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## Media Search of Suspects' Apartment Raises Questions

By Mark Joyella (<http://www.adweek.com/tvnewser/author/markjoyella>)  
on Dec. 4, 2015 - 12:50 PM

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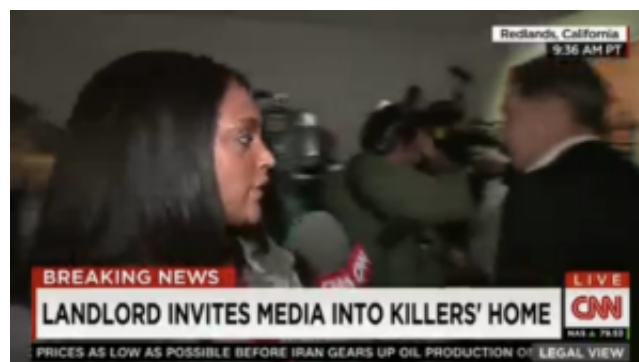
“There is something so strange about all of this,” said MSNBC’s **Andrea Mitchell**, as correspondent **Kerry Sanders** picked up baby toys, sifted through the trash, and examined credit card statements and identification documents—all belonging, we’re told, to the suspected terrorists responsible for the mass shooting in San Bernardino, Calif.

It was a profoundly bizarre moment of live television, which began when the landlord who owns the apartment apparently opened the home to journalists. A small army of them marched in, taking photos, shooting video,

and picking up anything and everything—including passports, photos, and drivers licenses, which were all displayed on screen.



For viewers, the items left behind in the apartment may be fascinating. But seeing the way journalists climbed over each other in a mad rush to be the first into, say, the powder room, closet or bedroom was strange.



(<http://www.adweek.com/tvnewser/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/12/Screen-Shot-2015-12-04-at-12.49.48-PM.png>) On CNN, correspondent **Stephanie Elam** (left) staked claim to a

bedroom in the apartment, telling **Anderson Cooper**, “I was the first person to walk into this room and saw how it was before everyone started touching it.” What was the value in Elam’s “exclusive,” if that’s the right word? Prayer books, ID cards, luggage, stickers, and signs the FBI searched the room and the attic above.

A CNN spokesperson said “CNN, like many other news organizations, was granted access to the home by the landlord. We made a conscious editorial decision not to show close-up footage of any material that could be considered sensitive or identifiable, such as photos or ID cards.”

A CBS reporter, live on CBSN, explained he would not show closeups of personal material—and would not even touch anything, as it was private property.

There’s no doubt there was “something so strange about all of this,” as Mitchell had observed. And it was surely awkward to watch—as liveshots collided with liveshots. But was this potentially damaging to the federal investigation?

Cooper, noting that “this is kind of bizarre,” stressed that investigators had finished their work at the home, clearing the way for the owner to open the doors and unleash the proverbial media circus. That is, assuming the landlord actually *did* invite journalists inside:



**Andrew Katz**  
@katz

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CBS: "Why did you let the cameras inside?"

Landlord: "I didn't. When I opened the door ... they rushed"

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12:47 PM - 4 Dec 2015

527

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“Now you have thousands of fingerprints all over inside this crime scene,” said CNN analyst **Harry Houck**. “We have dozens of people totally destroying the crime scene, which is still vital in this investigation...I am so shocked I cannot believe it.”

Fox News correspondent **Will Carr** was also part of the media scrum in the apartment, airing some of it live, though not to the extent MSNBC did. MediaBuzz host **Howard Kurtz** called the whole thing “riveting, you couldn’t take your eyes off of it. But I don’t think it was terribly responsible.”

**UPDATE, 2:30 p.m. ET:** At a media briefing on the shooting investigation, an FBI spokesperson said “once we turn that location back over to the occupants or the residents or once we board it up, anyone who goes in at that point has nothing to do with us.”

**More:** MSNBC released this statement about how they handled the coverage:

MSNBC and other news organizations were invited into the home by the landlord after law enforcement officials had finished examining the site and returned control to the landlord. Although MSNBC was not the first crew to enter the home, we did have the first live shots from inside. We regret that we briefly showed images of photographs and identification cards that should not have been aired without review.

And Fox News has released this statement:

After receiving permission by the landlord, and after the FBI investigation, we entered the suspect's home to report on what we saw. We exercised cautious editorial judgement and refrained from showing close-ups of sensitive information, including specific identifications and photographs.

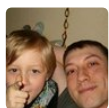
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**Jon Snow** · 4 days ago

I hope you realize those who found it 'riveting' are part of the problem. FFS.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**jdshaw** · 4 days ago

Shameful and disgusting. MSNBC was the worst - by far. No ethics. No sense of decency. No common sense.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**hvsteve1** · 5 days ago

What nobody ever seems to discuss is this was someone's private home. Though the two occupants were dead, the mother lived there. Everything in the home is the property of the family. Assuming the rent is paid up, this home, no longer a crime scene, is the property of the estates of the late tenants and neither the

crime scene, is the property of the estates of the late tenants and neither the landlord nor media have any right to enter the premises and touch anything. In addition to the newspeople picking up and showing personal documents of other family members on TV, the media was joined by people who walked in off the street. After all this rummaging through what is, after all, private property, who knows how many items might have been stolen as keepsakes of this horrible crime. Watch for the shooters' property to start turning up on Ebay. The family should sue the hell out of that landlord.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Captain Taterhead** • 5 days ago

Geraldo really missed out. He would have been in the crib. Or at least the first to open empty safe,

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**The Real Joe the Plumber 2012** • 5 days ago

CNN/DNC/BET/CHN loon™ POS Tuchman tried to get a wife of one of the victims to admit her husband caused the terrorists to commit murder by getting into a religious argument with the terrorist.

CNN/DNC/BET/CHN....THE BIGGEST TERRORIST CODDLERS IN NEWS

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**studiodrummer** • 5 days ago

it is 100% evident the FBI said they released the apt back to the family/landlord...was he paid to let these reporters i just like it is alleged some reported paid 1000.00 to jump the line...I think the idiot from messnbc showed shooters mother driving license or id card on camera.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**TVNewswatcher** • 5 days ago

Fox News Reporters were also in the Apartment

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**The Real Joe the Plumber 2012** ➔ TVNewswatcher • 5 days ago

In your warped pea-sized little brain you probably actually believe you have a point.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**AppleStinx** • 5 days ago

Did anyone find a video of the evil couple burning fossil fuel, which could be the "smoking gun" Obama needs for calling the massacre definitely, without a shadow of doubt, a terrorist act?

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**And So It Goes** • 5 days ago





Any surprise that it was CNN and MSNBC who got caught up in this? Of course not.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Tracy Flood** → And So It Goes · 5 days ago

Actually, all the networks and news cable channels got caught up in this. Even 'Inside Edition' sent in a reporter, and they're not even a news show!!!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Holistic** · 5 days ago

Lets hope the FBI raid the studios of MSNBC and CNN on camera to get back some of the evidence these MORONS took. No wonder people never trust the media or believe them any more. They have become full of just stupid people.

5 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Louie** · 5 days ago

Even if they were allowed in, the fact that they choose to do so, was such a lapse in judgement, each network should really post an apology. If I was the head of these news divisions I'd be pissed and bench whoever of my staff jumped in on this. It's 3:32PM eastern standard time, and I would've already said my network F\*\*\*\*\* up. It really was running whatever is left of journalism into the ground.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Bill C** → Louie · 4 days ago

The were like flies on dog crap in a yard

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**The\_Real\_Joe\_the\_Plumber\_2012** · 5 days ago

Only the Obama Justice Dept could screw things up this bad!

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz** · 5 days ago

that MSNBC reporter must be out of his goddamn mind, he literally just picked and showed whatever he found. Absolute zero integrity for his 15 seconds.

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**And So It Goes** · 5 days ago

WTH? Someone, either the FBI or the San Bernadino PD, really screwed up on this. I can't imagine that only 48+ hours after this incident, that the killers' apartment could be entered by anyone not connected with law enforcement?

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**rountry** · 5 days ago



Maybe the intention was to pollute the crime scene. Well done, everyone

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Tracy Flood** → rountry · 5 days ago

The apartment was NOT the crime scene. The crime scenes (2 of them) were (1) the building where the shootings occurred and (2) where the SUV was when the 2 murderers were killed by police in a gunfight.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**The\_Real\_Joe\_the\_Plumber\_2012** → Tracy Flood · 4 days ago

Tracey, the house is part of the crime scene. There were bombs, bomb making materials and thousands of rounds of ammunition. The bombs are crimes.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**amerpatriot** → Tracy Flood · 5 days ago

Right, Tracy, however any evidence that may have been obtained and used in a legal process has now certainly been compromised. Another perfect example of why the public has absolutely NO regard for media people. All in the disgusting scramble to be "the first to show..." anything of any interest.

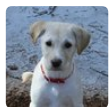
3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Tracy Flood** → amerpatriot · 5 days ago

Legal process? WHAT legal process? The legal process only happens if the killers are alive; they were killed in a shootout with police. Besides that, the FBI and the police took what they believe was evidence from the apartment anyway before they cleared the scene. The two murderers are DEAD; they will have to face GOD'S Justice!

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**TheATLMAC** · 5 days ago

The landlord could have asked the families of the two deceased apartment owners to come and clean up their family members personal property. Allowing the press to rife through the apartment was disgusting but about par for journalism today.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Holistic** → TheATLMAC · 5 days ago

There is so little journalism today. I bet CNN and MSNBC are proud of their reporters. It does not sink any lower than these people. Journalist, soon to pass lawyers are the most disgusting people on earth.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›





**Ics1956** → TheATLMAC · 5 days ago

They're too busy getting lawyered up, trying to discredit the investigation.  
Looks like this was the first step.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

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