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Marcia M. Gallo. *"No One Helped": Kitty Genovese, New York City, and the Myth of Urban Apathy.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. xxiii + 212 pp. \$24.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8014-5664-0; \$79.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8014-5278-9.

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An iconic parable of urban apathy and the anomie associated with modern life, the story of Kitty Genovese continues to serve as a feminist battle cry and a call for collective responsibility. But what if the myth is just a myth? Drawing on oral histories, media coverage, and artistic portrayals, Marcia M. Gallo seeks to resolve what she terms the "myth of urban apathy" surrounding the Genovese murder, while simultaneously restoring Genovese's "personhood" (p. xv). For Gallo, the "exclusive focus on apathy" in the Genovese case would ultimately serve to "disparage[e] those New Yorkers who challenged the status quo, from race relations to police accountability to gender and sexual norms," including Genovese herself (p. xxiii).

That Gallo's previous work concerns the lesbian rights movement, post-World War II feminism, and queer politics comes through in the parts of the book that shine. Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the larger responses to the Genovese case, as well as the appropriation of the murder by feminist groups in the 1970s. In chapter 5, Gallo explores how Genovese's murder fueled an increase in neighborhood crime watch programs and a rise in anticrime patrols as addendum to already existing block associations. In one poignant example, Gallo quotes Curtis Silva, founder of the para-police organization the Guardian Angels, as motivated by the Genovese murder to "return to the values of my parents and grandparents" in "tak[ing] responsibility for our own neighborhood" (p. 113). Other by-products of the Genovese murder, per Gallo, were the implementation of the 911 system in New York City (although the causal connection appears to only be in A. M. Rosenthal's book, *Thirty-Eight Wit-*

nesses: The Kitty Genovese Case, published in 1964) and the creation of the now-infamous psychological theory "Bystander Syndrome."

Chapter 6 examines how various feminist activists re-defined the Genovese crime "as not only a murder but also a rape" (p. 122). Particularly compelling is how minimized the sexual assault aspect of the Genovese case was in the subsequent media coverage, as well as the virtual media silence on Anna Mae Johnson, a black woman sexually assaulted and killed by the same assailant a mere two weeks prior to Genovese's death. As Gallo demonstrates, Genovese's name and story would subsequently be invoked by feminist activists in campaigns to end sexual violence against women and to increase awareness of domestic violence.

Gallo is also successful in her quest to restore Genovese's "personhood." In a chapter evocatively titled "Hidden in Plain Sight," Gallo does a wonderful job placing Genovese within the context of her times as a vibrant, successful, homosexual woman. Gallo's interviews with Genovese's lover, Mary Ann Zielonko, and some of Genovese's friends add poignant and touching details to a life cut tragically short.

While there is much to like about this book, there are numerous missed opportunities. Gallo spends too much time focusing on the creation of the myth (already long disproved by other writers and the mass media) instead of focusing on the more interesting historical question of why the public was so willing to believe the myth in the first place. Gallo tantalizes the reader with a paragraph on page 74 in which she argues that "in the early to

mid-1960s, concerns about apathy were invoked as useful shorthand to describe almost every ill that plagued society.â But there is no further discussion of the âapathy trope.â Another interesting explanation concerning public fascination with the case concerns the âechoes of Nazism,â which, according to Gallo, âwere very much in the public consciousness in the early 1960sâ (p. 73). Rosenthal himself, the editor responsible for popularizing the Genovese story, wrote his famous editorial on Auschwitz only a few years earlier, and the Holocaust was evoked several times in reader-submitted editori-

als that Gallo quotes but does not further explore. Ultimately, Gallo never adequately explains why the public was so eager to believe the worst of Genoveseâs neighbors, nor does her evidence of New Yorkersâ engagement with civil rights fundamentally dispel the notion of urban apathy on a micro level.

Despite this, Galloâs work serves to restore Kitty Genovese to the center of her own history while fleshing out a vibrant life cut tragically short. The book may prove of value to those interested in media studies or gender and sexuality studies.

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