

Analyzing the Angles of Tragedy: Media Framing of the Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting

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Sandy Hook Shooting

- International media attention
- Media's influence on action
- Agenda Setting theory and Framing

Research Questions

RQ1: What was the frequency of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting coverage in national newspapers?

RQ2: What frames did national newspapers use to portray the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting?

Method

- Front-page stories: *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *Wall Street Journal*, December 15, 2012 - January 4, 2013
- Content Analysis (Keaton, 2011)
 - Emergent Themes

Findings

Newspaper	Front-Page Stories	Regarding Sandy Hook
Los Angeles Times	21	15
New York Times	21	13
USA Today	15	4
Wall Street Journal	21	4
Total	78	36

Gun Control

- Any indication of future and current gun policies or restrictions, and public concern

Example: “Obama vows fast action pressing for gun control” (Shear, 2012)

School Security

- Propositions for how to provide more security within schools, including employing more security officers

Example: “N.R.A. envisions ‘a good guy with a gun’ in every school” (Lichtblau & Rich, 2012)

Shooter's Profile

- Description of the shooter, Lanza, and his lifestyle

Example: “Connecticut shooting; Shooter’s portrait sharpens” (Bengali, Hennessy-Fisk, & Murphy, 2012)

Remembrance of Victims

- Dedicating details about the victims' lives

Example: “Moments define their time and ours”
(Colton, 2012)

Previous Public Mass Murders

- Any mention of previous mass murders in public settings, including descriptions and statistics

Example: “Virginia Tech, Fort Hood, Aurora, Sandy Hook” (Hoyer & Heath, 2012)

Conclusions & Implications

- Reinforcement
- Consistency with evidence of media's constant frame changing
- Public's susceptibility to media influence

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