

## **Silver Arts, Essay: The Disruptive Element in My Neighborhood**

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Some people in my neighborhood don't care what kind of noise they make, whether it's early in the morning or late in the evening. For example, my next-door neighbor routinely arises at 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning, bangs pots and pans in his kitchen, plays the radio, and generally makes noise as if there were no one surrounding him. We live in row townhouses, and he's in the middle of a set of three.

Later in the morning, he'll take his dog for a walk and then, joined by a neighbor three houses down and another one or two houses down in the other direction, he will chat while his and the other neighbors' dogs bark and growl at each other. This can occur at 6:30, 6:45, 7:00, or 7:15 a.m. These dog owners all hangout with each other and are completely oblivious to the noise that their dogs are make.

### **Who Are They?**

I haven't physically described the noise-makers in my neighborhood yet, and you might be guessing that they are youthful offenders; however, they are seniors, all over age 75. In my neighborhood, it is the elderly who have disrespect for the young – people who have jobs, go to bed at a decent hour, get up at an early hour, and go to work for a living.

No amount of polite discussion, requests, written notices, or ultimatums budes these elderly residents from their long-standing habits. Perhaps they can't change even if they'd so desire. Perhaps they hear poorly, and they don't realize the extent to which they disrupt the sleep of their neighbors and the tranquility of the mornings and evenings.

It would be easy to regard these elderly offenders as outliers, neighborhood residents who do not represent the norm. However, these offenders include one person who is a neighborhood watch leader, who person who was a professor for many years at a leading university, followed by a long and distinguished career at the Environmental Protection Agency, and another who has traveled the world. Where is the environmental protection for the peace and sanctity of my neighborhood?