



Resources

Holocaust Unit

Bystander - Resource A

The Rape of Kitty Genovese

On March 13, 1964, in Kew Gardens, Queens, NY, Catherine Genovese was attacked and raped, when she was entering her apartment building at about 3:15 AM, coming home from work. She was stabbed twice in the back by Winston Moseley, a heavy machine operator, who later explained that he simply “wanted to kill a woman.”

Genovese screamed, “Oh, my God! He stabbed me! Help me!” and collapsed. Several neighbours in surrounding buildings reported hearing her voice, but decided it was probably just a drunken brawl or lovers’ spat. One man shouted from his window, “Let that girl alone!” which scared Moseley away. This neighbour was sure to have seen Genovese crawling across the street, under a streetlight, to her apartment, but did nothing to help her. Witnesses saw Moseley drive away, then return about 10 minutes later. He had put on a wider-rimmed hat to hide his face, and searched for Genovese in the parking lot, the train station, and the apartment complex, for 10 minutes, before finding her in the external hallway at the rear of the building, where the door was locked. She could not get in.

Moseley proceeded to stab her to death, inflicting multiple wounds in her hands and forearms, indicating that she tried to fight him off. She finally succumbed and he raped her as she lay dying. He then stole around \$50 from her and fled. The whole incident spanned 30 minutes.

There were approximately 12 people who claimed to have seen the first attack. Many of them later stated that they “just didn’t want to get involved.”

Source: <http://listverse.com/2009/11/02/10-notorious-cases-of-the-bystander-effect/>