

Media Mauls Dogs First, then Snaps Back at Actor

The National Canine Research Council reports that while "Mission Impossible" actor Ving Rhames' dogs are not guilty of killing their caretaker, the media is guilty of creating the news instead of reporting it.

Slanesville, WV ([PRWeb](#)) August 16, 2007 -- The National Canine Research Council (NCRC) reports that within hours after the discovery of the body of Jacob Adams on Ving Rhames' Brentwood, California property, the media was quick to release hundreds of speculative, inaccurate and sensationalized stories proclaiming Mr. Adams was "killed" or "mauled to death" by the dogs. Ironically, some in the media now shamelessly insinuate that Mr. Rhames, the owner of the dogs, is being injudicious in his released statement containing his condolences to the family of Mr. Adams and the preliminary findings of the Los Angeles Coroner's Office.

The media regularly traffics in rumor and accusation, putting entertainment and sensationalism ahead of truth and accuracy; purposely ignoring or manipulating facts which would lessen the dramatic effect of the story. The impact on the reputations, images and lives of both the dogs and humans involved in this incident appear to be of little concern to the media. Some sources have even chosen to ignore the facts and allege Mr. Rhames is guilty of the very speculation and duplicity the media has clearly practiced in the reporting of this incident.

Timeline: Reporting of Death at Home of Ving Rhames

August 3, 2007

On August 3rd, 40-year-old Jacob Adams was found dead on the Brentwood property of actor Ving Rhames with four of Rhames' dogs nearby.

August 3 - 6, 2007

Over the next four days 400+ media sources covered this story. Over 300 sources reported as fact that the man was either "killed" or "mauled to death" by the dogs. Less than one quarter of the media sources were responsible enough to report that the dogs were "suspected" of killing Mr. Adams.

August 7, 2007

An autopsy was performed by the Los Angeles County Coroner. The preliminary results of the autopsy found that the dogs did not cause the death of Mr. Adams. The Coroner's Office revealed that although Mr. Adams sustained bite and claw marks on his extremities, the injuries were determined to be "superficial" and not sufficient to cause his death.

August 8, 2007

Prior to the autopsy 300+ media sources reported the dogs caused the death of Mr. Adams; yet, only two newspapers, The LA Canyon and The Globe and Mail, reported the results of the autopsy that determined the initial media-reported cause of death was not accurate and Mr. Adams was not killed by the dogs.

August 9 - 13, 2007

The fact that Ving Rhames' dogs did not cause the death of Mr. Adams continues to be a non-event and no media

sources report the Coroner's findings in the week following the release of the preliminary autopsy report.

August 14, 2007

Ving Rhames releases a respectful and factual statement as to the death of his friend and the alleged involvement of his dogs. Mr. Rhames quotes the preliminary autopsy findings that the dogs were not responsible for the death and offers his condolences to the family of Mr. Adams.

Approximately 34 media sources reported Mr. Rhames' statement. Despite the fact that the August 7th autopsy disproves virtually all 300+ news stories claiming the dogs killed Mr. Adams, the media persists in not reporting the autopsy results. Even more astounding is the accusation by some in the media that Rhames' statement is imprudent or speculative as demonstrated by the following headlines:

Ving Rhames Clears Dogs Before Officials
Ving Rhames Assumes His Dogs are Innocent
Ving Rhames Solves Dogs Attack Case Before Official Report
Ving Jumps to Conclusions in Dog Attack Case

"Normally, this kind of media-driven character assassination and irresponsible reporting of dog attacks has been concentrated on the Pit bull," said Karen Delise of NCRC. However, the Pit Bull Paparazzi is not terribly discriminating, as other breeds of dogs are also becoming a target for sensationalism. In their haste to report this story, Mr. Rhames' dogs were alternately identified in the media to be: Mastiffs, Bullmastiffs, Fila Brasileiro, English Bulldog, Bulldog and, of course, Pit bull. Many of the initial reports about this alleged "dog attack" arbitrarily chose one of these breeds as the "attacker" and went on to detail the "aggressive traits" of that breed.

Unfortunately, there is little that can be done to ensure that the media acts responsibly in their reporting of sensational events, so it vitally important that the public understand that much of the information reported in the news is, first and foremost, entertainment, with the truth and fairness limping behind at a very distant second.

About The National Canine Research Council

The National Canine Research Council investigates all reported cases of fatal dog attacks in the United States knowing full well that it often takes weeks or months for an investigation to be completed and for the an accurate and truthful account of the incident to be uncovered. Serious analysis and discussion of canine aggression cannot be obtained from media sources.

For accurate and in depth information on verified cases of fatal dog attacks and the circumstances contributing to these incidents, please go to the National Canine Research Council.

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