Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Why all the violence?

It is with a feeling of disgust that we watch incidents of senseless violence erupt over and over again in this city.

The unfortunate death of a British antiques expert two weeks ago raised the consciousness of a larger part of the Baltimore community than had been previously, and that is good.

But we are forced to think about the hundreds of other, equally unfortunate incidents that have occurred recently.

Old people sleeping in their homes, teens playing in front of their homes, citizens walking down the street have been robbed and killed for no apparent reason.

The scenarios disturb us, mostly because these crimes are being committed by young people in their teens who apparently think it is fun to shoot and kill.

All of a sudden, it is not enough to rob someone. A life has to be taken, or at least seriously threatened, in order for all to fit into place.

We wonder why.

Well meaning psychologists would probably ascribe such events on a deep rooting frustration on the part of today's youth that has come from being a have-not in a "have" society.

We reject that notion. Black youths today have more in the way of material goods than most of their predecessors ever hoped to have.

Other people have attempted to link what is happening to the ready availability of guns.

An MTA official is quoted in an AFRO story today as saying, "It's easier to get guns than it is to get dope."

That may well be true, and we do not doubt its veracity.

Still another group of people might want to explain the situation on the abundance of crime-oriented programs on television.

Such programs, they argue, make crime glamorous, and undermine the serious after-effects of pulling a trigger.

On television, everybody always survives to appear on another program.

But while all these explanations might hold within them a trace of why we are experiencing youth-committed crimes, we are forced to address another possibility, and that is the home-life of our young today.

Within a race that used to boast of sound discipline and a demand for the respect of elders and property, there seems to have been a deterioration.

Instead of disciplining their young people, we wonder if parents are not more apt to let them do what they want, and support them when they are wrong?

Teachers complain constantly it is the parents who do not allow them to discipline the students when the need arises.

Such efforts are scoffed at, and instead getting respect, teachers are warned by the students' an attempt to discipline them will be reported to their parents.

Instead of being supported in their efforts to teach moral behavior as well as reading [illegible] teachers [illegible] parents themselves.

Psychologists say the child needs to be told no. Children need direction and if they [illegible] or cannot get it from their parents, they will get it from somewhere.

It is obvious our youth are getting their direction from a dangerous source.

In light of all this, it seems teens today have no respect for themselves, for their parents and teachers...and for the innocent lives they see fit to snuff out.

We wonder if the parents are not as afraid of their own children as are the people who walk the streets.

That would be very sad indeed.

But regardless of who is afraid of whom, something has to be done.

Too many people are dying because our young people think it is fun and games to kill.

And that is just about the sickest thing we have heard in a long time.

MADELINE MURPHY

A Labor Day message

When we hear the unions are pricing themselves out of business and when we hear the Maryland AFL-CIO is meeting [illegible] and when we hear the Maryland AFL-CIO is meeting to [illegible] we think its [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]