

A Bystander, a Friend
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Ever since we were little, we were taught not to be a bystander. If someone was being bullied, you should stand up and do something. Through instances like this, some of the best friends are made and some of the worst situations created. The ideas of the quote: "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." by Martin Luther King, Jr. can be found and proven using many current events and ongoing concerns. From public schools to the working class of Americans to finally political struggles, there are never ending examples of the effect of a bystander.

In the American public school system today, we are heavily struggling with safety threats. This could be bombing, knifing, or shootings. Since the 1980s, the amount of school shootings have increased dramatically. Many times, the attacker will leave behind a video or letter stating their reasons behind what they did. Often, they mention being bullied or the idea of being alone in a big world. But to them the biggest part is not that there were a few bullies, but that there were people watching it take place and doing nothing to stop it. They could not find refuge in the places they looked creating the magnified feeling of loneliness and helplessness. The only way to fix this, they might believe, is by wreaking havoc on the people that they believe hurt them most: the bystanders.

Likewise, another situation presented it the working poor of America. Everyone knows the struggle of being stuck inside the circle of poverty. The incoming wages can never be enough to balance the cost of living. In this case the large incorporations, banks, and insurance companies are the enemy. They are what undercut the worker's pay for the cost of cheap products and manufacturing. For loans and mortgages, the bank must always have their money even if that means bullying their way through a loan. The unaffordability but the requirement of insurance is what sometimes kills a person the most with piled up bills from any small accident. The people walking by a broken worker or supporting the ideas of large industry are those who hurt the poor the most by not helping. Every bit of charity and acts of kindness contributes to the cause, but if not, it's a slap on the face. The growing top one percent and wealthy class starts to separate, and a divided America is made. That is not the goal of this country.

The political situation of Benghazi attack of 2012 represents a political level of the quote by Dr. King. On September 12, members of the military terrorist group, al-Qaeda, attacked the US Diplomatic Compound in Benghazi, Libya. During this aggression, four Americans died, including the US Ambassador for Libya, John Christopher Stevens. Evidence was shown that the four made calls and pleas for help during the assault, but the US government did not initially send military aid. The silence of those in power caused the deaths of four innocent Americans. Forever will it be those who did not respond that are remembered compared to the actual attackers.

The ideas brought up by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. are ones that will never be abandoned. The proposition of the enemy being forgotten in the crimes of the friend who does not speak up in itself shows more pain. This is the definition of the common bystander, who is not willing to defend an innocent. By looking at modern examples, we can see how often and large scale they occur. Using Dr. King's quote, let's avoid being the silent friend, the bystander and instead speak up against the wrongdoings of the world.