*Columbine*, by Dave Cullen

1. **Opinion Chart (50 pts.)** Respond to the following questions/topics in the pre-reading column *before* you begin reading. We will re-visit this chart AFTER completion of the unit to fill in the post-reading column.

**DUE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PRE READING RESPONSE:** | **POST READING RESPONSE:** |
| Do you remember the Columbine shooting taking place in 1999?  If so, describe some of your first memories or thoughts?  If not, when did you first become aware of it? What was your impression? |  |  |
| What causes tragedies like the one in Columbine to occur? Who is to blame? |  |  |
| How can school shootings and other senseless acts of violence be prevented? |  |  |
| School shootings are featured in the media regularly today – more than 10 years since the Columbine attack. Are there more now? Does the public react differently today? Do students? School personnel? Law enforcement? The media? |  |  |
| **BEFORE you read, skim some of the media coverage from 1999 & write down some thoughts about the following “key terms” from Columbine:** |  |  |
| “Hit-Lists” & Target Students |  |  |
| Trench-Coat Mafia |  |  |
| Cassie Bernall & Rachel Scott |  |  |

1. **Vocabulary (50 pts.)** *Columbine* introduces many terms that may be unfamiliar or misunderstood/misused. Using the book as context, **write** **two sentences summarizing each term on a separate sheet of paper** (25 pts.). Then, **choose one term to expand on in a one-page essay** (25 pts.)**.** \*Use at least two sources (with correct MLA internal documentation & Works Cited) to support your essay.

**DUE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. Dyad
2. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
3. Victim's advocate
4. The Active Shooter Protocol
5. Psychopath
6. Angry Depressive
7. Psychosis (distinction from psychopathy)
8. The Gun Show Loophole
9. Brady Bill
10. NRA
11. DSM-IV
12. The Psychopathy Checklist
13. fMRI
14. Suicidal ideation
15. Hostage vs. non-hostage situations (as defined by the FBI)
16. Supervisory special agent
17. Threat assessment
18. Zero tolerance
19. Diversion
20. Altar calls
21. Evangelical Christian
22. Goths
23. Napalm
24. Molotov cocktail
25. NATO
26. **Discussion Questions/ Socratic Seminar (50 pts.)** Write out your responses to the following questions and prepared to discuss them in a Socratic Seminar at the conclusion of the unit.

**DUE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* 1. Some readers have referred to *Columbine* as a "non-fiction novel." Do you think this description fits? What elements make it fit each category?
  2. What do you make of the relationship between Eric and Dylan? Did this relationship remain consistent throughout the book? If there were shifts in their roles, can you pinpoint when and why this happened? Do you think this book glorifies Eric and Dylan and perpetuates the legend that they wanted to leave behind?
  3. As you read the book, what surprises did you encounter? Why do you think you hadn't known about them before?
  4. If you were able to meet the killers' parents, what would you say to them? What questions would you ask? What would you want them to know? If you could meet another character in the book, whom would you want to meet and what would you say to them?
  5. Who are the heroes of this story? Who are the scapegoats? Were there more than two people responsible for the killings? Which characters had reason to feel guilty? Who do you think still feels guilty now?
  6. How did the setting of this story enhance it? How does the Columbine community compare to yours? Were you surprised by the community reaction in the aftermath? How do you think your community would react after such an event?
  7. Which passages were most difficult for you to read? Which scenes are most memorable for you? What surprised you most as you read?
  8. With school shootings being featured regularly and predominately in the media for over a decade, does the public react differently to them now? Do students react differently? School personnel? Law enforcement? The press?
  9. Once an important incident is mis-portrayed, is it ever possible to correct it? Discuss some examples? Several of the “what” aspects of Columbine were initially misreported—e.g., nearly every newspaper in the country led with some version of *25 dead* April 21. It was reported on every major network. Yet those myths do not live on? Why do myths about “what” behave so differently than about “why”?
  10. What kind of impact did this book have on you? Do you think this book should be read in high school? Why or why not? Who should read this book?

1. **In-Class Essay (50 pts.)**

We will write an in-class essay on *Columbine* at the end of the unit. You will be provided with possible prompts and resources beforehand.

**ESSAY DATE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Author Biography**

*See latest updates at* [*http://davecullen.com/bio.htm*](http://davecullen.com/bio.htm)

Dave Cullen spent ten years writing and researching *Columbine,* a haunting portrait of two killers and eight victims. It became a break-out bestseller and won several major awards.

Cullen has been described as a cultural translator, writing about Evangelical Christians, gays in the military, Barbie doll collectors . . . anyone on the margins. He has contributed to *New York Times, Washington Post, Times of London, Slate, Salon, Daily Beast* and *Guardian.*

Dave began writing as a young boy in the Chicago suburbs. He dove passionately into journalism in high school and college, then wandered. He became an infantry soldier, management consultant, computer systems analyst and undergraduate instructor in scattered cities across the U.S., England, Kuwait and Bahrain. He traveled to 26 countries, with a penchant for north Africa and south Asia.

At 33, Dave devoted himself to writing full-time. He began with the University of Colorado-Boulder's writing program, where he won the Jovanovich Award for best master's thesis. He later won a GLAAD Media Award, an SPJ Award and is an Ochberg Fellow at the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma at Columbia University's Journalism School.

*Columbine* spent thirteen weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller lists. It won the Edgar Award, Barnes & Noble's Discover Award, and the Goodreads Choice Award. It was a finalist for the LA Times Book Award, the ALA's Alex Award, and others. *Columbine* was named to two-dozen Best of 2009 lists, including the *New York Times, LA Times* and *Publishers Weekly.* **It was declared Top Education Book of 2009 by the American School Board Journal.**

Dave was planning a move to New York City when Columbine happened. He remained in Denver to research, write and promote the book, and moved to NYC in July, 2010. He is happy there. He travels extensively to high schools and colleges to teach writing and discuss the tragedy.

**Internet Links & Resources:**

1999 Coverage –

<http://extras.denverpost.com/news/shotarch.htm#apr21> (Columbine Archive from *The Denver Post)*

<http://extras.denverpost.com/news/shot0420a.htm>(MAIN POST)

<http://abcnews.go.com/Archives/video/april-20-1999-columbine-shooting-9541833>(ABC News - live coverage)

<http://www.cnn.com/US/9904/20/school.shooting.08/> (CNN report)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxfbvlCW8-0> (YouTube compilation of live coverage)

<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/21/us/terror-littleton-overview-2-students-colorado-school-said-gun-down-many-23-kill.html?ref=columbinehighschool> (*New York Times* main article)

<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/22/us/terror-in-littleton-the-suspects-portrait-of-outcasts-seeking-to-stand-out.html?ref=columbinehighschool> (“Portrait of Outcasts Seeking to Stand Out” – NYT)

<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/24/us/terror-in-littleton-the-overview-sounds-from-a-massacre-oh-god-kids-stay-down.html?ref=columbinehighschool> (“Sounds from a Massacre” – NYT)

<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/06/us/columbine-students-seek-answers-in-their-faith.html> (Cassie Bernall - NYT)

The Book & Beyond –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EA22SKaQ5hU> (Dave Cullen’s book intro video)

<http://www.davecullen.com/columbine/awards.htm> (Awards for Columbine)

<http://www.columbine-online.com/> (Cullen’s online resource page)

<http://www.salon.com/2009/04/06/cullen/> (“What You Never Knew About Columbine” interview with Cullen & book review from *Salon*)

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/04/20/columbine.myths/#cnnSTCVideo> (“Debunking the Myths of Columbine: 10 Years Later” video & transcript from CNN/ interview with Cullen)

<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-04-13-columbine-myths_N.htm> (“10 Years Later: The Real Story Behind Columbine” from *USA Today*)

<http://www.denverpost.com/ci_12174127> (“10 Years Later: Columbine Remembers” from *The Denver Post)*