

The Legacy of 100 Days: The Rwandan Genocide

<http://44226196.nhd.weebly.com>

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Individual Website

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In the African nation of Rwanda, existing conflicts between the Hutu and Tutsi were galvanized by the 1994 assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana. These tensions hit their apex when long held prejudices and dogmas motivated the Hutus to needlessly slaughter over half a million Tutsis in less than one hundred days, leaving a bloodstained long-term legacy on the small nation.

I chose to research the Rwandan Genocide because I had recently viewed the film “Hotel Rwanda” and was very intrigued. I also felt that it embodied this year’s National History Day theme “Leadership and Legacy” exceedingly well.

Throughout my research, I travelled to multiple universities in search of new resources. On those trips, I searched for primary resources such as newspaper articles, news broadcasts, and live footage and recordings from Rwanda. I also managed to conduct nine interviews, which were extremely useful in furthering my knowledge of the Rwandan Genocide and how it relates to this year’s theme. I was especially excited to conduct three interviews with people who lived through the Rwandan Genocide.

After advancing to state competition, I added more multimedia to my website, made a tighter connection to the theme, and conducted several more interviews. I travelled to Buena Vista University and Iowa State University, and found an abundance of available resources at both locations.

The decision to create a website was an easy one, as large amounts primary media relating to my topic are available. I took advantage of this by adding visual aspects to my

site: videos, audio recordings, and photos. I then chose to use red accents, as red is a color I associate with blood and anger, two things which largely relate to my topic.

One of the most frustrating aspects of creating my project was trying to maintain the word count limit. Several times, I found myself exceeding the limit by a large surplus. I was able to compact my information eventually, but it was definitely a challenge.

The Rwandan Genocide definitely relates to the theme, “Leadership and Legacy”. It has left a legacy on the international community and the United Nations: they now respond to international conflict much quicker. It left a legacy on the nation of Rwanda, as the groups “Hutu” and “Tutsi” no longer exist. The leadership shown in the Rwandan Genocide was extraordinary, whether positive or negative. I feel that the Rwandan Genocide should always be remembered. It was a tragic chapter in history and it should not be repeated.

I enjoyed working on History Day this year. I learned new technological techniques, and gained knowledge of research skills that I’m positive will be useful in my life and career. I will never forget how much I enjoyed working on History Day this year, nor will I forget the Rwandan Genocide. We should never forget the disastrous events of our world’s history--that is just one of the reasons that programs like National History Day are so necessary.