

J-Term: what you might have missed

BY ANTHONY HARRISON
STAFF WRITER

Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting

December 14, 2012

On Dec. 14, 2012, Adam Lanza entered Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. and gunned down 20 children and six adults with a semi-automatic assault rifle before shooting and killing himself. Lanza, who was diagnosed with a developmental disorder, had also killed his mother earlier in the day.

According to the state medical examiner, each victim was shot at least once, and one victim suffered 11 bullet wounds.

The shooting has sparked intense discussion, debate and division over the issues of gun control, assault weapons and mental health services. On Jan. 26, Newtown residents were joined by thousands in a march on Washington, D.C., demanding stricter gun control.

France Invades Mali

January 11, 2013

Since Jan. 11, France has assisted the military of Mali in driving Islamic militants out of the country.

Following a military coup last year, militants believed to be linked to al-Qaeda attacked major cities in Mali, including Timbuktu, Gao and Bamako, the nation's capital. The extremists enforced Sharia law in occupied areas and destroyed libraries, tombs, mosques and other valued cultural sites.

Though formerly colonized by France, the Malian people responded positively to French relief. The citizens of Gao celebrated their liberation by playing banned music, smoking cigarettes and chanting, "France, France, Mali, Mali."

Algerian Hostage Crisis

January 16, 2013

Terrorists linked with al-Qaeda attacked a gas plant in eastern Algeria on Jan. 16, taking more than 800 workers hostage.

The primary target of the attack was the plant's staff, namely workers of British, American and French origin. Many of the workers hid in their rooms and escaped the next day, but others were subject to random execution.

The four-day siege ended on Jan. 19 after an assault by the Algerian military. All 32 of the militants were killed in the siege and nearly 40 of the hostages are confirmed dead, many as a result of terrorists using them as human shields to evade air strikes.

Israeli Elections

January 22, 2013

On Jan. 22, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu kept legislative control following parliamentary elections. However, a newly created centrist-populist party took 19 seats. Lapid vowed that he would not act as a "fig leaf" covering Netanyahu's far-right policies and wishes to revisit peace negotiations with Palestinians.

Despite his partisanship, Lapid is expected to receive a cabinet post and Netanyahu said that the two men "have had an opportunity to do great things together." Other winners are the center-leftist Labor Party with 15 seats and the Jewish Home, a right-wing religious party, which claimed 12 seats.

World Economic Forum

January 23-27, 2013

The 43rd World Economic Forum was held in Davos, Switzerland on Jan. 23-27. The forum gathered business leaders as well as political and humanitarian figures to discuss the state of the global economy and develop solutions to a variety of fiscal dilemmas.

Some major concerns at this year's forum included the ongoing economic crisis in Europe, Japan's deflating currency and the future possibilities and pitfalls of the Internet.

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde stated that 2013 will prove to be "a make-or-break year for the global economy."

"Don't relax," warned Lagarde.

Benghazi Hearings

February 1, 2013

Hillary Clinton has resigned as Secretary of State following her testimony before Congress regarding the attacks on Benghazi last September.

Clinton's Republican opponents on the Foreign Relations Committee criticized her during the hearings instead of inquiring about the attacks. Clinton kept her reserve, but occasionally returned fire.

"It is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again," a frustrated Clinton said while pounding the desk with her fists. Senator John Kerry was confirmed by the Senate as her replacement in a 94-3 vote and took office on Feb. 1.

Controversy in 'Zero Dark Thirty'

BY JOSH BARKER
STAFF WRITER

A man hangs suspended in the dark; his face is bloodied, his lungs waterlogged, and heavy metal blades so that he cannot sleep. He is here because he is alleged to have financially aided the 9/11 bombers.

This is one of the earliest scenes in Kathryn Bigelow's film "Zero Dark Thirty," which has been nominated for this year's Academy Award for Best Picture. Bigelow won Best Picture in 2010 for "The Hurt Locker," which also illustrates military action in the Middle East.

Controversy over the depiction of torture in various scenes throughout the movie has overshadowed its critical acclaim. Several members of the Academy who recently nominated the film for their top award are now calling for it to be boycotted.

In an article he wrote for Truthout, actor and Academy member David Clennon argues that the film's moral is that "torture sometimes works" comparing its lack of morality to that of the film "The Birth of a Nation," which is commonly stigmatized as racist.

Bigelow confronted these negative perceptions of her film in a recent article for the Los Angeles Times stating, "in the arts ... depiction is not endorsement."

However, in his article for The New York Review of Books, Steve Coll argues that where "Zero Dark Thirty" fails is not in what it depicts about torture, but what it fails to depict about torture. Coll argues that the film fails to portray the CIA and FBI officials who questioned the use of "enhanced interrogation techniques."

This view of the notorious manhunt for Osama bin Laden may be partially due to the film's limited approach in following one central character known as "Maya," played by Jessica Chastain.

Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Duncan points out that this hunt was really a "very complex effort involving hundreds of analysts, not one woman."

Regarding the concept of torture in the film, Duncan said, "torture exists, people do it," but continued, "information from torture is useless ... someone would admit to being Elvis's love child."

In her article for Los Angeles Times Bigelow concludes, "I think Osama bin Laden was found due to ingenious detective work. Torture was, however — as we all know — employed in the early years of the hunt."

"That doesn't mean it was the key to finding Bin Laden," Bigelow continued. "It means it is a part of the story we couldn't ignore. War obviously isn't pretty, and we were not interested in portraying this military action as free of moral consequences."

"Zero Dark Thirty" is now playing in movie theaters across the U.S.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Online poll:
Did "Zero Dark Thirty"
cross the line?

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