

# APPENDIX H

## KITTY GENOVESE STORY

**Catherine Susan Genovese** (July 7, 1935 – March 13, 1964), commonly known as **Kitty Genovese**, was a New York City woman who was stabbed to death near her home in the Kew Gardens section of Queens, New York. The circumstances of her murder and the apparent reaction (or lack thereof) of her neighbors were reported by a newspaper article published two weeks later and prompted investigation into the psychological phenomenon that became known as the bystander effect or “Genovese syndrome.”

### Attack

Genovese had driven home in the early morning of March 13, 1964. Arriving home at about 3:15 a.m. and parking about 100 feet (30 m) from her apartment’s door, she was approached by Winston Moseley. Moseley ran after her and quickly overtook her, stabbing her twice in the back. When Genovese screamed out, her cries were heard by several neighbors; but on a cold night with the windows closed, only a few of them recognized the sound as a cry for help. When one of the neighbors shouted at the attacker, “Let that girl alone!,” Moseley ran away and Genovese slowly made her way towards her own apartment around the end of the building. She was seriously injured, but now out of view of those few who may have had reason to believe she was in need of help.

Records of the earliest calls to police are unclear and were certainly not given a high priority by the police. One witness said his father called police after the initial attack and reported that a woman was “beat up, but got up and was staggering around.”

Other witnesses observed Moseley enter his car and drive away, only to return ten minutes later. He systematically searched the parking lot, train station, and small apartment complex, ultimately finding Genovese, who was lying, barely conscious, in a hallway at the back of the building. Out of view of the street and of those who may have heard or seen any sign of the original attack, he proceeded to further attack her, stabbing her several more times. Knife wounds in her hands suggested that she attempted to defend herself from him. While she lay dying, he sexually assaulted her. He stole about \$49 from her and left her dying in the hallway. The attacks spanned approximately half an hour.

A few minutes after the final attack, a witness, Karl Ross, called the police. Police and medical personnel arrived within minutes of Ross’ call; Genovese was taken away by ambulance and died en route to the hospital. Later investigation by police and prosecutors revealed that approximately a dozen (but almost certainly not the 38 cited in the Times article) individuals nearby had heard or observed portions of the attack, though none could have seen or been aware of the entire incident. Only one witness (Joseph Fink) was aware she was stabbed in the first attack, and only Karl Ross was aware of it in the second attack. Many were entirely unaware that an assault or homicide was in progress; some thought that what they saw or heard was a lovers’ quarrel or a drunken brawl or a group of friends leaving the bar outside when Moseley first approached Genovese.