

Amen State Rep. John Fritchey, Amen

By Mary Mitchell

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Of all the challenges facing urban communities, the ongoing street violence has vexed us the most.

I no longer buy the lament that most residents in the communities impacted by the violence suffer from apathy.

Many of the people who live outside of these communities are struggling to understand how Chicagoans can continue their day-to-day routines while almost daily another young life is snuffed out by gunfire.

State Rep. John Fritchey (D-Chgo.), who represents residents of the North Side blames the media for being part of the problem.

In an op-ed piece that appeared in the Sun-Times on Friday, May 5, Fritchey pointed out that how much coverage a crime victim receives depends on where the crime occurred.

"[Residents in those large swaths of the city that are for the most part devoid of gang problems and the shootings that are their byproduct go about their daily life with a blissful ignorance toward the plight of their less fortunate neighbors to the south and west," Fritchey said.

"The media, in turn, magnify these urban mind-sets by devoting significant coverage to almost any instance of violent crime that tarnishes the otherwise placid (and mostly) white parts of Chicago while giving the equivalent of a journalistic yawn to the murders of youths in crime-ravaged (and mostly black) parts of the city."

Fritchey reiterated what black activists, politicians, clergy and journalists have been saying for decades.

Maybe now that Fritchey has spoken out, the people who make the decisions about how violence is covered in this city will take those complaints seriously.