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# Reporters inexplicably stampede San Bernardino shooters' home

By Michael Walsh December 4, 2015 1:41 PM Yahoo News





Their exceptional access garnered a dubious response.

Onlookers were left scratching their heads when reporters stampeded the home of San Bernardino shooters Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik on Friday — grabbing personal items in a frenzy to get them on the air.

Apparently, the landlord let members of the media inside the house, providing unprecedented access so quickly after a killing spree.

Authorities have identified Farook and his wife, 27-year-old Malik, as the gunmen who opened fire during a holiday party for county employees at Inland Regional Center, a facility for persons with disabilities about 60 miles east of Los Angeles. The rampage left 14 dead and 21 injured.

SLIDESHOW – Reporters inspect the home of San Bernardino shooters >>>

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Viewers watching live-stream footage from within the home — provided by CNN, MSNBC and other outlets — expressed disbelief that the news media would be given free rein over an active crime scene.

The awkward house tours showed broadcasters rummaging through the Farook family's photos, books, driver's licenses, shredded documents and other personal items.

The Twitterverse was sent into a tizzy.

We're all confused that media went inside the #SanBernardino shooters' apartment, right?

- Caitlin Dineen (@CaitlinDineen) December 4, 2015

literally WHAT is going on on @MSNBC https://t.co/v3DzUV7PUA

- Portia Crowe (@PortiaCrowe) December 4, 2015

PRO TIP: Don't invite MSNBC reporters to your holiday parties. They'll end up broadcasting from your bathroom.

- Ryan Teague Beckwith (@ryanbeckwith) December 4, 2015

If there is a connection b/t ISIS & #SanBernadino, then why was the apartment open to the media? pic.twitter.com/Kp8Rta98oP

- deray mckesson (@deray) December 4, 2015

WTH?! Dozens of reporters crowd into #SanBernardino shooters' apartment TAMPERING WITH EVIDENCE!
#RedNationRising https://t.co/ZNhVL6qNI5

- Joy Reborn (@RedRising11) December 4, 2015

MSNBC just doxed Rafia Farook, mother of a terrorist, on live television. I've blurred the important bits. pic.twitter.com/VqPwT6oyVY

- David Boles (@DavidBoles) December 4, 2015

Why is the media touching all the evidence in the

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#SanBernardino apartment?!?!?!

- Joanna Preston (@JoPrestonFNC) December 4, 2015

Much of the criticism was directed at NBC News correspondent Kerry Sanders. He led his cameraperson to focus on baby toys, such as a teddy bear and a doll.

"Quite a number of items," he said. "All the things that you'd expect to find in a child's room."

This is what rock bottom of journalism looks like #SanBernadino pic.twitter.com/gzS6zPZBxb

— Maxim Eristavi (@MaximEristavi) December 4, 2015

Media tour? Try media circus, led by MSNBC. How is this okay, @FBI? Kerry Sanders' hands are all over everything. pic.twitter.com/FMNQKbUkwj

- Social\*Fly (@socflyny) December 4, 2015

Their concerns were shared by a number of experts.

Paul Callin, a CNN legal analyst, in conversation with news anchor Wolf Blitzer, characterized the scene as an unbelievable case of negligence. "You have a contaminated crime scene now and any criminal defense lawyer, any criminal prosecutor can tell you that it's not unusual when you go to a crime scene months later that you find additional evidence. That's why where you have a mass murder, the crime scene is locked down so that forensics can get in and thoroughly examine it and determine whether leads exist. To see this crime scene being rummaged as it is and publicized – I'm shocked by it."

The surreal moment occurred the same day U.S. officials confirmed that Malik had pledged allegiance to the ISIS terrorist organization in a Facebook post.

After the deluge of criticism, CNN issued the following statement: "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."

MSNBC released a similar statement: "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."

During the media mayhem, there were conflicting reports as to whether or not law enforcement had cleared the scene and removed all the useful evidence.



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Associated Press



As @mitchellreports said on @MSNBC: the apt owner permitted the press tour, the FBI has already cleared out useful evidence

Erika Masonhall (@ErikaMasonhall) December 4,2015

San Bernardino Sheriff's spokesperson to Grasswire on reporters entering apartment: "That is not a cleared crime scene."

- Grasswire Now (@GrasswireNow) December 4, 2015

Elizabeth Plank, a senior correspondent for Mic, a New York-based media company, said that the landlord had accepted \$1,000 to let journalists in and likely did not get pre-approval from the FBI.

The landlord took 1000\$ to let in reporters so what's most plausible is that he went rogue and did not get permission from FBI.

- Elizabeth Plank (@feministabulous) December 4, 2015

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By Ori Lewis and Dan Williams JERUSALEM Reuters



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Rachel Pilcher



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