

since 1965. Its famous port, considered the hub of its economy, is the smallest regional port, vastly overshadowed by those in South Louisiana and Baton Rouge. Its slow recovery has been blamed on political inertia and lack of leadership.

What will be the extent of “real demand” for rebuilding in the city? Rybczynski asks. How will the city, state, or federal government provide for the poor, given America’s dismal track record in the field? Should rebuilding follow a new model—streets rerouted or areas returned to swampland—or should the old city be reconstructed, house by house? History offers little guidance. Of 20 cities struck by disaster since the 17th

century, only two have been substantially changed in rebuilding, Rotterdam and Skopje, Yugoslavia, now Macedonia. Central Rotterdam was almost entirely destroyed by German bombing in World War II. When it was rebuilt, it was reconfigured to incorporate one of the world’s first pedestrian-only shopping districts. Skopje, hit by an earthquake that left 150,000 of its 200,000 people homeless in 1963, was redesigned by a Japanese architect as part of an international effort.

Normally, however, rebuilding starts immediately in the existing pattern, in part dictated by landownership, street patterns, and other infrastructure issues. New Orleans’s

very modernity makes rebuilding harder. Water, electricity, phone and Internet cables, and other city services need to be in place before residents can return. The list of essential services is surprisingly long, Rybczynski writes. Somebody must restore them, but there is little housing for such workers. Authority is divided, plans are contested.

Judging by the experience of other cities, he writes, it is likely that New Orleans will be as much as 50 percent less populous than before the flood, that rebuilding will require a major federal effort on the scale of the Depression-era Tennessee Valley Authority, and that the entire process will take 10 years.

PRESS & MEDIA

Kitty Genovese, Revised

THE SOURCE: “Nightmare on Austin Street” by Jim Rasenberger, in *American Heritage*, Oct. 2006.

THE STORY APPEARED AT THE bottom of the front page of *The New York Times* on March 27, 1964. It began, “For more than half an hour, 38 respectable, law-abiding citizens in Queens watched a killer stalk and stab a woman in three separate attacks in Kew Gardens.

“Twice the sound of their voices and the sudden glow of their bedroom lights interrupted him and frightened him off. Each time he returned, sought her out and stabbed her again. Not one person telephoned the police during the assault; one witness called after

the woman was dead.”

The killing of Kitty Genovese by a mentally ill machine operator named Winston Moseley led to more than 1,000 books, articles, plays, scripts, and songs—not about the crime, but about the Bad Samaritans, the 38 ordinary Americans who watched their neighbor die.

But the story wasn’t quite true, writes Jim Rasenberger, an author and screenwriter. It *is* true that neighbors should have done more to help Genovese when she was chased and stabbed after returning at 3 AM from her job as a bar manager. And it *is* true that some people, perhaps as many as seven,

saw something of an attack, and a larger number heard her call for help.

Other conclusions and facts, however, were exaggerated or wrong, Rasenberger writes. Moseley didn’t attack her three times, but two. The police got that wrong. Thirty-eight people could not physically have watched the murder because of the geography of the site. After Genovese was first stabbed on the street, she stumbled around the back of a building and into a foyer, out of view and earshot of nearly all potential witnesses. That is where Moseley found her the second time, tried to rape her, stabbed her, and left her to bleed to death. Someone called the police after the first attack.

The story triggered nationwide soul-searching about callous, inhuman New Yorkers who would stand by during a murder because, as one witness explained in the story, “I

didn't want to get involved." Subsequent psychological research suggested that the reason was more likely to be confusion, fear, misapprehension, or uncertainty. Some neighbors may have thought that it was a lover's quarrel, or that Genovese was drunk when she staggered from the scene of the first attack. An account pieced together from court testimony by lawyer and Kew Gardens resident Joseph De May (at oldkewgardens.com) suggests that some of the elderly residents of the apartment complex thought the fight may have spilled out of a bar near where the first stabbing occurred. Only one person admitted seeing a knife.

The late *New York Times* editor A. M. Rosenthal stood by the newspaper's account until his death last May. "In a story that gets a lot of attention, there's always somebody who's saying, 'Well, that's not really what it's supposed to be,'" he told Rasenberger. "There may have been 38. There may have been 39."

PRESS & MEDIA

The Mute Majority

THE SOURCE: "The Gendered Blogosphere: Examining Inequality Using Network and Feminist Theory" by Dustin Harp and Mark Tremayne, in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, Summer 2006.

FOR MORE THAN A GENERATION, the editorial pages of America's newspapers have been assailed as testosterone terra firma. Even as women moved into nearly four of 10 editing and reporting jobs, they still

contributed only about 10 to 20 percent of opinion pieces. The free, uncensored, unedited World Wide Web was supposed to change this. Guess what? The number of women among the top 30 political bloggers was exactly three, or 10 percent, in 2004, according to Dustin Harp and Mark Tremayne, journalism professors at the University of Texas, Austin.

This would be merely another anecdote in the inexplicable realm of gender differentials if the number of blogs—Web logs or online



Conservative blogger Michelle Malkin

entries in diary form—were not growing so fast. About 32 million people reported reading them in 2004, and researchers increasingly find that young Americans regard them as a superior form of citizen journalism. They are free, include a wider range of views than traditional newspapers and magazines, and provide opportunities for dialogue.

Of the 30 top-ranked political blogs in 2004, the most popular female-written blog, "A Small Victory," at No. 13, has disappeared from the Web. The conservative blog

MichelleMalkin.com, then ranked 23rd, continues, and liberal and raunchy Wonkette.com, then written by Ana Marie Cox, was 26th.

Harp and Tremayne argue that one of the most common explanations for women's paltry showing among the top blogs—that there just aren't many female bloggers—doesn't hold up to scrutiny. While it is true, they say, that women were slower to start blogging than men, women now write 43 percent of all blogs, and hundreds of female bloggers—at least 466, according to a recent list—write about politics.

A more fruitful explanation might be found in the history and culture of the Web, as bloggers link to one another and boost each other's readership. "Original players in any network have an advantage: The longer you have been around, the more links you are likely to acquire. In the 1990s, men outnumbered women on the Web by a sizable margin. While that is no longer true, the early advantage may continue to grow and snowball." Men also may simply prefer to link to other men, they suggest.

Could it be that women's political blogs are inferior? Harp and Tremayne dismiss the notion. As long as quality is judged by popularity—and popularity is skewed by historical patterns—there is no way to make unbiased judgments. Their verdict: "Patriarchal hegemony" should be actively combated by women bloggers and others "who understand the importance of inclusive spheres of discourse."