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4th Hour

iSearch Paper - Night

When any high school student or even any person hears the term genocide, they would think “The Holocaust”. Granted the Holocaust was a very significant event in history and something that should most definitely not be overlooked, however what many people are overlooking are the many other occurrences of genocide that have happened much more recently than the holocaust. Europe, Ukrainian SSR, China, Nigeria, Cambodia, all over the world genocide occurs much more frequently than many of us might have thought. I personally found a specific occurrence of genocide to grab my attention more than many of the others, The Rwandan Genocide. So I set off on a knowledge based adventure to research and find everything I could on Genocide in Rwanda.

When I first set off to learn more about the Rwandan Genocide I knew very little about the event. If you would’ve asked me what I knew about it all I could’ve said was “Well I know it happened.” So learning about this was not only useful but also very interesting because this was my first opportunity to really learn about the Rwandan Genocide. When I first began researching I was getting basic facts, what many people might call “The Need To Know Facts” like how many people died, who the feud was

between, who won, and other stuff like that, this is what I initially wanted to learn. As my research went on I found the more specific things to be where the real interest lied. I found out how the people were able to save themselves, or stay under the radar, to be the most interesting things to learn.

So the step by step process I had to take was first of all to find out why it all happened in the first place, who was who and where it all happened. The second step from there had to be how many people died or suffered because of it. After finding out who was included and how many suffered, I attempted to head straight for the end and to call it even and wrap up the story. While wrapping up was a possibility, I still couldn't have worked something out and made a great summary of what happened, I stumbled across some of the more nitty gritty type of things I mentioned above, like how many of the Tutsi people saved themselves and how they were able to work things out in small counts rather than looking at the larger picture. This was about where I was in my progress when I, very conveniently, met Yvette and her mother Cecile Mukakizima, Cecile was a Tutsi citizen during the Genocide in Rwanda, and her story was easily the most interesting opportunity I had during my research of this topic. Interviewing Yvette about everything Cecile went through while living in Rwanda for the Genocide led to nothing but purely interesting and useful information, the type of information you don't usually gather from reading a text book or news article. I'm very fortunate to have been able to interview Yvette and her mother not only under normal circumstances but also because of how massive a role Cecile played in saving many Tutsi.

After I finished the designated research portion of the project I was able to move onto putting it all into shape through the 3d project, but first I had to gather all of the information and have it all in one place rather than scattered everywhere. My results were pretty clear and simple, I was able to find a full timeline, after researching countless amounts of separate timelines, both with at length description and just the name of the event and when it happened. I was also able to find when, why, and how it all happened. When and why really went hand in hand with the timeline. After I found a good timeline, well put together, and some other basic information about the occurrence like how many people died, how they died, and how long they spent killing the victims. I started to run out of questions I could ask, this was one of the dead ends of my project, and there wasn't a lot of dead ends throughout my research on this topic.

I was able to implement all of this into my 3d project by simply making a timeline descriptive enough to get the point across but not too descriptive to where I lose someones attention while they're reading it. In a separate section I put my interview with Yvette about Cecile in depth, in the most interesting order I could put it in. Then just as a small addition for no specific reason other than to add decoration I recreated an image of the Hutu harassing the Tutsi out of clay.

All in all, throughout this project I was able to gather a much better understanding about not only the topic I chose to research but to better understand why these things happen throughout history. As well as the methods they were stopped by. On top of this I also learned that if there's ever in the slightest chance to gather information directly from

someone who lived the event, that's the way to go. If i'm ever doing another project based on a search in which I have free will to learn, and I know someone who's been there and lived it, that's the best person to gather information from. My interview with Cecile was without a doubt the most interesting way I've ever learned about history, nothing in a text book can show you the same feeling that someone who has lived it can.

Not only did this project teach me more interesting ways of learning but it also made me come to realize some of the things I may have been missing while learning about the Holocaust, when you think the Holocaust and you see concentration camps you're solely focusing on the group of people that we're caught and sent to concentration camps. What I've personally never thought about is how many jewish people were able to avoid this fate undercover, by hiding from the authorities or maybe even being sheltered by a non jew. This project really taught me digging just one step deeper in the research process can make a huge difference in the final results of the project.

Finally with the focus on what I've learned about humanity in general, is even though it seems that history repeats itself and genocide may be unavoidable, we can gather the information on how to take a stand against genocide, by learning from the Rwandan Genocide, the Holocaust, and the many others like it. This has also made me come to the ultimate realization that, no matter how many people are out there with drives that could do harm like Hitler, and the many people involved in both the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide, there are just as many opposites with good morals that want to help others no matter what the situation. There is always hope.

