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# Reasons for violence rarely share commonalities - Motives: There appear to be no connections in spite of recent killings

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*By Stacey Mulick December 8, 2002 Publication: The News Tribune Page: A05 Word Count: 820*

A woman was killed in her bedroom and her body later found in a recycling bin.

A 5-month-old boy died of a head injury severe enough to have come from a fall from a two-story building. A 5-year-old boy and a 19-year-old college student were killed when a gunman shot through a window at a Thanksgiving party. Two boys died in separate shootings while playing with loaded guns. Two downtown club patrons got into a fight over a girl. One was stabbed to death. Those deaths, plus at least two street fights involving gunshots and a workplace shooting, have occurred in the Tacoma area in the past five weeks. Law enforcement officials said reasons for violence seldom share connections. The details: \* Teresa Ann Cahill and Anthony Edward "Aiden" Owings died in family violence. Police suspect that Cahill, a 52-year-old mother and grandmother, was killed Nov. 13 inside her Northeast Tacoma home. Hunters found her body the next week in North Bend, after Cahill's daughter and husband reported her missing. Prosecutors have charged Cahill's husband, Craig, with first-degree murder. There have been reports the couple was having marital problems. Aiden, a 5-month-old boy, died Dec. 1 from a blow to the head. Prosecutors on Thursday charged his father, Brian Zane Womac, with second-degree murder and first-degree assault of a child. \* Jeremy Britt Bayinthavong, 5, and Kimberly Carol Riley, 19, were fatally shot Thanksgiving evening

when a gunman opened fire on a lower-level window of a South End home. Bullets also hit Jeff Spencer, 22, and his 20-year-old sister, Harmony Spencer. Police have reported no arrests in the Nov. 28 shooting. While investigators have not released a motive, they believe the gunman was targeting the split-level home in the 1000 block of South 75th Street or someone inside. \*

Matthew Wilson, 11, and Nathon Young, 14, were victims of unsupervised gunplay. The boys died in separate incidents when guns they were playing with fired. Both were fatally wounded in the head. Wilson was shot Nov. 20 at a friend's East Side Tacoma home. The two friends were playing with a loaded .38-caliber handgun when it went off. Young died Wednesday, the day after he was accidentally shot at a friend's home in Spanaway as he and another youth played with a .22-caliber rifle. The youth, thinking the rifle was unloaded and with the safety on, pointed the weapon at Young's head and fired. Such shootings are rare in Pierce County. It's coincidental two occurred within two weeks of each other, officials said. Statistics from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department show that from 1996 to 2000, two such shootings involved children between 10 and 14, none involved youths 15 to 17 and three involved teens 18 to 19. For the same time period, there were 18 nonfatal firearms accidents involving children younger than 18 who were hospitalized for their wounds. Police say Wilson's and Young's deaths could have been prevented had the weapons been locked away. An accessible weapon, combined with youthful curiosity and a lack of adult supervision, can be deadly.

"Something dangerous is going to happen," said Pierce County sheriff's spokesman Ed Troyer.

\* Lamar T. Turner, 21, and Clarence Johnston, 48, died in violent incidents in the streets.

Turner died Nov. 9 after he was fatally stabbed during a fight along Pacific Avenue. He and a second man got into an argument over a woman as they left a downtown nightclub. Prosecutors have issued a first-degree murder warrant for 20-year-old Yasmani Olguin-Mejia in Turner's death. He remains a fugitive. Johnston died of head injuries and stab wounds suffered during a fight Dec. 1 with two other men on a sidewalk in the 6500 block of Pacific Avenue.

Prosecutors have charged Geoffrey Alan Hauptli, Daniel Keith Higgins and Raymond Louis Howard Jr. in his death. \* Five youths were wounded Wednesday night as they walked along an East Side street. None has cooperated with detectives investigating the shooting. One told investigators he was in a gang, but authorities said it's too early to tell whether the shooting was gang-related. \* Two gunbattles rattled the Hilltop neighborhood Dec. 1. The first started in the 1000 block of South Martin Luther King Jr. Way when two groups of people started shooting at each other. A bystander was wounded. The second shooting occurred a few blocks away when one of the groups started down an alley near South 13th Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Someone in the group stopped and shot back toward the street. A gunman standing in the street then fired 10 times at the group, hitting a man in the leg. No arrests or motive have been reported in either case. \* Udo Gretza, a 52-year-old University of Puget Sound employee, fired a gun twice as he struggled with two supervisors on the Tacoma campus Nov. 13. He'd just

been fired from a job as a groundskeeper that he held for more than 20 years. Prosecutors charged Gretza with three counts of assault.

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