
The Effect of Geography on The Coverage of School Shootings

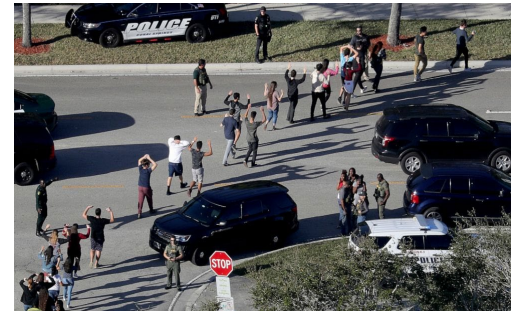
Introduction

- In 2019 there were over 130 school shootings in the United States
 - Making up less than 1% of gun violence in America
- Most school shooters are white males
 - About 80% of the time someone knows their plan to perpetuate the school shooting



Introduction

- Many school shooters perpetuate the shooting because they want the fame
 - Campaign such as #nonotariety have come out who promote not referring to the shooter by name or publicizing their photo
- Newspapers are a business
 - They have to cover the news in a way that people will read
- Often newspaper articles on school shootings promote actionless fear



Purpose/Research Question

- Would the effect be found in the difference between newspapers or the difference in the coverage of schools across multiple newspapers?
 - The purpose of this study was to determine whether the location of a school shooting affects the portrayal in a particular newspaper.
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Review of Literature

- No other country with the same socio-economic status as the United States has had an epidemic of school shootings.
 - Krug, 1998
 - The fame shooters receive by coverage in newspapers and on TV leads to copycat shootings of others seeking fame.
 - Schildkraut & Muschert 2013
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Review of Literature

- People are more likely to read a newspaper article about a hero than the first victim or the shooter.
 - Levin & Weist, 2018
 - The way that the media covers school shootings plays into the concept of public fear.
 - Burns, et. al, 2000
 - The relationship between the amount of time from one school shooting to the next can be connected to the media coverage that the first shooting receives.
 - Lin, Ping-I, et. al, 2018
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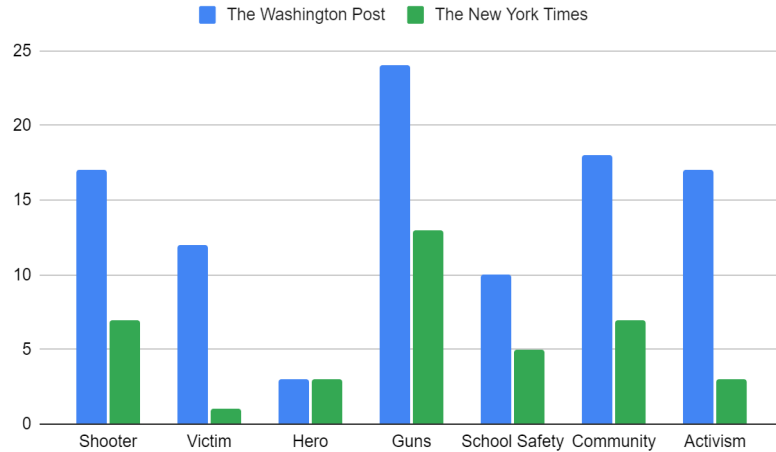
Results

Newspaper, School	Percentage of Articles	Number of Articles
The Washington Post, Umpqua Community College	45.50%	101
The New York Times, Umpqua Community College	17.60%	39
The Washington Post, Santa Fe High School	13.50%	30
The New York Times, Santa Fe High School	23.40%	52
Total	100.00%	222

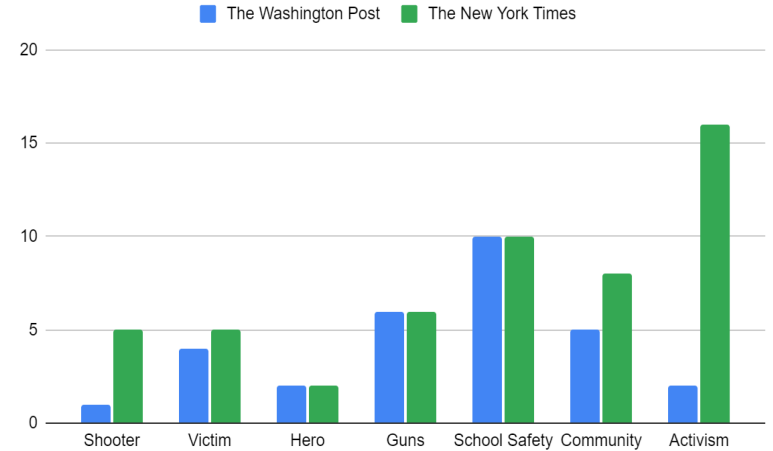
Results			
	The New York Times	The Washington Post	Marginal Row Totals
Santa Fe HS	52	30	82
Umpqua Community College	39	101	140
Marginal Column Totals	91	131	222 (Grand Total)

Results

Umpqua Community College



Santa Fe High School



Results

The Washington Post	Shooter	Victim	Hero	Guns	School Safety	Community	Activism
Umpqua Community College	17	12	3	24	10	18	17
Santa Fe	1	4	2	6	10	5	2
<i>P-value</i>	.05876	.83366	.35238	.6672	.00174	.88075	.16452
Statistical Significance	N	N	N	N	S	N	N

The New York Times	Shooter	Victim	Hero	Guns	School Safety	Community	Activism
Umpqua Community College	7	1	3	13	5	7	3
Santa Fe	5	5	2	6	10	8	16
<i>P-value</i>	.24604	.18024	.42372	.0114	.41222	.7414	.00736
Statistical Significance	N	N	N	S	N	N	N

Results

Umpqua Community College	Shooter	Victim	Hero	Guns	School Safety	Community	Activism
The Washington Post	17	12	3	24	10	18	17
The New York Times	7	1	3	13	5	7	3
<i>P-value</i>	.87288	.08914	.21498	.25014	.61708	.98404	.16452
Statistical Significance	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Santa Fe HS	Shooter	Victim	Hero	Guns	School Safety	Community	Activism
The Washington Post	1	4	2	6	10	5	2
The New York Times	5	5	2	6	10	8	16
<i>P-value</i>	.29372	.60306	.56868	.29834	.15272	.88076	.01108
Statistical Significance	N	N	N	N	N	N	S

Discussion

- There is a difference in coverage based on the location of the school and the location of the newspaper
 - P-value of .00001 means that there is a statistical significance
 - It can be concluded that the number of articles written about the shootings in each category has little significance based on geography.
 - “school safety” in The Washington Post, “guns” in The New York Times, and “activism” at Santa Fe High School.
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Discussion

- President Barack Obama visited the victim's families after the shooting at Umpqua Community College
 - While Obama was on this trip two school shootings took place in Maryland
 - Sheriff in Renburg, OR, John Hanlin, had called the Sandy Hook shooting a hoax
 - The shooting in Parkland, FL, may have affected the coverage of the shooting at Santa Fe
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Conclusion

Limitations:

- The amount of data that was able to be collected
 - Only using two newspapers and two schools
 - Bias in the media sources
 - Liberal bias
 - Only looks at newspapers
 - More limited audience
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Conclusion

Further Research:

- Look at other schools and newspapers
 - Non-mass school shootings
 - The risk factor that the number of articles in each category
 - Looking at newspapers with a different political bias
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