

The Newtown Shooting: A Media Literacy Discussion

In rushing to get the story first, mass media often gets the story wrong.

Things the media initially got wrong in the Newtown shooting.

1. The identity of the shooter
2. The age of the shooter
3. The school class of the victims
4. The shooter's mother being a teacher/substitute/aide at the school
5. The gun used to commit the murders
6. How the shooter entered the school
7. The shooter's girlfriend was missing
8. The shooter's father was dead
9. The possible second gunman
10. Reports of a previous altercation at the school

Any Others?

How has technology both helped and hurt the search for information and the publication of "facts" in the news?

Other questions:

Should the news interview young children as witnesses of the attack?

Should parents allow them to be interviewed?

Is all this media coverage making the situation in Newtown worse?

How many of you read this statement from Morgan Freeman on Facebook or Twitter?

You want to know why. This may sound cynical, but here's why. It's because of the way the media reports it. Flip on the news and watch how we treat the Batman theater shooter and the Oregon mall shooter like celebrities. Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris are household names, but do you know the name of a single *victim* of Columbine?

Disturbed people who would otherwise just off themselves in their basements see the news and want to top it by doing something worse, and going out in a memorable way. Why a grade school? Why children? Because he'll be remembered as a horrible monster, instead of a sad nobody.

CNN's article says that if the body count "holds up", this will rank as the second deadliest shooting behind Virginia Tech, as if statistics somehow make one shooting worse than another. Then they post a video interview of third-graders for all the details of what they saw and heard while the shootings were happening. Fox News has plastered the killer's face on all their reports for hours.

Any articles or news stories yet that focus on the victims and ignore the killer's identity? None that I've seen yet. Because they don't sell. So congratulations, sensationalist media, you've just lit the fire for someone to top this and knock off a day care center or a maternity ward next.

You can help by forgetting you ever read this man's name, and remembering the name of at least one victim. You can help by donating to mental health research instead of pointing to gun control as the problem. You can help by turning off the news.

Here's the original post, not from Morgan Freeman.



Mark [redacted]
Yesterday at 12:44pm · 🌐

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Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · Share

👍 [redacted] and 21 others like this.

[redacted] damn mark. well said.
[redacted] 6pm · Like · 🗨️ 1

Mark [redacted] I'm not normally a "share if you agree" type of person, but this is something I wouldn't mind making the rounds.
Yesterday at 12:51pm · Like · 🗨️ 1

[redacted] Absolutely 1000% correct. Best post I've seen today. Also shows like "Criminal minds" and "CSI" only serve to desensitize us and give nutfuckers more ideas. These shows serve no purpose. You don't need to "be entertained", and unless you are a fo... See More
Yesterday at 12:55pm via mobile · Like

[redacted] But this just doesn't work. News outlets can't not cover a story as important as this, and in doing so they're going to mention the perpetrator's name. Trying to prevent him from becoming infamous from this is nigh on impossible. It's like the story of... See More
Yesterday at 1:04pm · Like · 🗨️ 2

[redacted] True. But it's the amount in which they mention him, the way they interview kids at the scene, and the word choice they use. The goal is to hook people with key words that make them want more information, thus staying tuned, thus sticking around to watch commercials and sell Pepsi, and Geico ads
Yesterday at 1:07pm via mobile · Like

[redacted] sadly this is so true. Prayers for all the family and friends
Yesterday at 1:08pm · Like · 🗨️ 1

[redacted] How can i share your post? Looks like i need to copy and paste it. but i fully agree man. i'm so sickened right now.
Yesterday at 1:13pm · Like · 🗨️ 1

Mark [redacted] If I know the internet, someone will attribute the quote to Morgan Freeman or Betty White and it'll go viral. [edit] OH GOD IT'S ALREADY HAPPENING.
23 hours ago · Edited · Like

[redacted] i know egen more why we have a chemistry that works well.

Does the poster have valid points?

Is it better that this was attributed to Morgan Freeman because of the amount of views it eventually received?

Other questions about the coverage of the shooting: