

## **Boko Haram in Nigeria**

*original post 7/5/14; updated 10/5/14 and again 19/5/14 and again 16/8/14*

For several weeks every time I have switched on BBC Radio 4 there have been reports of girls being kidnapped by Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria. This is a group of Islamic fundamentalists whose very name translates as "Western education is sinful". Recently some 270 or so girls have been taken.

The curious thing is that all these BBC reports in the last few days have mentioned only the abducting of girls but with no mention of what has happened to the boys. Radio 4's *Today* programme on 7/5/14 (~7:00am) introduced Angelina Jolie as someone who has been campaigning about "violence against women", further giving the impression that the victims are female only. On 9/5/14 we had Senator John Kerry talking about the action being taken by the US, again in reference only to the abduction of girls.

This is curious. Earlier reports of Boko Haram's activities in Nigeria, such as this one <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/boko-haram-islamic-militants-storm-nigeria-boarding-school-kill-29-children/> from February this year described the fate of the boys on that occasion as follows, "*The militants locked the door of one dormitory where male students were sleeping and then set it ablaze, slitting the throats of those who tried to clamber out of windows and gunning down those who ran away. Many were burnt alive.*"

In fact the attacks by Boko Haram on schools in Nigeria have been going on for a long time, over a year and probably several years, previously killing over a thousand boys, perhaps several thousand (200 in one week according to the above report). The abduction of females is a relatively new occurrence. Until a few weeks ago the girls were simply told to leave and not come back. And so long as the girls were being spared, the mere killing of boys did not merit any media attention in the West. It still doesn't it seems.

In the April incident, the girls were spared but kidnapped. They have a market value. If they convert from Christianity to Islam they may be treated reasonably. Otherwise probably their fate is not pleasant. Possibly their fate will not be pleasant either way, I don't know. But for the boys it is immediate execution. Why is the treatment of the boys apparently not worth mentioning?

Why is that the BBC reports the abduction of girls - which is, of course, abhorrent - but does not even mention that boys are being slaughtered in even greater numbers - and that this killing of boys has been going on for a great deal longer? Why is it that Boko Haram becomes news in the West only now that girls are being victimised? Why is it that celebrities are flocking to support the #BringBackOurGirls campaign but no one cares about boys? The deaths of a thousand or more boys - burnt alive, knifed, gunned down and sometimes beheaded - appears to be of too little importance to register. Of course, unlike the girls, it is not possible to bring them back. But it would not be too late to protect those still alive - if anyone cared.

My question is rhetorical of course. We know the reason why the deaths of boys are not mentioned. These events are an excellent opportunity for feminist propaganda. The point is proved by Michelle Obama's YouTube video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=9ON5BsiFQQk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=9ON5BsiFQQk)

Here Michelle Obama has taken the unique step of delivering her husband's weekly presidential address to express outrage at the kidnapping of the Nigerian schoolgirls. (What gave this unelected person the right to usurp the President's role, by the way? That Obama was happy to give the slot to Michelle is proof in itself that this is political propaganda deliberately targeted at the female vote). She makes no mention of any killing of boys whatsoever. Her speech is squarely in the feminist tradition - interpreting the

events in Nigeria entirely in terms of victimisation of females. Here is the proof, for those who still need it, that the one-sided concern - for females only - applies all the way to the top, to the presidency of the USA. This is the unholy alliance between the feminist ideologues and senior politicians, of both sexes, which makes the feminist position so frighteningly strong.

You could expect *The Guardian* to be in the vanguard when it comes to putting a feminist spin on the news. Their article on 9/5/14 refers only to the girls abduction without mention of boys deaths, whilst their article on 10/5/14 does make a brief mention of past killings of boys, but the article is still almost entirely concerned with the girls. The prize goes to the lovely Deborah Orr, 9/5/14, who writes, "*Many people have asked why the British media has taken so long to report with any prominence the plight of the 276 schoolgirls who were taken at gunpoint from their boarding school in Chibok, Borno state, on 14 April.....Feminists thought the answer was because females don't matter.*" Err...no, Deborah, that's not quite right - at least relatively speaking the British and US media have been very quick to pick up the story now it affects girls. The right question, Deborah, is why did *The Guardian* not report the killing of boys - at all, even now, despite the fact that it has been going on for years?

It is simply not credible to suppose that the staff at the BBC and *The Guardian* are unaware of the mass killing of boys. They are journalists, for Christ's sake. If I know, they know. The unpalatable truth can only be that the omission of any mention of what has been, and continues to be, happening to boys is deliberate policy. To mention the boys fate would undermine the propaganda value to the feminists of the girls' victimisation. Only females can be allowed to play the victim's role. Males must appear only in the role of the perpetrators of violence.

But now that girls are the victims we see President Francois Hollande of France hosting Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan in a head of state conference aimed at tackling Boko Haram. And we have France, the UK and the US all putting military personnel on the ground in Nigeria. Where were they when it was just boys being killed? This is the relative worth of males and females in our society for those who have eyes to see and brains which are still functional. The reporting of these atrocities is an excellent example of how boys do not matter - only girls matter - the precise opposite of the feminist line. The delightful Ms Orr goes on to admit that, "*I don't know much about Nigeria. But I know what I like. I like children going to school without being kidnapped by violent criminals bent on destroying their lives*". No mention of not liking killing boys, then, Ms Orr?

There are honourable exceptions in the press - papers which have run articles pointing out that the primary victims are, in fact, boys. For example, Colin Freeman in *The Telegraph* <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/colinfreeman/100270947/dont-forget-that-boko-haram-targets-boys-as-well-as-girls/>, Noah Rothman here <http://www.mediaite.com/online/why-did-kidnapping-girls-but-not-burning-boys-alive-wake-media-up-to-boko-haram/> and Lara Prendergast in *The Spectator* <http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/coffeehouse/2014/05/boko-haram-also-murders-boys-where-was-the-selfie-protest-then/>. These articles suggest that Boko Haram may have been responsible for around 1000 deaths since the start of the year - predominantly boys - and I have seen estimates of around 2000 deaths since their activities started - as long ago as four years. The Noah Rothman article concludes, "*an even more disturbing question needs to be asked now: why did the press spring to action when young women were kidnapped, but were virtually unmoved when it was young boys who were being slaughtered and burned alive?*" The Lara Prendergast article received a lot of supportive comments, but that did not stop some feminists giving us the benefit of their usual logic defying lack of compassion.

An example is, *cartimandua*: *The reason those boys were killed is Muslim societies and tribal African societies don't keep girls alive. If you want fewer dead boys you have to stop the society abusing the girls.* What? According to this pernicious mindset, whatever happens to boys it is always, always, always females who are the true victims - even when it isn't. Yes, burn to death a thousand or so boys and guess what? It's girls that are the real victims. This is feminism. It is not compassion. It is not equality. It is repugnant.

Update at 19/5/14: This issue continues to infuriate. I have still heard no mention on the BBC radio news of the killing of boys, despite daily bulletins about the abducted girls. On today's BBC news we were told of the latest atrocity, reported thus, "11 people were reported killed in an attack on a village of which one was a 12 year old girl". But who were the (apparently less important) others? Obviously male. Why mention the one girl? Because it would not be a real atrocity otherwise.

On 17/5 the BBC web site<sup>1</sup>, after reminding us of the abducted girls, finally mentioned that, "thousands of people have been killed by Boko Haram in recent years". See, they do know. And do note the word "people". Take care not to mention the sex of the "people" so as not to damage the propaganda message. They would all have been male, barring the occasional collateral damage to girls. You see how carefully these things are expressed? Having established via the earlier reports that the issue is the kidnapping of girls and that Boko Haram (men) are responsible, it is now favourable for propaganda purposes to blame Boko Haram for as many atrocities as possible. Not hard, you would think, but the trick is to do so without revealing boys to be victims, and thus diluting or negating the propaganda value to the feminist cause. The solution is to reveal Boko Haram's wider atrocities in terms of past killing - but without mentioning the sex of the victims. By now, you see, the public have lodged in their minds the meme "Boko Haram are nasty to girls". So by referring to Boko Haram's further nastiness, but carefully omitting the sex of the victims, the public automatically associate the further nastiness with nastiness to females. In this way the killing of boys is cunningly presented to the public as "violence against women" - the feminists' favourite slogan. It is subtle but vile, this propaganda business. It takes just the right nuances and phrasing - nothing so gross as lying. Half the truth is a whole lie.

So even now, several weeks after the media's attention was focused (finally) on the outrages of Boko Haram, we still have our beloved foreign secretary, William Hague, saying "*The first focus of everything we do now is about the girls, of course it is*"<sup>1</sup>. And the great British public are happy with that - and that's why he says it, because he has to. That's how it works. The feminist controlled media present the issue falsely as "violence against women", the public outrage is whipped up, and the politicians are obliged to appease both the feminist lobby groups and the public generally by being seen to be protective of females. And where are men and boys in this playing out of the political farce? Nowhere. They have neither voice nor sympathy. You will recognise this same process being deployed in other feminist propaganda issues. A couple of months ago it was FGM (female genital mutilation). Same procedure: present genital mutilation, falsely, as an issue only for females, whip up public indignation by exploiting the feminist control of the media, and force Michael Gove and Ban Ki Moon to do precisely what *The Guardian* told them. And if anyone should point out in a comment on *The Guardian's* web site that actually male genital mutilation is a far bigger problem and how about some outrage about that too - well, you can expect *The Guardian's* moderator to remove the comment - I speak from experience.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-27451966>.

16/8/14 Update: Boko Haram's atrocities continue, as expected. In the last week they have kidnapped at least 97 men and boys ([http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/15/world/africa/boko-haram-kidnapping/index.html?hpt=hp\\_t3](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/15/world/africa/boko-haram-kidnapping/index.html?hpt=hp_t3)) and killed at least 28 "people" and injured 25 others. For "people" read males - otherwise, if the people in question had been of the uber-gender this fact would undoubtedly have been mentioned. No surprise about this. But just to point out....there has been no outcry from Obama (Mr or Mrs) or from David Cameron or any of the other politicians so keen to jump on the #BringBackOurGirls PC opportunity. There is no political capital to be had merely expressing outrage at the treatment of males. Why? Because it is just business as usual.