

Russel williams media

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The Truth is Not Always What We Want to Hear: Did the Media Go Too Far in Covering Russell Williams? Kaitlyn Witmeyer The University of Western Ontario Society relies so vastly on media as a source of information, that in some cases there can be discrepancy on what is deemed as appropriate or not appropriate when covering a story. This is the case for the story of Russell Williams who is charged with two accounts of murder, sexual assault and countless occurrences of breaking and entering.

Williams' case has been highly covered by the media and a great magnitude of disturbing details as well as photos has been provided while documenting events. The amount of information provided to the public has caused a controversy as to what is appropriate and ethical to share in concern of the victims directly involved in the case. The information provided as well as the photos is a necessary approach in order to inform the public of the severity of the situation. There are however, certain unnecessary disturbing details that should be omitted.

Russell Willams, formally known as Colonel Russell Williams, is a powerful figure in Canada whose job consisted of commander of the forces base in Trenton. This is what makes the particular story so shocking; that a person of such power and who has respect by the country can commit such acts. It is also why the need for publicity is important. Williams murdered two females, Jessica Llyod who was 27, and Marie-France Comeau who was 37, but this was not until after his countless number of break-ins as well as the sexual assault of two separate women.

Williams has a sexual fetish with female undergarments and would break into the homes of women and take pictures of himself wearing these articles

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as well as steal them for his own personal pleasure. This obsession is believed to what lead to the unfortunate assaults and deaths of the other women. When the story was first broadcast The Toronto Star and The Toronto Sun both released photos of Williams posing in female lingerie on the front cover of the morning paper.

The Star had a photo of Williams posing in lingerie particularly placed next to a photo of him in his Colonel uniform. This photo caused controversy and even though it may be graphic for a front-page headline, it is necessary. There are much more disturbing photos that exist of Williams actually assaulting his victims, but those will never, and should never be released. The photo of Williams in lingerie was necessary to be released because it showed the public of how alarming the case actually is without crossing the line of being morbid.

The Toronto Star received a lot of backlash from the photo released however people need to remember that Williams is a murderer and not to just focus on him being a fetishist (McGrath 2010). Due to all the troubling information and photos released, people may tend to concentrate more on the fetish-like behaviours Williams displayed and not give enough attention to the fact that he took the lives of two young women. It was important that the media relay enough details to the public concerning the case so an understanding of the severity of the situation could be made.

The message of the situation was relayed across without the need for unnecessary disturbing details like The Toronto Star's article states " On New Year's Day 2008, he broke into a home in the Ottawa neighbourhood where he lived and sprayed semen on a 15-year-old girl's dresser. He then took a
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picture of himself with the girl's make-up brush touching his penis" (Rankin, 2010). This piece of information is quite disturbing and unnecessary in relaying the message to the public.

A play by play is also provided of Williams' video raping Comeau, "The video beings of Comeau lying in fetal position on her antique wood bed, duct tape wound around her head and covering her face in a T-shape that only her nose is exposed" (Mandel, 2010). Although the video its self was not released to the public, a detailed description still leaves an image burned in our minds. Chris Nicholas of the Ontario Provincial Police Department believes that the detailed information is a "good dose of reality of how evil people can be" (Hewit, 2010).

Although it is a harsh reality, the people could have been spared these descriptive details. Williams broke into a total of 82 homes, but only 17 of them were reported (Seglins, 2010). Many of the break-ins went unreported; this may have been due to embarrassment or unawareness but the knowledge could have helped prevent the murders that occurred. The series of break-ins began in 2007 and lasted until 2010; one can only wonder that if more incidents were reported if that outcome could have been different.

Filling the public in on such knowledge now may help prevent future situations from occurring because people are aware of the suspecting signs. The names of the victims and families were not released to the media of those who were broken into or sexually assaulted. This is for the best because the families have the right to keep their names private but the information released was important for the public to know. The names of the females who were raped and murdered were released because it becomes

crucial information when someone is murdered in order to obtain more evidence.

Even though the names were not released of many of the victims, those who live in their tight nit communities would be aware of who they are and what they experienced. Some may find the sharing of events embarrassing but it is important for the public to be aware of the events that occurred. Cases like Williams' help society become more knowledgeable and by that, implements can be made to try and make people aware so situations like this can be avoided. Children have become so street proof that they are afraid to talk to people who they do not know, even if their intentions are harmless.

This loses a sense of community and even though unfortunate it is now a necessary precaution. Two murders, two sexual assaults, 82 break-ins, and numerous female undergarments stolen. The truth can be a harsh reality, and for the story of Russell Williams, this is the exact case. Some may continue to find the information provided in the media as inappropriate and unethical. The public could have been spared certain images and details that would have been better left out with the message of the story still making its point across.

It is however though still important for the public to be aware of the severity of the situation. Let this unfortunate story be a building block in society to help improve the world we live in. References Friscolanti, M. (n. d). The Dark Depraved Side of Russell Williams Revealed in Court. Macleans. Retrieved from www2.macleans.ca/2010/10/18/dark-depraved-side-of-russell-williams-revealed-in-court/ Hewit, P. (2010, October 19). Do We Need to Know all the <https://assignbuster.com/russel-williams-media/>

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