
- There was a clear opposition in the U.S. to the use of armed force because there were no vital national interests to protect and because winning seemed doubtful.
- U.S. leaders were unwilling to act because they perceived a lack of public and Congressional support for intervention.
- The 1992 U.S. presidential election kept the Bush administration from risking involvement in a conflict with uncertain outcomes.
- President Clinton worried about offending the Russians, who were allied with the Orthodox Christian Serbs.

Moral/Ethical Factors

- There was a fear of the U.S. entering into a bloody conflict—a “quagmire” like Vietnam—that would be long and unsuccessful; recent fiascoes in Haiti and Somalia heightened the unwillingness to intervene militarily.
- The violence did not threaten U.S. interests or affect the American people; it was considered a humanitarian issue that did not meet U.S. standards for intervention.
- World leaders were unwilling to risk the lives of their soldiers.

Flawed Assumptions

- The conflict was viewed as a civil war (though Serbia was acting against the recognized independent state of Bosnia) and there was resistance to intervening in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.
- There was a belief that atrocities were being committed by all sides, and that the conflict was the inevitable expression of “ancient hatreds” that could not be prevented.
- There was widespread disbelief as reports of the violence and atrocities surfaced.
- There was a fear that intervention would bring retaliation against Muslim civilians or international peacekeepers, and that it could do more harm than good.

Source: Power, Samantha (2002). “A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide. New York: Perennial

Reasons for Global Unresponsiveness To Genocide: Rwanda

Political/Economic Factors

- The United States did not have any compelling political or economic interests in Rwanda and therefore would not consider intervention.
- U.S. leaders were unwilling to act because they perceived a lack of public and Congressional support for intervention.
- There was a lack of intelligence on Rwanda, and limited interest among high level advisors, which diminished the sense of urgency about the violence there.
- U.S. patience for peacekeeping missions was waning; they were seen as costly and ineffective
- There was a belief that the United Nations could not afford another Somalia and that a failed intervention might hurt the future of the United Nation's peacekeeping program.
- World leaders were unwilling to make the financial sacrifices necessary to stop the killing (for example, by financing technology to block the infamous deadly radio broadcasts).
- In a world of limited political and economic resources, Rwanda was not considered a priority.

Moral/Ethical Factors

- Following the fiasco in Somalia, the U.S. was not willing to risk another bloody intervention; there were no political costs attached to avoidance, but many risks attached to intervention.
- Multilateral missions for humanitarian purposes were viewed as “quagmires in the making.”
- After Belgian peacekeepers were murdered, the international community feared committing additional peacekeepers or soldiers.
- The label of genocide was avoided for fear of a moral imperative to act.
- Ethnic strife and bloodshed in Africa was seen as regrettable but not unusual.
- The slaughter of black Africans, for some, did not warrant intervention due to racism and stereotypical beliefs.

Flawed Assumptions

- There was hope that a prior peace agreement would still work and that the Hutu government was working to stop the violence (even though members of the government were perpetrators of the genocide).
- Inaction was justified by saying that a military solution was the only solution, but since military intervention was untenable there was nothing to be done.
- Officials exacerbated public reticence by painting an extreme picture of options—either total nonintervention or bloody quagmire; stay out of Rwanda or intervene everywhere.
- There was a disbelief that genocide was actually occurring; the conflict was seen as an internal war, which was not the basis for an intervention.

Public Awareness and Interest

- There was a belief that the public would oppose intervention and there was no public constituency for action.
- Press coverage about the genocide in Rwanda was initially limited, which contributed to limited public and governmental awareness and attention.
- There was no Rwandan diaspora in the U.S. to generate sympathy and support.

Source: Power, Samantha (2002). “A Problem from Hell”: America and the Age of Genocide. New York: Perennial