

Free night by elie wiesel essay example

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Introduction

Review of the award-winning novel by Elie Wiesel called “ Night” for academic reflection and consideration allows focusing on specific parts of this account of the Holocaust. The interaction between the arrays of characters provides the dramatic intensions of the author in creating the human perspectives of the victims among his characters. Understanding the message of hatred and forlorn suffering of Jews in Elie Wiesel’s novel “ The Night” requires understanding that victims are also present in the guise of the tormentors and bystanders.

Bystanders

A particular incident in the story Wiesel describes yet another example of the how darkness symbolically and actually creates human experiences where God is absent creating the allusion of night as the time of suffering. In this particular incident in the story, the Nazi Gestapo finds among its kapos or prisoners supervising the other concentration camp prisoners two men they deem guilty of sabotage and hangs the two men. The significance of this is two-fold. First, the hanging of Nazi prisoners as a perpetration of suffering caused by one human upon another and the fact that kapos typically enforced their power over prisoner work crews with their own brand of brutality now faced the brutality of their captors.

The most harrowing aspect of the hanging links to the condemnation of a third victim – the blonde pipel – a favored child among the prisoners having a relationship with a kapo or group of kapos deemed guilty in this case because of his connection to the convicted men. Thousands of prisoners

must watch the hanging of the three. Included in the roster of bystanders witnessing the hanging are Gestapo SS as well as the reluctant executioner - the Lagerkapo. Wiesel writes, “ To hang a child in front of thousands of onlookers was not a small matter” (64). This is the essence of the absence of God when night descends symbolically on all the onlookers - prisoners and Nazi perpetrators alike.

This description reveals Wiesel’s intention showing the reader victims of the holocaust prove derived from different perspectives. “ The SS seemed more preoccupied, more worried, than usual” (Wiesel 64). The decision, “ the Lagerkapo refused to act as executioner” (Wiesel 64) prove the humanity of the situation as these behaviors overlap becoming victims of the cruel moment particular to the murder of a child. The final horror exposed in the child unable to die at the end of the rope because his small size meant hours of enduring the torture squeezing around his neck rather than breaking it. Onlookers weeping in unison and despair with the quivering voice of the Lagerälteste or camp elder screamed, “ Cover your heads” (Wiesel 64) as the thousands marched past the dead men and the still living and suffering child.

Conclusion

The absence of God removing the suffering of the child tore at the onlookers’ souls - Nazi and prisoner alike so their position in this time and place proved their suffering existed amid this circumstance as victims of man’s inhumanity to man. Therefore, as posited in the introduction, this moment of inhumanity allows the reader a better understanding of the message of hatred and forlorn suffering of victims of the holocaust. Elie Wiesel’s novel “

The Night” shows how victims exist and overlap in the guise of the tormentors and bystanders as described in the observation of the cruelty put on others - especially the innocent as represented by the hanging of the child.

Wiesel, Elie. The Night. Hill and Wang a Division of Farrar, Straus, and Giroux

New York. Copyright © 1958 by Les Editions de Minuit 1958 Print