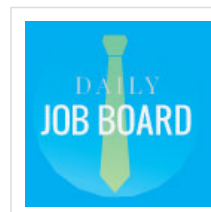




IMAGE COURTESY OF [STEVE BOTT VIA FLICKR]

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NEWS

## Too Far: CNN and MSNBC Crews Rifle Through San Bernardino Shooters' Apartment

By [Anneliese Mahoney](#) | December 4, 2015

MSNBC and CNN reporters, among others, just entered the apartment of Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik, the alleged San Bernardino shooters, and rifled through their belongings on live TV. Not only is this a gross violation of ethics, it's also a big problem for the police and FBI.

It's [unclear](#) exactly what happened. According to the news networks, the landlord of the building where Farook and Malik lived allowed them in. According to the landlord, they all [rushed](#) past him without permission. The news crews then proceeded to look through the shooters' personal possessions, showing things like friends' photos and identifying documents to the cameras.



**Stephen Miller**  
@redsteeze

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Screenshots from MSNBC. I added the redout

12:43 PM - 4 Dec 2015

1,138 532



**David Boles**  
@DavidBoles

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MSNBC just doxed Rafia Farook, mother of a terrorist, on live television. I've blurred the important bits.

12:49 PM - 4 Dec 2015

1,374 648

There are so, so many issues with what just happened that I don't even know where to begin. For one, these news crews potentially just put the family, friends, and acquaintances of Farook and Malik in serious danger. By releasing things like pictures of drivers' licenses and other personal information, they could be subject to violence. While I have no sympathy for the shooters, there's no reason to endanger their families and friends, who may have absolutely no connection to the attacks.


Additionally, this is a big problem for law enforcement—the fact that they didn't appear to have control over the crime scene is incredibly worrisome. The FBI appears to have had jurisdiction over the apartment at the time that the journalists entered. As [CNN's own panelists](#), legal analyst Paul Callan, and law enforcement analyst Jonathan Gilliam commented, the fact that the journalists were either allowed in, or not stopped by some form of law enforcement is a huge problem from a legal issue. Even if the two alleged shooters are dead, the scene still needed to be preserved in case they had accomplices, but it's now been contaminated. Gilliam went so far as to call the [incident](#): “the biggest visible screw-up in investigative history that I think has ever occurred.”

'Biggest Visible Screw-Up': CNN Analysts Bewildered by Media A... ⌚ ↗



Apparently there were also other [media outlets](#) in the area, including FOX News, and at least one reporter from The Sunday Times, but it's unclear who exactly was inside at any given time. Additionally, there were civilians mulling around—at one point it was reported that someone brought a child into the apartment, and another [woman](#) brought a dog.

Twitter users also broadcasted their outrage with CNN and MSNBC's actions, as well as the lapse in security by law enforcement:


 **Sarah Kendzior**  
@sarahkendzior Follow

So FBI now investigating as terrorism. They'll undoubtedly find some CNN and MSNBC fingerprints on the walls. Go get them, guys.

2:28 PM - 4 Dec 2015

99 163



 **Gord Macey**  
@GordMacey Follow

Bang up job reporting from a crime scene by CNN & MSNBC.  
[pic.twitter.com/kmwyMKIbCK](http://pic.twitter.com/kmwyMKIbCK)

2:18 PM - 4 Dec 2015

1,053 929



**Dan Jurgens**  
@thedanjurgens

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Every reporter for @MSNBC, @CNN and other organizations that went in that apartment should be out of work before the day ends.

2:08 PM - 4 Dec 2015

450 438

Overall, it was a pretty shocking show of incompetence, from multiple different sources. Details on how this was allowed to happen was still unclear, but we should all expect some heads to roll.



**Anneliese Mahoney**

Anneliese Mahoney is Lead Editor at Law Street and a Connecticut transplant to Washington D.C. She has a Bachelor's degree in International Affairs from the George Washington University, and a passion for law, politics, and social issues. Contact Anneliese at amahoney@LawStreetMedia.com.



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