ARush to judgment: 2006 Duke lacrosse rape and 2011 Penn State child sex abuse scandal

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## Introduction
- Campuses crises no longer confined within the gates of the university
- Protection of “Duke Brand” and “Penn State Brand” above well-being of students
- Both schools failed to take control of the media & society’s idolization of college athletics

## Theory Statement
### Fink’s Stage Analysis Theory
- **Stage 1:** Unstable relationship b/w Duke and Durham county - Duke’s superior economic status and majority white student body; resentment against Men’s Lacrosse Team
- **Stage 2:** Crystal Magnum accused three Duke lacrosse players for rape; Durham Police Department, national media, Durham District Attorney Michael Nifong becomes involved
- **Stage 3:** Duke administration, faculty, and study body condemns lacrosse players
- **Stage 4:** Players acquitted; Duke face multi-million dollar law suits

### Benoit’s Image Repair Discourse (IRD)
- Mortification
- Transcendence
- Bolstering
- Compensation
- Corrective Action

## 2006 Duke Lacrosse Scandal
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## 2011 Penn State Child Sex Abuse Scandal
- **Stage 1:** Culture of the Happy Valley; deification of Paterno and the Nittany Lions administration covers up Sandusky
- **Stage 2:** Investigation begins; Paterno’s dismissal; media goes out of control; student riots supporting Paterno
- **Stage 3:** “We are still Penn State”; Candlelight vigils; NCAA punishments
- **Stage 4:** Sandusky found guilty; Paterno dies; administrators charged with perjury

## Conclusions
- All organizations will face a crisis
- What’s important is not undoing a past mistake, but moving from crisis to opportunity
- Both cases manifest what happens when universities lose their core values and focus on protecting their brands
- Wake-up calls for college culture’s worship of athletics
- Agenda Setting & Priming - Duke: white vs. black, rich vs. poor, male vs. female; Penn State: end of Paterno

## Research Question
- How did failures in crisis communications tarnish the reputations of Duke and Penn State during the 2006 Duke Lacrosse Rape Scandal and 2011 Penn State Child Sex Abuse Scandal?

## Key References

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