



A Campus Perspective

Reacting to t



Violence shatters innocence in American schools

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It's happened again: another senseless act of violence, shattering the innocence in an American school.

We've seen it before: Pearl, Mississippi, Moses Lake, Washington, Springfield, Oregon and now Littleton, Colorado.

What is this world coming to? It used to be fist fights in school; now kids are solving their problems with guns, knives and even explosives. Whatever happened to talking out problems? It's gone. The innocent days of childhood have disappeared leaving us with chaos and disorder. We as a community can stop it, we can make everyone aware and prevent and prepare people from allowing violence to open its doors to our children.

Children no longer have very good morals, because of home lives, schools, and society. The morals we need to set start with our children, at home. Maybe, just maybe if the loving and nurturing of these children began at home then we could count on fewer people being influenced by hatred and racism. Then we can continue at school; and from there have nurturing and love through society.

The world will never be perfect, but the ignorance people have towards those who are different often results in feelings of low self-worth. So then we as a society punish the criminals and monsters of today, but at first we make them. "It takes a whole village to raise a child."

What goes through our heads when we see or hear of such tragedy? I sit and think of when our society began to break down. I see everyone wanting to blame everyone else for the tragedies that happen in our schools. Instead of saying what was done wrong, we as a society need to put our minds together to make it right. The parents, students and faculty that experienced these acts of violence on a personal level will never be the same, but something can be done to protect ourselves for years to come.

Our lives should not be defined by tragedy. We should have thought about prevention before any of this ever happened. I've heard many reports of faculty, administration and even the government saying what needs to be done now. Well, why wasn't it thought about before? Because we as a society are so naive that we don't believe something like this can happen until it's pounding on our back door.

Damn us! Situations like this may not be able to be prevented, but we can be prepared. It's very sad that it takes tragic events to unravel before we decide to take a stand.

My heart screams out to the victims and their families of this tragedy and every other one that has occurred. No family or person should ever have to endure such heartache.

What really saddens me is that you can get a gun anywhere. Everyday more people under the age of 21 are getting their hands on guns, illegally. When will the travesty stop? Gun safety at home,

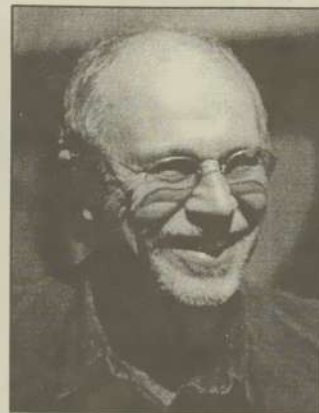
school, and in the community is one way to begin.

I've heard several schools talk about how they want to be notified of any unstable behavior or if a gun is brought to school. That may be said, but it's not taken to heart. Like in the movie *Dangerous Minds*, starring Michelle Pfeiffer, when a student went to the principal to tell him that he was in danger at school and the principal made him leave when he didn't knock. That character was later shot. Why should a student go to the administration when they don't listen? With the lack of administrative support we see why these kinds of things are happening.

Now that we know the problem, we have to come up with a solution. We need to strengthen school security, maybe even add metal detectors, if necessary. Surprise students with an inspection once a week of lockers and belongings. We need to up the social awareness. Every school, organization, and business should have some sort of plan in case a shooting does occur, God forbid that it ever does.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Only then can everyone start to feel safe again. It is totally up to the community, the students and parents. Good intentions are just those, good intentions. We need to do instead of just say we need to do.

I pray for all the victims and hope everyone learns how to be prepared and prevent such atrocities.



"There are lots of factors involved. What we know about people is that they are capable of striking out with rage and violence. These kids felt alienated, then they found a way to celebrate their own alienation."

"I don't think you can prevent violence through education, we have so often eliminated the arts. Those are far more important perhaps to those who feel alienated. Take their energies and do something positive with them. I think we can learn from history and learn from it."

David Smith-English, 56
Theatre Department



"I think that a lot of teenagers in the U.S. disrespect their freedom. In Israel, every family has a machine gun in their closet, but those kids whose freedom is at risk have respect for weapons because they know they will have to defend themselves in war when they are 18."

"I don't think schools can prevent violence. It would be wise to teach students how to react in such situations."

Mariah Kreinheder, 17
ASG Child Care Senator



"I don't think there is one simple solution. When we try to simplify a situation, we try to look for simple solutions. This is a complex issue."

"It is individual values. It's not just a matter of individual values. It's not just a matter of values, but feeling safe, secure, and violence, but feeling safe, secure, like you have a future."

Dian Connett, 47
Dean of Instruction



"I think it's about society. I don't think you can blame the parents or the media. It's strictly society."

"More people more comfortable with themselves. It's the whole thing of harassing on others; everyone should feel equal."

Joey Frizzell
student

Campus policy outlines

The Littleton shooting raises the question: What if it happens here?

According to Peter Angstadt, dean of college services, Clackamas is well prepared if a shooting were to occur.

"We have very good community law enforcement," said Angstadt. "Teachers and instructors are well trained and can recognize signs of strange behavior and can hopefully spot these kinds of things before they

happen."

What to do in case of a shooting is listed in the Emergency Safety Procedure (ESP) that is posted in every classroom.

In case of a shooting:

1. Stay alert
2. Remain calm
3. Report suspicious situations to Public Safety, ext. 665
4. Take cover immediately at