

Violence

by Fatima Menendez

"My birthday is the same as the date carved on my father's gravestone. I was born on September 9, 2001. My father was one of the firefighters trying to get to people when the twin towers collapsed. My dad died a hero, and, even though I've never met him, he's my hero." I saw this in an interview on my television last month for the 12th anniversary of the tragedy of 9/11 and it got me thinking. It's amazing how we can be here one moment and be gone the next. Up until now I'd thought that violence had never affected me, at least not directly. I mean I've been bullied, who hasn't though? The disaster of September 11 is one of the worst acts of violence our country has ever experienced and it affected all of us economically, mentally, and most importantly it has affected the way we see each other. It opened doors to evils we blinded from. You can't just see different cultures the same way anymore; stereotypes keep us from flipping the page and seeing past the cover and into the content. We are aliens breathing the same air. We can't trust our neighbors, and the proof of that is what just happened in Boston at a marathon. A nice day to run was ruined by a couple of citizens who killed 3 people and injured as many as 264 others with house made bombs. It's amazing how the internet, which was made for communication purposes, has been turned into a weapon of sorts.

Children have been turned into targets for seeds of violence; theres teens taking guns and knives to school and killing their peers, teachers, and even their parents.

Violence is a sickness that's killing all the good we have inside. It's like poison, it dominates and destroys. It's the appocalypse; we are zombies that attack the weak. One day we are going to see the emergency lights in our country go off and the special report saying, "...We acted too late. The disease has spread and there's no cure. God be with you all who have avoided the attack, and even those that have not.."

Violence can be seen anywhere from neighborhoods to theaters near you. The movie "The Purge", which was recently released, encourages the idea that an act or acts of violence can be healthy for our country's mental stability as long as you do it within the allotted time. The movie states that one day, our country will have this one night out of the year of pure, unreasonable, hatred and that future generations like our children allowed to kill if they simply feel the urge to do so. Imagine if you happened to step on someone's toes on your way home and maybe that person hates their job and has been waiting for this night to release all that bottled up anger; you become their target and they hunt you down to hurt or murder you. Imagine your own family's hands stained with your blood. It would be Christmas for the mentally unstable.

Back to the question, has violence ever affected me? Yes, it has, it has affected and infected all of us. It's everything from being impatient in morning traffic, talking back to your elders, and not knowing how to simply appologize for the first offence and avoid the chain of events that are sure to follow. I'm scared that one that school on the news will be mine and that student lying lifeless on the cold floor surrounded by a pool of their own blood will be me or one of

my peers. We are the United States of America, we need to be live up to that name and be united and not riot just because of differences in sexual preference, economical or legal status, and differences in opinion. We all make this country go everyday but with the ever-changing world we live in, we need to learn how to be globally-minded. Our generation needs to accept and respect that we all view the world differently. We need to flip the page and see what's inside, to look past the wreck and see the damage. We need look past stereotypes and really look at and understand each other. We are this world's future; I'd hate to see what this world will look like if the spread continues.