

Bystanders and upstanders

Business



In life, people say that you always have a choice between being a bystander, upstander, and perpetrator, but you cannot choose being a victim. I don't fully agree with that because in the Holocaust some people didn't have a choice to stand up because they would get instantly killed. Some really brave people still chose to be upstanders even though they know the consequences. They just want to do the right thing. During the Holocaust, people had the choice to be an upstander or a bystander, and some people wanted to be an upstander. In the article "Deciding to Act" Marion Pritchard, a graduate student in German-occupied Amsterdam decided to be an upstander after seeing German soldiers take Jewish kids from an orphanage and throw them into a truck.

Throughout the Holocaust she helped hide Jewish children from the Nazis in a hiding place in her house. One time when the Nazis were checking the house for Jews they did not find any, but then one of the soldiers came back to double check and the Jews weren't in hiding so Marion shot the soldier and killed him so no one would find out that she was hiding Jewish children. In the article "Le Chambon: A Village Takes a Stand" a whole town of people decide to make the choice of being upstanders. They helped hide over 5,000 people go into hiding in their town 3,500 of which were Jewish people. The town local minister, Magda Trocme, said that "There was no decision to make. Do you think we are all brothers or not? Do you think it is unjust to turn in the Jews or not? Then let us try to help!" They helped them because it was the right thing to do.

Also in the article "Protests in Germany" a group called the White Rose chose to be upstanders. There were three of them, Hans Scholl, Sophie

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Scholl, and Christoph Probst, Hans was a former German soldier and saw what Hitler and the Nazis were doing to the Jews and then later dropped out because he knew it was wrong. He wanted to change things. The White Rose did try to change things but Hitler ordered them to be executed, but even though they died their legacy still lived on and inspired more people to fight because they knew what was happening to the Jews was wrong. During the Holocaust some people were bystanders and decided to do nothing about what was happening.

One example is in the article "Difficult Choices in Poland" it says "Some people did nothing in response to what they saw because they feared punishment." This shows that a lot of people knew it was wrong what the Nazis were doing but they did not have the courage to go up against the Nazis because they did not want to get killed. Another example from the article "Difficult Choices in Poland" says "It was very risky to protect Jews in Poland because the punishment could be death for the family or even the entire town." This shows that other people did not want to help the Jewish people because they thought everyone around them would tell because if the Nazis found out that others knew about them hiding Jews but didn't tell, up to the entire town could get murdered. In the article "Bystanders at Hartheim Castle" it talks about how in a hospital in Austria a lot of strange things were happening and the people in the town were getting suspicious.

People in the town were seeing loads of Jews going in to the hospital and not come out, they saw bits of hair come out of the chimney, and they also smelled the horrible stench of rotting flesh in the air. In the article it says, "Wirth ended the meeting by threatening to send anyone who spread "

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absurd rumors of burning persons” to a concentration camp.” This shows that everyone in the town aren’t bad people they were just terrified of the Nazis and what they would do to them if they told anyone or tried to help. In conclusion, the choice between being a bystander and an upstander is always a really hard choice, but it was way worse during the Holocaust. The people that chose to stand up against the Nazi Party and Adolf Hitler are some of the bravest people ever, but don’t blame the people that did nothing because you probably would have done the same.