



peachjar | Webinar for Schools

School Safety & Prevention Series
with Rick J. Kaufman, APR

Preparing for and Working with Media in a School Crisis

BREAKING NEWS

What we'll cover...

- Social Media vs Traditional Media
- Get Ready for the Media Barrage
- Relationships and Spokespersons
- Students as Frontline Sources
- Media Relations: Best Practices
- 4 Stages of a Crisis: How Media Responds



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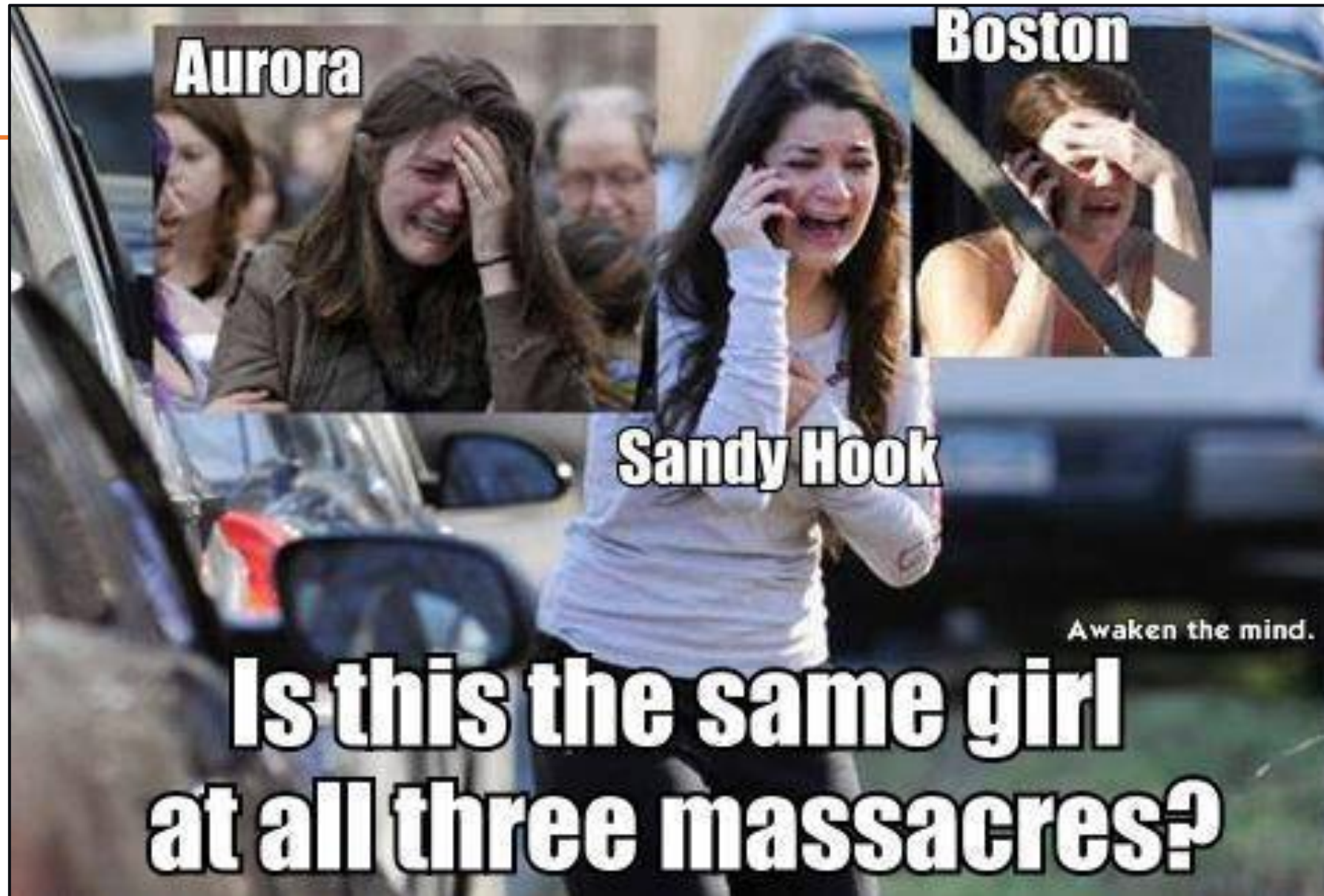
Tabassum Bhagani
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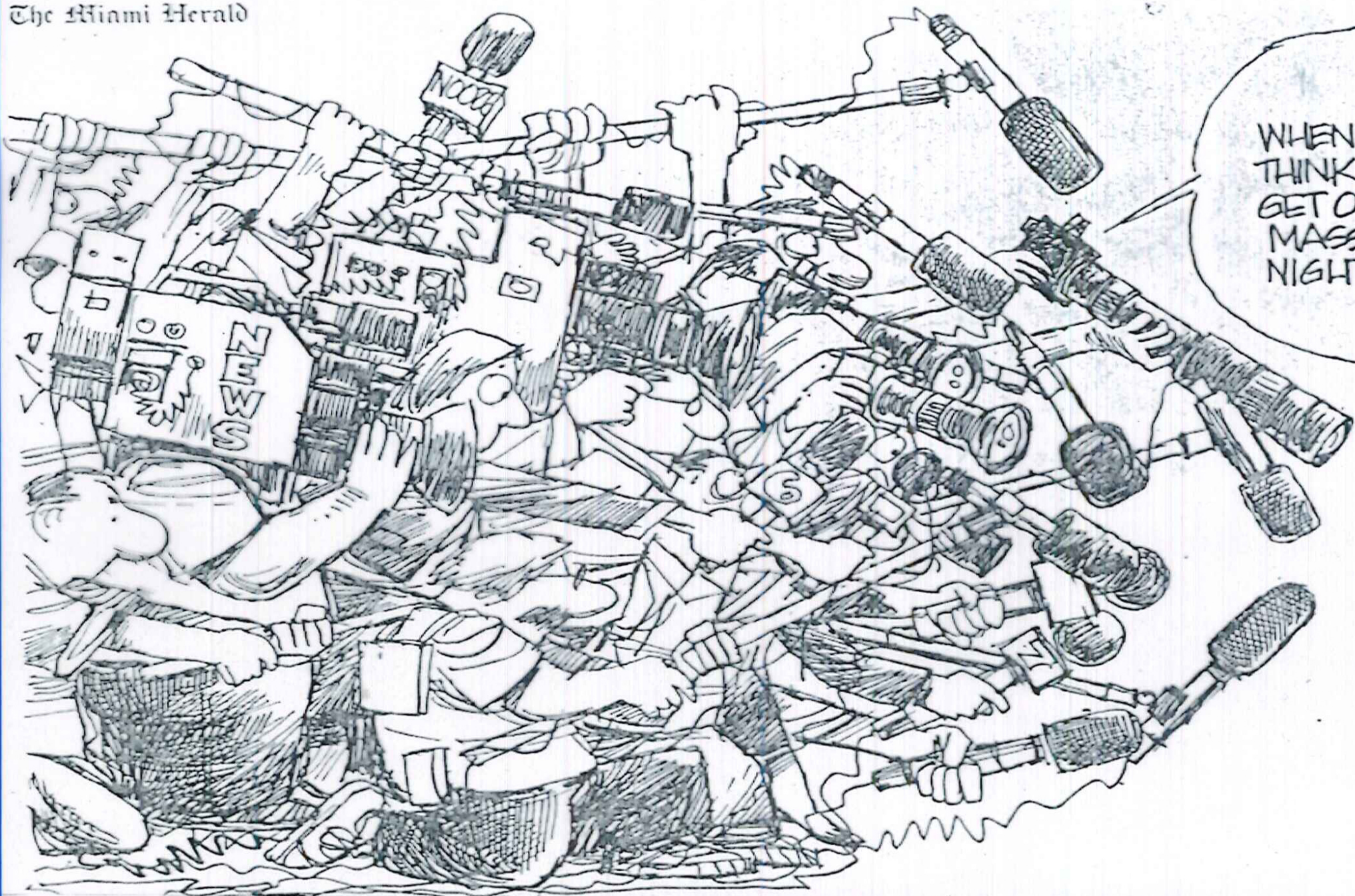


In a crisis ...

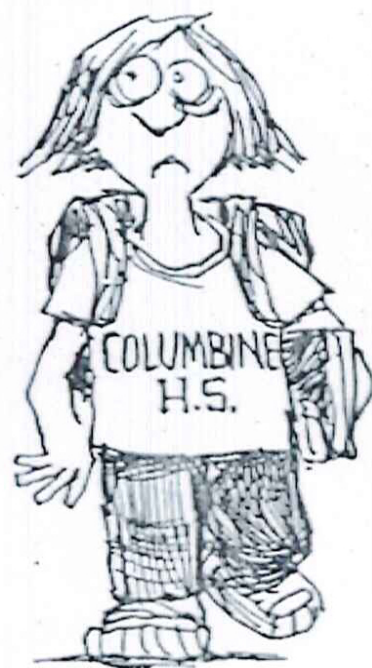
We expect media to present news we can trust.







WHEN DO YOU
THINK YOU'LL
GET OVER THE
MASSACRE
NIGHTMARE?...



Media Relations: Responsiveness

- Effective, constructive response contributes to a more positive portrayal in a crisis
- Ineffective, antagonistic response has potential to make a bad situation worse, especially in the public's eye

Ostrich Strategy

Leaders who face conflict or a challenge by denying reality.





Relationships & Spokespersons

Media Relations: Best Practices

- Media Plan
- Establish, maintain an ongoing relationship with media
 - Single point of contact & back-up
- Be truthful ... always
- Be first to report bad news
- Monitor media coverage

Media Relations: Best Practices

- Respond to all reasonable media inquiries; it's okay to ...
 - Develop guidelines for media access
 - Set ground rules for interviews
 - Perform media triage according to response priorities, procedures
 - Limit commenting on others' crises
- Follow-up when the crisis is over

When we create and maintain respectful relationships with reporters and journalists, there are less contentious interactions when a crisis arises.

Spokesperson

Best Characteristics

- Experienced
- Credible
- Authentic
- Knowledgeable
- Empathetic



Students as Frontline Sources

- May be “initial spokespeople” & “shapers of your messages”
- Use of video, blogs, podcasts & other social networking sites to show, tell the world the story of what happened
- Social networking message boards
- A powerful voice in the wake of a crisis
- Embrace this emerging stakeholder group



“A lot of misinformation came out in the first few days because you had hundreds of reporters relying on 16-year-olds. A lot of them had their own agendas. A lot thought this was their 15-minutes, and they wanted to be surrounded by cameras to tell their stories of being stuck under library tables or running through halls when shots are being fired. And (reporters) were all over that.”

Carla Crowder
Reporter, Rocky Mountain News
from the documentary, “Covering Columbine”

4 Stages of a Crisis

How media responds

1. Breaking news
2. Information dissemination
3. Blame & finger-pointing
4. Resolution

Source: Jane Jordan-Meier
Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management

4 Stages of a Crisis

How media responds

Breaking News

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What is the district's response?
- How much damage or money involved?



4 Stages of a Crisis

How media responds

Information Dissemination

- What's the cause of the incident or accident?
- Is this a pattern?
- Who is responsible? Who will pay?
- What is the potential damage, impact?
- What are the future plans?

4 Stages of a Crisis

How media responds

Blame & Finger-pointing

- Why did this happen?
- What does it mean?
- What are the long-term implications?
- What are you doing so it doesn't happen again?

4 Stages of a Crisis

How media responds

Resolution

- What was learned?
- What needs improvement?
- What are you doing to prevent the incident, accident from happening again?
- What are the next steps?

Parting thought...

The media's role is to make public the information its viewers, readers and listeners want. Reporters believe their job is to inform parents, the community and the broader public. If you do what you know to be right, and say what you know to be true, the reputation of your school system and leadership will prevail.

Resources (SchoolSafetySeries.com)

- *Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management*, Jane Jordan-Meier, 2017
- *Complete Crisis Communication Management Manual for Schools*, NSPRA, 4th Edition, 2016
- Communicating with Media in a Crisis
- Patterns of Media Response to a Crisis: The First 72 Hours
- The Media Perspective
- Media Interviews of Students (Blog extra)
- Interview Request Form





We'd like to hear from you!



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Next Webinar: April 16, 2019

The Columbine Tragedy: 20 Years Later

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Thank you!