



The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience

By Mark Bixler



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In 2000 the United States began accepting 3,800 refugees from one of Africa's longest civil wars. They were just some of the thousands of young men, known as "Lost Boys," who had been orphaned or otherwise separated from their families in the chaos of a brutal conflict that has ravaged Sudan since 1983. *The Lost Boys of Sudan* focuses on four of these refugees. Theirs, however, is a typical story, one that repeated itself wherever the Lost Boys could be found across America.

Jacob Magot, Peter Anyang, Daniel Khoch, and Marko Ayii were among 150 or so Lost Boys who were resettled in Atlanta. Like most of their fellow refugees, they had never before turned on a light switch, used a kitchen appliance, or ridden in a car or subway train?much less held a job or balanced a checkbook. We relive their early excitement and disorientation, their growing despondency over fruitless job searches, adjustments they faced upon finally entering the workforce, their experiences of post-9/11 xenophobia, and their undying dreams of acquiring an education.

As we immerse ourselves in the Lost Boys' daily lives, we also get to know the social services professionals and volunteers, celebrities, community leaders, and others who guided them?with occasional detours?toward self-sufficiency. Along the way author Mark Bixler looks closely at the ins and outs of U.S. refugee policy, the politics of international aid, the history of Sudan, and the radical Islamist underpinnings of its government. America is home to more foreign-born residents than ever before; the Lost Boys have repaid that gift in full through their example of unflagging resolve, hope, and faith.



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The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience By Mark Bixler Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #437059 in Books
- Published on: 2006-10-01
- Released on: 2006-10-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .66" w x 6.00" l, .93 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 288 pages



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In 2001, four young men, having fled the Sudanese civil war that has raged for more than 20 years, left East African refugee camps to begin a new life in the modern sprawl of Atlanta. Bixler, a reporter for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, covered their emigration for the paper, and here recounts their extraordinary stories. Thousands of young men, displaced by the war and separated from their families, have come to be called the "Lost Boys" of Sudan after *Peter Pan*'s orphans. Selected by the State Department for resettlement in the U.S., Jacob, Peter, Daniel and Marko had not seen a light switch before their arrival. Bixler chronicles their earnest attempts at cultural orientation and their intimate relationships with volunteers who donated time and money. While lively and even entertaining, the book does not simply tug heartstrings with touching anecdotes. A recurring theme is the émigrés' intense struggle for a basic education; they and other refugees "could not understand why the government seemed to have brought them without a plan for their education." The book does not ignore the pitfalls and politics of refugee resettlement, which are especially complicated since 9/11, but Bixler's perspective is optimistic. He also provides essential background, including a crash course on U.S. refugee policy and a short history of Sudan. (Mar. 14)

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From [Booklist](#)

In 2000, in a historically unprecedented gesture, the federal government resettled 3,800 young men unaccompanied by parents and with no family in the U.S. when it opened its doors to those who were called the Lost Boys of Sudan. Uprooted by the civil war that had ravaged Sudan, the boys were forced to wander, dodging bullets and wild animals. Jacob Magot, Peter Anyang, Daniel Khoch, and Marko Ayii were among 150 youth who were eventually resettled in Atlanta. Bixler, a reporter with the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, follows the progress of the four young men as they adjust to life in modern America, learning to use kitchen appliances, take public transportation, and look for work. Bixler chronicles their struggles to overcome loneliness and to come to terms with the brutality of their past, as well as their frustrations with job hunting and the growing suspicion of foreigners post-9/11. Assisted by myriad volunteers and social-service providers, the four realize their dreams of education and make lives for themselves. An inspiring story of determination and faith. *Vanessa Bush*

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Review

Mark Bixler shows what the refugee experience is like for tribal, traditional, and traumatized people as they crash into modern America. While there are quite a few books on the Sudanese in America, this is the one that connects personal stories to history, foreign policy, and public policy. It's erudite and readable, a rare combination.

(Mary Pipher *author of The Middle of Everywhere: Helping Refugees Enter the American Community*)

The journey of the 'Lost Boys of Sudan' is both heartbreaking and inspiring. It speaks to the strength of the human spirit to survive and grow under even the most abject circumstances. Their plight eloquently shows us the terrible consequences for children of war, and their personal triumphs over adversity symbolize a great hope for Africa and the global community.

(President Jimmy Carter)

Mark Bixler's fascinating narrative follows four young men coming of age as they navigate from a past that saw the slaughter of their families, the destruction of their communities, their flight to years of temporary asylum, their childhood denuded of adult assistance and supervision, in at best a fourth-world environment, to, suddenly, the most complex and competitive society on earth. Bixler also plumbs the strategic limits of American society; the rescue and resettlement of individual refugees such as these is tied to the principled oversoul of America. These young men will succeed here; as they do, we succeed too.

(Roger Winter *former director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement and executive director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1981–2001*)

Mark Bixler has written a compelling story about four courageous and persistent young men who overcame enormous adversity before arriving in the United States. As a former university president, I am especially taken by the Lost Boys' intense desire to gain a college education and by the personal sacrifices they are willing to make to achieve their goal. As the head of an organization whose mission is to serve refugees around the world and in the United States, I find *The Lost Boys of Sudan* to be an excellent introduction to a remarkable group of newcomers to this nation of immigrants and refugees.

(George Rupp *President of the International Rescue Committee*)

An inspiring story of determination and faith. . . . An utterly gripping story of perseverant young people.

(Vanessa Bush *Booklist*)

Bixler writes honestly about the Lost Boys' triumphs and challenges, including trying to pay for college with minimum-wage jobs, sorting out the benefactors from the con artists among those offering to help, and enjoying the privileges of life in America knowing that family members still suffer back home. Perhaps the most sobering message of Bixler's book is the degree to which the refugees continue to struggle. Surviving one nation's trauma does not necessarily mean you will escape trouble in another.

(*Louisville Courier-Journal*)

Mark Bixler has written a compelling account of the extraordinary hardships the Lost Boys underwent in Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya and the at times wrenching difficulties they encountered after coming to the United States. In addition to chronicling the experiences of several of those boys, Bixler provides essential background about the civil war that led to the uprooting of millions of southern Sudanese and about the genesis and evolution of U.S. policy toward refugees, who are victims of persecution. *The Lost Boys of Sudan* should appeal not only to readers drawn to the dramatic story that unfolds in its pages, but also to U.S. government officials and private organizations involved in refugee resettlement who want to improve their programs.

(Donald Petterson *author of Inside Sudan: Political Islam, Conflict and Catastrophe*)

Bixler feeds us meticulously researched facts while doling out tantalizing bits of the compelling story of Lost

Boys adjusting to America. It is the quintessential immigrants' story of people striving for the American dream: peace and a chance for education and self-determination. It is a directory for the confusion of the ongoing, 20-year civil war in Sudan. It is also an insightful look at U.S. foreign policy and 'terror-fighting' work around the world in the last 10 years. And it opens with a chilling glimpse into the almost impossible task of escaping the bottom rungs of the work ladder in our country.

(Kay Campbell *Huntsville Times*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Harrison Colon:

What do you think of book? It is just for students as they are still students or the item for all people in the world, what the best subject for that? Just simply you can be answered for that issue above. Every person has various personality and hobby for every other. Don't to be obligated someone or something that they don't want do that. You must know how great and important the book *The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience*. All type of book could you see on many sources. You can look for the internet resources or other social media.

Fred Musso:

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Walter Feuerstein:

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Hilary Winters:

That guide can make you to feel relax. This book *The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience* was colourful and of course has pictures on the website. As we know that book *The Lost Boys of Sudan: An American Story of the Refugee Experience* has many kinds or genre. Start from kids until teens. For example *Naruto* or *Detective Conan* you can read and think you are the character on there.

Therefore not at all of book usually are make you bored, any it makes you feel happy, fun and chill out. Try to choose the best book for yourself and try to like reading this.

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