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One teacher's perspective on crime prevention

By Chris Guerrieri



Recently a young man, age 19, was gunned down on the city streets of Jacksonville. He had been out of prison only four days before he was killed. I don't know his whole story, mostly just

the end, but I could guess:

His father was out of the picture and he lived with his mother who worked a lot. She tried to be there for him, to provide for him, but no matter what she did she couldn't really get ahead and that wore on her. He spent a lot of time on his own, or with children from similar homes. He went to school but wasn't that interested in it; his grades weren't that great and he was in trouble a fair amount.

If that's not his story, maybe it's one of the dozens of other young men who have had their lives prematurely ended either through death or through their involvement in crime. I am sure it's one of their stories, probably a lot more, and it's also my story.

And you know what? It's partly our fault as educators. We sat back and allowed them to skate through the school system (and I am sure the criminal justice system, as well) without any real consequences for their actions. How many of them would have had a different fate if when they were younger we had said, "We're serious, we are not going to put up with your behavior, there will be consequences, you must get an education /trade /skill, and where we are going to be tough on you, we will be there for you."

How do I know? Well, it's because people don't go from being a model citizen one day to being a murderer the next. Believe it or not, it starts with kids not doing their homework and then being disrespectful to a teacher. It escalates to getting in fights and failing classes, but all the way they are pushed along, promoted without minimum skills because we want our graduation rates to be high or we are afraid to hurt their self-esteem by failing them.

Then we just hoped for the best despite the fact we knew they were either in trouble or could be. Sure, we'll provide free breakfasts and lunches for some but good luck on finding dinner, or food on

PERSPECTIVE... CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

"Classy, elegant" Grandmother will be missed 82-year-old murdered in Baymeadows home invasion

By Shirley Shaw

Renie Telzer-Bain never covered up the truth. She would say, "This is not a perfect world, and we all have our ups and downs." A proud woman, she never burdened others with personal issues, believing they should remain private. She probably would have been dismayed to know how suddenly, unceremoniously, she was thrust into Jacksonville's headline news just before the new year.

This classy, elegant, independent woman was murdered by unknown assailants who invaded her home, robbed and killed her on December 29.

Lysa Telzer, who has been married to Renie's son Dana for 22 years, says her mother-in-law was like a mother



Renie Telzer-Bain

to her, a best friend "to both of us. My husband had a very special relationship with his mother. She was his pride and joy and she taught us so much: how to live, how to be good to others, how to cook and clean

house - all the good things mothers should do.

"She raised her sons to believe they were no better than anyone else, but that nobody was better than they were. She lived for her family, adored her sons and was incredibly proud of Myles, her only grandchild, that he had grown to be such a wonderful young man."

Renie was born in Georgia but lived in Jacksonville most of her life. Pre-deceased by her two husbands, she was a registered orthopedic and psychiatric nurse who retired after working at Memorial and St. Vincent's Hospitals for many years. Lysa tells how her mother-in-law met a nurse friend at Publix about seven years ago, and when the friend, who worked at Taylor Manor, said they

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Crime TV versus Reality

By Shirley Shaw

When a condemned man is scheduled to be executed by lethal injection in 32 hours for the murder of a 17-year-old girl, possible new evidence is presented to the FBI agent who arrested him. FBI Guy knows the man is guilty but asks the team of anthropologists who had initially examined the body and confirmed the killer's guilt to give up their weekend plans and review the evidence.

With 24 or so hours and counting, Bones, a brilliant forensic anthropologist, decides she needs to view the remains again and seeks a warrant to exhume the body. She goes to the judge's home, gets him out of bed, convinces him to sign the warrant - and within a couple of hours (based on another plotline in the story), the body is wheeled on a gurney into their lab.

This was the incongruous timeline shown recently in an episode of *Bones*. Only **two hours** to retrieve a body? On a Friday night? What about the logistics of getting into the cemetery, calling in workers to operate the digging equipment, getting police or medical examiners to monitor the event? And who knows what else would be required. It just wouldn't happen - except in Hollywood.

Welcome to the world of crime TV. *Bones* is just one of the many forensics genre programs spawned by *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* after it debuted a decade ago. There is *CSI:(Las Vegas/New York/Miami)*, *Without a Trace*, *Numbers*, *The Closer*, *24*, *Criminal Minds* and many other such shows offering fascinating insight into the world of the FBI, police, detectives, crime scene investigators, evidence technicians - all working (but usually not together) to thwart the bad guys.

Besides the unrealistic time frame represented in these crime shows, the most consistent aspect is the unerring ability of the heroes to solve the case, get the crook and maybe try and convict him/her (as in *Law and Order*) all within the one-hour time slot. The detective or examiner or anthropologist or profiler seems to cut right through the tangle of clues and intuitively know what happened.

Their equipment yields immediate results in obtaining personal information, telephone and financial records, matching fingerprints or DNA. Their experts instantaneously provide precise details about everything from symbols to centuries-old relics or chemical content of any material found on or near the body, and where any insect species exist that are found in decomposing flesh. An agent orders a satellite repositioned to assist his surveillance.



And their computers are incredible. The quirky analysts don't need to change screens, use a cursor or wait more than a second or two after typing three or four keystrokes for whatever information they seek to appear. It's all very interesting and quite amazing and, unfortunately, creates unreasonable expectations for real life law enforcement personnel to fulfill.

Some shows are better than others in portraying timelines and available technology, but although the viewing public, hopefully, understands that the stories are designed to run - start to finish - within a one-hour time slot, the perception remains that crimes can always be solved very quickly. Sometimes they actually can be, but realistically most cases take days, weeks, months or years, and, for lack of indisputable (but sufficient) evidence, some are never prosecuted.

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