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# Victim 'was always happy, joyful'

Jordan Manners, 15

Katie Rook and mark Medley, National Post  
Published: Thursday, May 24, 2007

Jordan Manners, 15, was a bright, slight boy who loved basketball, aspired to be an actor and worked hard at making people laugh, his friends and neighbours said yesterday.

David Whetstone, Jordan's neighbour for eight years, often saw the "very friendly" boy playing ball outside.

"He was a good kid, very quiet. He played right here," another neighbour said, pointing to the lane outside the row of attached homes. "His mother was strict, so he stayed out of trouble."

Classmates said "everyone knew Jordan."

They described him as a "nice kid" who would "say anything to make you laugh."

"He was always happy ... and joyful. He wasn't rude. He wasn't anything," said one girl.

Toronto filmmakers Mark Simms and Paul Nguyen featured Jordan two years ago in their CBC documentary, *Lost In the Struggle*. The film traced the lives of three men growing up in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Jordan's story did not make the film's final cut, which first aired in October, 2006.

Mr. Simms remembered Jordan as a "good kid," whom he had at one time personal trained.





"He was always a good kid. He was quiet, liked to play basketball," Mr. Simms said. "He did well in school."

Mr. Simms dismissed the image of Jordan as a gangster and said instead he enjoyed

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acting and had been featured in some of Mr. Simms' documentaries. "He was doing well in school."

Within hours of the shooting, seven memorials devoted to Jordan had been created on the popular social networking Web site Facebook. Sentiments ranged from shock to sadness to outrage.

"I still can't believe it," wrote one girl. "He was my cousin."

Another young man, who said he was Jordan's cousin, simply wrote "R.I.P Jordan ... our family will never everr [sic] forget u.."

"My heart and prayers go out to Jordan's family," wrote another girl. "I pray that you now see peace and I pray that justise [sic] will be served, your killer be found and punished to the highest extent.

One young woman wrote about riding bicycles with Jordan: "It's been a while since i seen him, but i am still sad and shocked and can't help to remember all the memories we shared. Its so sad to have to say goodbye to someone you knew, and whats worst to know that his mother who cared about him soooo much is suffering."

Filmmaker Mr. Nguyen suspected Jordan had been the victim of a retaliation. "From what I heard, it was probably some sort of beef. Usually that's the case anyway," he said. "I don't know specifically, but I just heard on the street it's a beef. That's just what's on the street."

Mark Dezilva, who teaches martial arts to hundreds of kids in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, said his students told him Jordan tried to look tougher than his five-foot frame naturally allowed. "Every other news is saying he was a gangster, but he was like every other kid trying to be a gangster. He was only a [grade] niner and he got shot. Everyone is wondering why it happened."

Students who began to trickle into Mr. Dezilva's class after being released from the school after 6 p.m. complained to Mr. Dezilva that the police had arrived 15 minutes after the shooting and then locked down the school for four hours.

"I mean, come on. Any smart person knows that nobody is going to stay around. They're going to run up to Downsview Park and they'll be gone already," he said. "Everyone knows the person is gone, they should have searched around the school."

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