

BACKGROUND: YOU MUST READ BUT YOU NEED NOT ANNOTATE

**Fenger High School melee: Police presence to be stepped up on first open day since fatal beating
Teen's close-range video helps in investigation of honor roll student Derrion Albert's death**

By Kristen Mack: Chicago Tribune reporter *September 28, 2009*

Chicago police geared up to provide extra security at Fenger High School on Monday as they reviewed a graphic amateur video showing a student beaten to death with wooden two-by-fours. The nearly three-minute video, shot by a girl who attends Fenger, captured the gruesome melee as it unfolded. Derrion Albert, 16, is seen being struck then stumbling to the ground; teenagers then continued to viciously punch, kick and strike him with the wooden boards. The additional evidence is aiding the investigation, Chicago police said.

Derrion's family was squeamish about watching the footage and not all of them were able to make it through. But they said they don't have a problem with people viewing it as long as it helps identify who beat Derrion to death. "It hurt to watch," said LaTonia Williams, Derrion's aunt. "It's one thing to hear about it and come up with your own theory of what happened. To see it is another thing. It gave us a real clear picture of what happened. That video was crucial."

Some parents and students have expressed reservations about returning to Fenger on Monday. It is the first time Fenger will be open since Thursday, when brewing gang rivalries that started at school spilled onto the streets of the Roseland neighborhood on Chicago's Far South Side.

"Word is there will be more violence at the school on Monday. Don't think this is going to end," said the Rev. Victor Grandberry, community representative for the local school council, who said some parents will withdraw their students from Fenger on Monday.

Police said they are increasing their presence at and around Fenger to ease fears students and their parents may have about safety, Morgan Park District Cmdr. Mike Kuemmeth said. The beefed-up security will remain until the public perception that the school is dangerous decreases, he said.

In an effort to curtail the violence, several community groups plan to hold a vigil at the school Monday afternoon.

On Friday, a teen girl, who asked the family not to identify her because she fears retaliation, showed the video to Derrion's family before handing it over to police and WFLD-Channel 32, the local Fox station, said Eunice Cross, the grandmother of Derrion's half-sister. The vivid images were captured from the middle of the brawl. The footage the girl shot provided an additional vantage point to video from a surveillance camera atop the Agape Community Center, 342 W. 111th St., next to a vacant lot where dozens of boys converged Thursday afternoon.

Detectives reviewed the tape Friday evening and said they appreciate the new evidence. "We are pursuing interviews with a number of people of interest," Police Officer Gabrielle Lesniak, said.

Three people older than 17 and a juvenile are being questioned in connection with the attack, a law enforcement source said Sunday.

Police have identified several people from the video, police spokesman Roderick Drew said.

Fox Chicago was approached Friday by the female student's brother with a copy of the video, said Carol Fowler, the station's news director. It held off on airing the tape for 24 hours at the request of police, who wanted more time to find suspects. Fox paid its typical freelance fee of about \$300 to obtain the tape exclusively, Fowler said. "The principal reason we decided to air the video was because it communicated in a powerful way the danger these kids face getting to and from school every day," Fowler said.

Joseph Walker, Derrion's grandfather, said he could not bear to watch the recording. "The graphics are too strong for me," he said. "God bless whoever took that video. It did and said it all."

Witnesses and police said Derrion, an honor roll student, was swept into the altercation. The first officers who arrived on the scene waited until backup arrived before they broke up the sprawling fight, witnesses said

Back home after failed bid, Daley talks about teen beating death
By Associated Press 6:39 PM CDT, October 3, 2009

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago Mayor Richard Daley says he'll work with police and school offices to break the "code of

silence" after the fatal beating of a Chicago honors student. Police, ministers and community leaders have been asking people to come forward with information about Derrion Albert's killing late last month. Daley on Saturday called the code of silence "unacceptable."

Cell phone video footage shows Albert being kicked and hit with splintered railroad ties. Four teens are charged in his death.

START YOUR ANNOTATING HERE

Snitch and you're a dead man

By John W. Fountain

John W. Fountain is a professor of journalism at Roosevelt University and author of "True Vine: A Young Black Man's Journey of Faith, Hope and Clarity."

The Chicago Tribune: October 11, 2009

Snitching can get you killed.

That much I understood growing up in the 'hood. In kindergarten, I was taught not be a tattletale. But to tell on bad guys, on the criminally minded, especially those who breathe bloody murder, is a more serious matter than being a tattling toddler.

Lately, particularly in light of the senseless violence that continues to claim innocent lives in Chicago, I have heard the lambasting of the good people of terrorized neighborhoods for not readily coming forward with information on murders. I have seen some shaking their heads, shrugging their shoulders and essentially blaming those unwilling -- at least reluctant -- to tell, as being in some way complicit.

Some even seem roiled that someone might witness a murder and be reluctant to come forward to police. And, in fact, they convey the sense that those unwilling to be witnesses are somehow less human, less feeling and less willing to assume responsibility, less eager to play a role in helping turn their neighborhoods around.

In my experience growing up in an impoverished Chicago community like those under siege, it boils down to an issue of trust. And many who live in the city's most murderous neighborhoods -- who have also witnessed police and political corruption and a trail of broken promises -- simply don't trust the authorities enough to come forward. By doing so, they could be laying their lives on the line.

It isn't that people don't want to tell. They do. And it isn't that they aren't concerned about their neighborhoods. They are. But to come forward is to risk everything, even in a world where "safety" is always relative.

In poor black neighborhoods, we have seen the revolving door of criminal justice. We have come to understand that there is a new breed of serial killer -- young men who kill and kill and kill again. And we also know this: that when the feds seek witnesses in high-profile cases to bring down

notorious mobsters and crime families, they at least have the good sense to offer witness protection. They understand what's at risk for those who come forward.

In my old West Side neighborhood, "body snatchers" are real. There, I have known of masked gunmen to creep upon their prey in the still of night as they sit on a porch unsuspectingly, to kick in doors and hold people at gunpoint, to kidnap, maim and murder. From a child, I have witnessed gunplay and gangs and drug dealers and pimps in shiny Cadillacs, glaring like the sun, and the police drive by street corners -- where hustlers hawk their wares -- and do nothing.

The Law -- the police -- in certain neighborhoods isn't necessarily the law. Once the flashing white-and-blues disappeared, we understood that we were at the mercy of the lawless, left to protect ourselves by any means necessary. For some, our insurance was God. For others, it was the gun. For others still, a little bit of both. But seldom did we consider the police.

Some students have alleged that a police squad car arrived at the scene of the recent beating death of 16-year-old Derrion Albert, though no officers intervened to save him. If that is true, what measure of protection can anyone who witnessed it expect they might receive as a "snitch"?

Given the historic marginalization of black and brown life -- and death -- why would one think that losing their life for having been brave enough to speak out might somehow make the difference? Why wouldn't they simply become like the scores of murder victims whose names don't even make the newspaper's police blotter?

And yet, I have heard them -- politicians, police and pundits -- reviling the people of these neighborhoods for not coming forward. And I think to myself, "Easy for them to say. Let them lay aside their bodyguards, their chauffeur-driven limousines and their legal sidearm, and let's see just how brave they'd be." Instead we all leave the 'hood and go safely home.

Whenever gunfire thundered in the night in my old neighborhood, I was grateful when the scene was blocks away, relieved that any blood spilled had not come nigh my front door. Except in a way, I always realized it was never that far away. That every evil that happened in my neighborhood, in one sense or another, always happened to us all. I also remember wishing there was someone we could tell, someone who might be ready, willing and able to do something to end the violence and crime, in essence, to be able to snitch in a way that would not jeopardize our lives and our family's once the bad guys learned we had ratted them out.

What would happen if we diminished the risk and created a greater sense of assurance that the law would do its job in actually making the streets safe as well as protecting those who decide to turn killers in?

They still might not be lining up to testify. But I'll bet you'd find some willing to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Due: Monday, Oct. 26 (late fees apply!)

- Directions:**
- Annotate – show evidence of close reading (see “article annotation” handout for expectations)
 - Answer the **questions**. . .

Thesis: *(definition: The basic argument advanced by a speaker or writer who then attempts to prove it; the subject or major argument of a speech or composition; a statement supported by arguments and evidence)*
What is the thesis of the article?

Embedding quotes from the article and citing paragraph numbers, write a grammatically correct paragraph in which you argue the following: “Among the choices given, which is the most important paragraph in the article? 5? 7? Or 9?” You will probably want to outline your paragraph first.

<p>EXAMPLE OF AN EMBEDDED QUOTE:</p> <p>One reason people do not snitch, Fountain asserts, is that, for people in poor neighborhoods, “the law . . . isn’t necessarily the law” (9).</p>

You are not finished yet! Look on the other side →

Construct a paragraph, featuring a thesis, argument points, and examples, arguing *against* John W. Fountain. In other words, write a statement arguing in favor of snitching. You will probably want to outline your paragraph first. Your paragraph should be about 150 words.

Oh, yes, you MUST PROVIDE A WORD COUNT.

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