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Primary Sources Of The Character Assassination Of The Corby Family



The Expendable Project
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1. INTRODUCTION

As the Schapelle Corby case has unfolded, over more than seven years, the conduct of the Australian media has itself been the subject of considerable controversy. The period has been punctuated by countless examples of smears, sensationalism, and outright fabrications. There has even been incidents of intrusion and abuse of Schapelle Corby herself, in her prison cell. This has attracted international condemnation, and even the emergence of internet websites dedicated to exposing it.

Two individuals, however, have attracted particular scrutiny, not only because of specific publications or broadcasts, but as a result of their repeated and prolonged engagement. These are John Stewart of the ABC, and Eamonn Duff of Fairfax Media. Both have used their positions to regularly reproduce allegations, which have not only been wholly refuted by the police, but, as this report will show, have little or no credibility from an objective standpoint.

This is of serious concern, not only to journalists, but to any society which values a responsible and ethical media.

The person whom these individuals primarily used to create their output was Michael Corby, Schapelle Corby's father. This was extremely convenient: Michael Corby lost his battle with cancer in January 2008, and in Australia, dead men cannot sue.

The road was thus clear for a myriad of baseless allegations, with reduced risk of litigation.

THE TEXT BOOK APPROACH

On the darker side of what passes for journalism, certain approaches and procedures for the manufacture of malicious smears are well known. In the case of the character assassination of an innocent target, there is an almost text book approach to these matters.

In the absence of any genuine evidence to support whatever agenda is being pursued, it is necessary to construct something which can at least be presented as such. This can easily remain undetected if the perpetrator is senior, experienced, or well positioned.

The format of the exercise is usually to identify someone, anyone, who has had even the flimsiest association with the target, and who:

- has a criminal background
- is psychiatrically or psychologically unbalanced
- is desperate for money and prepared to fabricate for it
- is a drug addict.

Or, sometimes, a combination of the above is used.

Introduction

A high profile case like this one also tends to attract the most unpleasant elements of society: those chasing remuneration, self publicity, notoriety or similar. This is a classic tendency for any major event involving a celebrity or quasi-celebrity.

Ethical and experienced journalists are well aware of this, and tend to manage the situation accordingly. The unscrupulous, and those with an agenda, are perhaps less demanding.

From this base, it is not difficult to wholly create a story, even when confronted with damning contrary evidence from entirely credible sources. Control of the output delivery medium enables omission and emphasis to be applied liberally.

THE CORBY FAMILY

Let us examine in some depth how Stewart and Duff operated with respect to the Corby family, through the vehicle of Michael Corby, deceased.

On the following pages we will examine their track record on the Schapelle Corby case, their methods, their attitude to Michael Corby's family, the evidence and police statements they overlooked or ignored, their sources, some of the contradictions in what they produced, the crude production techniques employed, the choice of terminology, and the nature of the *stories* they constructed.

2. JOHN STEWART: THE LATELINE FABRICATIONS

2.1 THE APPROACH

The volume of reports by John Stewart which were hostile to Schapelle Corby and her family was substantial, and to many, they were extremely disturbing. Over a period of years a number of angles were encompassed, including various attempts to associate Schapelle's father with drugs via the most tenuous of links. For example:

Corby's next-door neighbour faces drug charges

Reporter: John Stewart and Renata Gombac

LOCATION: <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2006/s1558393.htm>

Broadcast: 30/01/2006

Lawyer challenges Corby biography

Reporter: John Stewart, Renata Gombac

ABC's 7.30 Report: broadcast 6 December 2006

LOCATION: <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2006/s1805957.htm>

Michael Corby linked to alleged drug criminal

By John Stewart and Renata Gombac

ABC's Investigative Unit: 31 January 2006

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2006/s1805957.htm>

It would appear that he scraped everywhere, employing methods which have been roundly condemned. For example (JournOz):

UNETHICAL RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION

If you were pursuing the father of Schapelle Corby instead of investigating the real case issues, how would you research him? Perhaps you would use the internet to search for background information.

Or perhaps, because Mr Corby served in the Navy, you would post a question on a naval message board, stating clearly that you were really working on an historical naval piece, and not on Schapelle Corby at all.

No, you wouldn't really do that. And neither would I.

But I'm afraid it appears that the ABC would:

Name: John Stewart
Telephone: 0409-77-65-79
Email: stewart.john@abc.net.au
Subject: Michael Corby.
Date: 26-Apr-2006

Comments:

Hi, I am a reporter at the ABC in Sydney. I am trying to locate anyone in the Navy who knew Scapelle Corby's father, Michael Corby when he was in the RAN. He was in the RAN between 1968 and 1977. He served on board the HMAS Melbourne as an electrical technician. He was a greeny for sure. I think his record number was R104785. He would have had mates who were also greenies. He spent some time in Victoria at a naval base. If anyone can remember him I would like to speak with them. I am working on an historical piece on the Navy and only recently found out that Mick was in the Navy during this time. Michael Corby moved up to Mackay after he left the Navy, then to Brisbane. cheers John Stewart ABC TV Sydney 0409-77-65-79.

Words escape me.

The Lateline Fabrications

Stewart's attitude and ethos is, perhaps, even better illustrated by the following audio recording, which was similarly commented upon:

ABUSIVE AND AGGRESSIVE INTERVIEWING

Ethical journalists are well aware of the requirement for respect, objectivity and fairness when interviewing members of the public. Indeed, the AJA Code of Ethics covers this through a number of its clauses, amongst them "Use fair, responsible and honest means to obtain material", "Never exploit a person's vulnerability or ignorance of media practice" and "Respect private grief and personal privacy".

But consider how the ABC interview members of the public. Consider for example how they interviewed Mercedes Corby, in the context of her struggling to support her sister Schapelle during her terrible ordeal. We recently discovered a recording of one such interview. Here are some extracts:

[Play Or Download The MP3](#)

[Note: These are short extracts. Much of the interview is extremely unpleasant and not suitable for a public website]

[The audio is available on www.expendable.tv]

Mercedes Corby in fact did very well indeed, given the sort of journalist she was confronted with. The bigger issue though is what this open hostility clearly indicates regarding the ABC's position with respect to Schapelle Corby.

Consider those words and listen to the tone in his voice.

Is that the voice of someone adopting a neutral, objective, and truth seeking journalistic perspective? Or is it the voice of someone who has a clearly entrenched hostile position, annoyed that a young woman is standing up for herself and her family?

Is it the voice of true objectivity, or the voice of subjective bias?

Is it the voice of someone you would trust to report neutrally and fairly on this issue?

Indeed. I think the same thing too.

Despite the considerable efforts expended, and the appalling methods used, Stewart and Gombac came up with nothing of substance.

Such disappointing returns from this *investigative unit* may have created a degree of pressure within the ABC, particularly on John Stewart.

However, whatever the reason, whatever the agenda, the story presented was, itself, unprecedented in its nature and vitriol.

2.2 THE STORY AS PRESENTED

Rather than write off the substantial investment, and explain that there was nothing of significance to be found, *Lateline* produced a blatant and hugely damaging smear. A story with no credibility, in fact, less credible sources for the broadcast would be hard to imagine.

They spun a story which falls apart with the most casual scrutiny, and presented it as fact; a story which the ABC was subsequently forced to apologise for. Nonetheless, its content was not only repeated across many other ABC channels, but across the media as a whole. The damage it caused to Schapelle Corby and her family was incalculable.

The story, which aired on the 4th July 2008, relied heavily on the technique described earlier: the identification of criminal elements, drug addicts, or those with other issues, for source quotes and comments. It also focused upon a recently deceased man, enabling a degree of cover from the risk of a defamation case.

Its TV production was nothing short of scandalous, with exploitative footage of a dying Michael Corby, who was also suffering from deafness. It employed the stringing together of unrelated comments tailored to suggest linkage, dark sinister music score to indicate '*bad guy*' when Michael Corby was shown, unsubstantiated allegations directly presented as fact, damaging statements which directly conflicted with practical reality, and non-inclusion of basic and core factual information.

Here is the raw original transcript:

JOHN STEWART, REPORTER: It's now clear there were at least two generations of Corbies involved in the drug trade. Together, the father Michael Corby senior and his daughter Schapelle Corby represent 30 years in the marijuana business.

MICHAEL CORBY SNR: You ever had a puff on a bloody joint? What did you nod your head for? Does that mean yes? How about you, Mr Cameraman?

JOHN STEWART: But Michael Corby senior's experience in the drug trade involved more than just the occasional puff. In the late 1970s, Michael Corby moved to Mackay in North Queensland after a stint in the navy. His military record indicates he had problems with discipline and left the service after going absent without leave.

Alan Trembath is a retired farmhand living on the outskirts of Mackay. He is also a cousin of the late Michael Corby. He says that by 1980, Schapelle Corby's father had become well known in Mackay as the local marijuana dealer, something which caused tensions in his family.

ALAN TREMBATH, COUSIN OF MICHAEL CORBY: Michael used to be in and out of trouble with dope and, you know, over the years I can remember some hell of a big blues with his parents. He used to hang around with a bikie group on the Gold Coast. I can remember him and my Aunty Pearl, his mother, having arguments and fights over, you know, different periods of time when I was staying at their house in Ekeby.

JOHN STEWART: Alan Trembath says that Schapelle Corby senior was not just a small time dealer but was involved in moving large amounts of marijuana throughout northern Queensland.

ALAN TREMBATH: I was in the Kooyong Hotel having a few beers and Michael walked in. He approached me and we went and sat down and he said to me basically straight out, he said, "Do you want to earn 80 grand?" I said, "80 grand?" I said, "What have I got to do, go and kill somebody for it?" And he said, "No, no", he said, "Get you to take a boat up to see the bay and pick up a lot of marijuana and bring it back down to Mackay and you'll get 80 grand for it." Well at the time I thought, "Well, 80 grand, I could do with it but if I got caught, 10 years in jail at eight grand a year when you got three little kids just didn't sum up. So I refused."

The Lateline Fabrications

JOHN STEWART: In the 1980s, Michael Corby senior moved to the central Queensland town of Middelmount where he worked at the local mine. There, he lived next door to another miner, Tony Lewis.

MICHAEL STOTHARD, MIDDLEMOUNT RESIDENT: Tony and Mick associated together all the time, they lived next door to each other and they worked at the open cut together. So, yeah, they were pretty friendly.

JOHN STEWART: 10 years later, Tony Lewis and Michael Corby senior both moved to a small town called Iveragh near Gladstone on the central Queensland coast. They became neighbours once again and in September 2004, the Queensland police raided Tony Lewis's property and discovered five kilos of marijuana in vacuum sealed plastic bags and thousands of dollars in cash. In a recent documentary about Schapelle Corby, Tony Lewis denied that his next door neighbour knew about his marijuana crop.

TONY LEWIS, CONVICTED MARIJUANA GROWER: Mick knew nothing. No, I never ever told Mick. He would have got right into me and say, "No way in the world, boy, you'll end up in the slammer", or something. Mick would have just done that, yes.

JOURNALIST: So you haven't heard from Tony Lewis in about two years?

MICHAEL CORBY SNR: Tony who?

JOHN STEWART: Kim Moore tipped off the police about Tony Lewis's marijuana operation. A one-time heroin user, she kicked the habit 25 years ago and was living near Tony Lewis and Michael Corby's farms. She says she first met Michael Corby as a man called Mick at the local pub with Tony Lewis.

KIM MOORE, POLICE INFORMANT: We were having a couple of drinks at the bar and Tony and (bleep) came in. Anyway - and we were sitting there talking for a little while and then this other gentleman came in and I was introduced to him as Mick.

JOHN STEWART: On September 16, 2004, three weeks before Schapelle Corby's arrest in Bali, Kim Moore made a statement to the Queensland police. Her statement became the basis of a Queensland police crime intelligence report. It says:

(male voiceover): "Information is that along with (bleep) a person with the name Michael is also involved with the transport of these drugs. ... The informant suggests large quantities are being moved to Bali."

JOHN STEWART: Kim Moore has confirmed to the ABC that the Michael she named three weeks before Schapelle Corby's arrest was Michael Corby senior.

KIM MOORE: Old Michael Corby is very close to Tony Lewis and he is involved with the making that Tony does, with his drugs and the running.

JOHN STEWART: The ABC has obtained the flight records for Michael Corby senior. He travelled to Bali on September 4, 2004, just four weeks before Schapelle Corby was arrested at Denpasar airport. Before he died, Michael Corby senior denied having anything to do with the drugs found in his daughter's boogie board bag.

MICHAEL CORBEY SNR: Never touched that bag! Never seen it! Never had nothin' to do with the bloody bag!

JOHN STEWART: Michael Corby senior's cousin says he's sorry for Schapelle Corby and believes she simply followed her father into the drug trade.

ALAN TREMBATH: Honestly, I don't think Schapelle would have known any different, you know, because she would have been around drugs all her life.

JOHN STEWART: Throughout his long drug career, Michael Corby senior avoided going to jail. However, his now infamous daughter was not so lucky and is due for release in another 16 years.

This is still open on the internet for the public to view here:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20080705142320/http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2008/s2295226.htm>

Now, let's examine this in a little more detail.

2.3 THE SOURCES

Their two *sources* could hardly have been less credible.

ALAN TEMBATH

Trembath was engineered to make sweeping and general statements of a highly damaging nature, without substantiation. Yet Michael Corby was only vaguely aware of him, having had no contact for many years, and Schapelle Corby didn't even know him.

His only specific or substantive statement was that he had been offered \$80,000 to ship some marijuana a few hundred miles. But even cursory consideration reveals how wholly impractical this actually was.

In the early 1980's this was a substantial sum of money. It would have purchased almost two houses at the median price for Mackay, which was \$50,000. Indeed, the Principal of a major real estate agent confirmed to the *Hidden World Research Group* that the average price of a new, 3 bedroom 1 bathroom house, was around \$42,000 at the time. The average wage in 1982 was about \$13,520 per year [Source: *Parliamentary Research Service, RESEARCH NOTE. Number 53, 25 June 1996, ISSN 1323-5664*].

The alleged job as a courier, which didn't even involve crossing state, let alone national, borders, would therefore have netted Trembath a couple of houses; many times the average annual salary, tax free. The amount of marijuana carried to justify such a sum would have had to have been absolutely astronomical.

Rosleigh Rose also put this into the perspective of the family's situation: "*We were struggling in a Housing Commission home and Michael wasn't much better off*".

Trembath's credibility as a source was even dismissed by his sister, Lyn Lack. She referred to the claims as "*bullshit*".

"It's all lies," Ms Lack said. "\$80,000 in the late 70s is like \$500,000 today. Imagine how much more marijuana that would be worth in the 70s."

"That was like two houses back in the 70s. Michael never had that sort of money. It's just not credible."

Ms Lack said she believed Mr Trembath was only making his statements now because Mr Corby was dead and he wouldn't have to defend his claims. "It has to be for his 10 minutes of fame," she said.

Ms Lack also said Mr Trembath hardly knew the Corby family, despite being Mr Corby's cousin, and Schapelle probably didn't even know he existed.

<http://news.smh.com.au/national/doubt-over-corby-dads-alleged-drug-ties-20080705-31zp.html>

The story was wholly implausible, impractical, unsubstantiated, and lacking even a shred of supporting evidence, all of which *Lateline* must surely have been well aware.

The Lateline Fabrications

Nonetheless, despite the clear reality of the situation, Trembath was flagrantly used to create the impression of a family orchestrating massive scale international criminality.

KIM MOORE

Stewart's other source was equally transparent. Kim Moore, real name Heather Kimbaley Moore, was a former heroin addict and a self confessed thief:

Q. What hospitals have you been treated in in relation to drug addiction? A. Wilston Park.	Q. From whom did you steal? A. Shops.
Q. Would you say that loudly? A. Wilston Park	Q. You don't suggest, do you, that it was - that mere shoplifting was enough to maintain your heroin habit? A. Yes.
Q. Wilston, is it? A. Yes.	Q. What did you steal from shops? A. Clothes, cigarettes - so we could sell them.
Q. So, a psychiatric institution? A. Yes.	Q. "So we could sell them"? A. Yes.

NSW Supreme Court: Transcript Extracts (Kim Moore)

Her unreliability as a witness was clear enough. Journalist and author, Tony Wilson, summed this up in his book, *Schapelle - The facts, the evidence, the truth*, as follows: *"She had been previously discredited in a Queensland court and was so garbled in the Supreme Court defamation case against Channel 7 that not one media outlet reported on it"*.

Q. You said you weren't living in a house in 2005. Where were you living? A. I was living in my car.	Q. Will you read out the first sentence? A. "I have been to Tony Lewis' a couple of times since 2002."
Q. Were you living in your car in 2006? A. No.	.12/05/08 644 MOORE XXN
Q. Were you living in your car in 2007? A. No.	
Q. When you went on Today Tonight, you made a claim about where you were living, didn't you? OBJECTION. FORM	MS.CAT D8
HUGHES: There is an assumption underlying that and the occasion hasn't been specified. QUESTION WITHDRAWN	Q. "I have been to Tony Lewis' a couple of times since 2002"? A. Yes.
LITTLEMORE	Q. And you just told the jury it wasn't a couple of times, it was six or seven, didn't you? A. Yes.
Q. These are the words you used on Today Tonight, Ms Moore, on 10 December last year: "I've been living in my car since 2004 until now"? A. Yes.	(Statement removed from the witness and returned to Mr Littlemore.)
Q. That's what you said, isn't it? A. Yes.	Q. Which is the truth, a couple of times or six or seven times? A. Six to seven times.
Q. It is not true, is it? A. It is.	

Q. You put something in that statement that you agreed was false, not true, didn't you, about the frequency of your visiting Mr Lewis' property? A. Couple of times.

NSW Supreme Court: Transcript Extracts (Kim Moore)

John Stewart must surely have been aware of the nature of Moore's testimony, particularly with respect to the outcome of the high profile case.

The Lateline Fabrications

Further, as indicated above, with specific reference to her allegations relating to Michael Corby, Moore had earlier testified against Tony Lewis, with respect to these, in a Queensland court.

Q. You gave evidence in the prosecution case, didn't you?
A. Yes.

NSW Supreme Court: Transcript Extracts (Kim Moore)

She clearly had a problem with Tony Lewis, who was one of Michael Corby's neighbours, having accused him of drug dealing. These allegations ended in tatters. Her testimony was dismissed and Mr Lewis was acquitted of supplying. This is directly referenced as follows:

30	Q. Have you ever read a newspaper article from the Daily Mercury dated 26 May 2006 referring to Mr Lewis and Beth Lavender being acquitted on certain charges? A. No.		Q. Have you ever seen or were you present when the judge in that matter delivered his judgment? A. No.
	Q. Have you ever in your life read a newspaper called The Daily Mercury? A. Nope, I've never seen it.	15	
35	Q. It would appear to be a Rockhampton newspaper. Have you ever read any Rockhampton newspaper? A. Nope.		Q. Has anybody told you anything about the judgment in that case so far as it affected you?
	Q. You gave evidence at the trial in Rockhampton, didn't you? A. Yes.		OBJECTION. ALLOWED
40	Q. Of Ms Lavender and Mr Lewis? A. Yes.	20	A. No.
45	Q. And one of the outcomes of that trial was that they were acquitted of charges of supplying drugs, wasn't it?		Q. Are you aware by any means of whether you were criticised?

NSW Supreme Court: Transcript Extracts (Kim Moore)

It is difficult to imagine how Stewart could have missed this, or if he did, that as an experienced journalist he didn't at least perform some cursory research into what was, effectively, his star witness.

This is particularly central, as the legal case referred to here, decimates the whole basis of his *story*: no supply from Tony Lewis ruins the smear story against Michael Corby.

Despite this, Moore's already dismissed and dismantled allegations were openly broadcast: "*he is involved with the making that Tony does, with his drugs and the running*". References to the Moore/Lewis court case, which disproved this, were of course completely omitted.

The *Lateline* broadcast went even further.

They sought to disguise this outcome, by referring to Lewis as, "*Convicted Marijuana Grower*", with its more sinister undertones of supply, rather than using a less serious sounding word, such as *possession* or *user*.

The Lateline Fabrications

TONY LEWIS

Tony Lewis himself was, of course, very clear: "*Mick knew nothing. No, I never ever told Mick. He would have got right into me and say, 'No way in the world, boy, you'll end up in the slammer', or something. Mick would have just done that, yes*".

To distract from this somewhat inconvenient statement, *Lateline* exploited Mr Corby's illness and in particular his deafness, by immediately presenting a clip in which he asks "*Tony who?*" to create the requisite impression.

POLICE STATEMENT

Moore's formal statement to the police was also somewhat different to what *Lateline* implied. She didn't mention Michael Corby at all. She didn't mention any Michael. She didn't mention any member of the Corby family.

Note also that *Freedom of Information* requests from various parties have not uncovered any documentation which does mention him.

AWARENESS

Lateline must have been well aware of Moore's erratic behaviour in general; not only her background and references to living in a car, but her non-appearance in court and the inability of the police to locate her on a number of occasions.

They must surely have been well aware of the nature of her testimony in the NSW Supreme Court, and of her previous testimony against Mr Lewis.

They must have been aware of the Queensland court outcome, at which Mr Lewis was cleared of supply.

They would also have been aware that these factors decimated any case they had for a story at all.

It appears, however, that all that mattered to *Lateline* were the comments they could extract in support of their predetermined script.

The lacking credibility of Moore, her unreliability, the contradictory police evidence, the fact that her allegations had already been dismissed by two courts of law, and the conflicting accounts of others, were simply ignored.

2.4 THE POLICE

The whole story was completely dismissed by Queensland Police:

"Queensland Police has no evidence to link Michael Corby with involvement in the drug trade" a police spokesperson said. *"It's dead, over. It's an old story and I don't know why it's getting more attention."* [<http://news.smh.com.au/national/doubt-over-corby-dads-alleged-drug-ties-20080705-31zp.html>]

However, *Lateline* made **no** reference to the police position at all in their *story*. No comment from them. No explanation that they had investigated and cleared Mr Corby of any involvement with drug dealing. No reference to the fact that they had clearly had enough of people throwing mud, under the cover of journalism.

Here is how *JournOz* described Stewart's approach:

A MEMO TO MR STEWART

Allow me to help you with your *story* Mr Stewart. This is how an investigative journalist would handle it. He would actually ask the police, officially. Here is what the police had to say, for example, when they were asked if you had contacted them: *"I can advise that QPS has not spoken with any journalist from 7:30 Report"*.

Here is what they have had to say on some similar fiction to your own: *"We have found no links, nothing at all..."*. For the record, they even used the word *"laughable"* in that particular interview.

But more still: they are clearly sick of people creating smoke to give the public the impression of fire. They have even issued a certificate to make it plain:



That took me five minutes to find. Why didn't you find it, Mr Stewart? Or did you?

2.5 THE DELIVERY

Having established that the story was manufactured from no credible basis, it is worth examining the way in which *Lateline* constructed it. The following examples illustrate just some of the techniques used:

Script Tailoring:

Lateline were forced to make a number of changes to the internet transcript of the story some weeks after the broadcast. The following statement was added (blue text):

KIM MOORE: Old Michael Corby is very close to Tony Lewis and he is involved with the making that Tony does, with his drugs and the running.

JOHN STEWART:

Queensland Police say they have no evidence to link anyone else to the drugs found on Tony Lewis's property.

Queensland Police were actually stating that no-one *other than Tony Lewis* was linked. However, by placing this directly after Moore's allegation, this could easily be misinterpreted as no-one *other than Tony Lewis and Michael Corby*.

False Assertion & Omission:

The commentary is consistently full of innuendo and misrepresentation. Look at the final sentence, for example:

Throughout his long drug career, Michael Corby senior avoided going to jail. However, his now infamous daughter was not so lucky and is due for release in another 16 years.

Here, Stewart openly and directly states that Michael Corby Senior was a criminal and lucky not to be convicted/jailed (*dead men cannot sue*), and that Schapelle Corby is guilty; in a single blow.

Another example is the publication of this comment:

"Honestly, I don't think Schapelle would have known any different, you know, because she would have been around drugs all her life"

This not only re-enforces the idea of guilt, but implies exactly the same about Schapelle's sister, Mercedes, despite such smears having already been dismissed by the Supreme Court in a defamation case against Channel 7.

The outcome of that case would have been well known to Stewart.

Yet *Lateline* still continued to create material which clearly contradicted the unambiguous legal outcome.

The Lateline Fabrications

Innuendo:

The use of Mr Corby's flight record is yet another example of gross manufacture.

The ABC has obtained the flight records for Michael Corby senior. He travelled to Bali on September 4, 2004, just four weeks before Schapelle Corby was arrested at Denpasar airport. Before he died, Michael Corby senior denied having anything to do with the drugs found in his daughter's boogie board bag.

Mr Corby's passport clearly shows the dates on which he visited his daughter Mercedes, whose husband is Balinese. There is nothing out of the ordinary about it whatsoever, and indeed, its pattern maps that of any regular tourist. However, Stewart presents the visit on the 4th September as though there was something sinister about it.

The truth?

Mr Corby was dying, having been diagnosed with cancer. He made the effort to undertake that particular trip, because he saw it as possibly the last time he would see his eldest daughter and grandchildren. Why wouldn't he go to see her?

Why didn't Stewart ask a family member why he went, and then report it?

Production:

All this was filled out with crude propagandistic production techniques, deployed to lead the viewer down the intended path. For example, dark suggestive background score was used when the sick Michael Corby was introduced.

[\[View a video extract on www.expendable.tv\]](http://www.expendable.tv)

2.6 THE DAMAGE

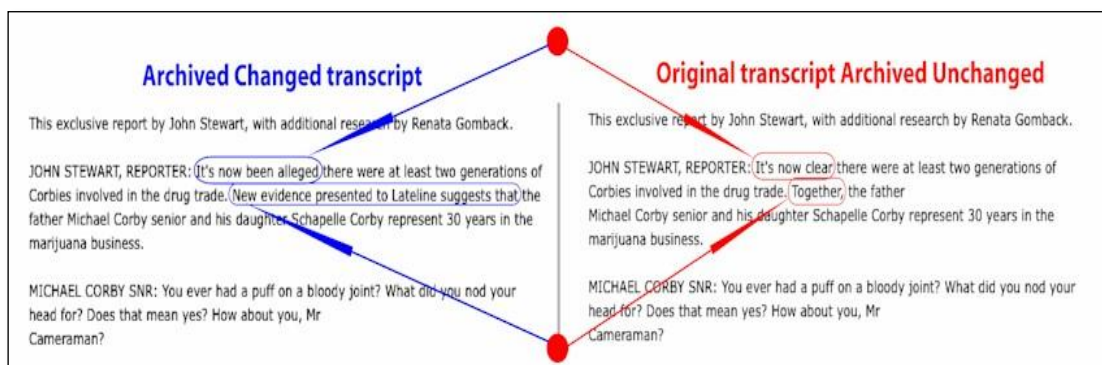
When confronted, the ABC sought to brush this under the carpet as swiftly as possible. Ignoring the many other serious aspects of the broadcast, and the wider activities of Stewart, they issued an apology for representing the fabricated allegations as fact:



[View the video on www.expendable.tv](http://www.expendable.tv)

"Last month Lateline aired a story containing new evidence suggesting that Schapelle Corby's father, the late Michael Corby senior, was involved in the drug trade. That story should have made it clear that these were allegations, not facts, and for that we apologise".

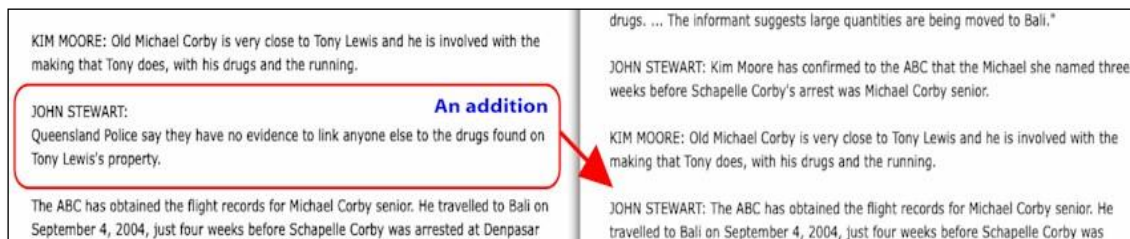
The updates to the transcript on their websites simply changed Stewart's flagrant misreporting into damaging allegations, based upon the fabrications identified earlier. For example:



The Lateline Fabrications



A tiny reference to the police was also inserted. But as referenced earlier, this was added such that it created ambiguity, and could easily be interpreted as meaning that no-one *other than* Tony Lewis and Michael Corby were involved, rather than just Tony Lewis.



Not only did these updates ignore the many other disturbing aspects of the Lateline report, but also the fact that the story was repeatedly reported through other ABC channels and broadcasts, sometimes by John Stewart himself. He had been reporting elements of this *Lateline* story for many months prior, and continued reporting them after the 4th July broadcast.

And worse still, like many *Lateline* reports, it was picked up, syndicated and repeated throughout the Australian media. For example, Fairfax and News Ltd publications referred to it, and used the content regularly. News Ltd:



Fairfax:



Further, the *Lateline* contents were widely reported as fact, again influencing public opinion, seriously undermining support for Schapelle Corby, and damaging the reputation of the Corby family.

This would have come as no surprise to Stewart or the ABC, as *Lateline* is frequently the source for other media reporting, and its broadcasts are routinely assumed to be accurate and honest.

The whole series of ABC reports and broadcasts were pivotal, both in delivering and driving the adverse publicity against the Corby family, and in negatively influencing the public's opinion of the Schapelle Corby case itself.

3. EAMONN DUFF: THE MCCAULEY FABRICATIONS

3.1 THE MCCAULEY PHOTOGRAPHS

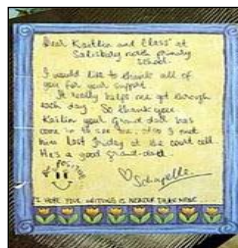
Malcolm McCauley is an established criminal, having been convicted of a number of offences over a prolonged period.

His involvement in the case began when he spotted Rosleigh Rose, Schapelle Corby's mother, whilst he was on holiday in Bali during the trial. Along with another tourist, David McHugh, he struck up a conversation, bought her a drink, and asked if he could visit Schapelle, like so many other tourists had done during the remand period.

Rosleigh agreed, as visits tended to keep Schapelle's spirits up. She took McCauley and McHugh to Kerobokan Prison, where they posed for photographs.



Schapelle Corby was as generous to McCauley as she was to all visitors, and wrote a message to his granddaughter: *"Dear Kaitlin and Class at Salisbury North Primary School. I would like to thank all of you for your support. It really helps me get through each day. So thank you. Kaitlin your Grand dad has come in to see me, also I met him last Friday at the court cell. He's a good Grand-dad. Be Positive (Smiley face) - (heart shape) Schapelle. I hope your writing is neater than mine..."*. On the back of a photo of herself Schapelle wrote: *"Kaitlin, When your old enough to travel the world; Remember the locks on your bags... (heart shape) Schapelle xx"*



McCauley left Bali and that was the end of his involvement.

Subsequently, however, the police raided his house in South Australia in connection with his drug dealing, and found the photographs from his visit to Kerobokan.

The McCauley Fabrications

At this point in time Schapelle's second appeal was in progress. Nonetheless, the police leaked the existence of the photographs to the media, enabling them to connect Schapelle with a convicted drug dealer. Worse still, South Australia Police stated that the photographs "*did not appear to be taken in a prison setting*".

Newspaper articles screamed to the public, and to the Indonesians, that the photographs showed that Schapelle Corby had met drug dealer McCauley before her trip to Bali:

heraldsun
News.com.au, via The Herald Sun: 10 December 2005
By Keith Moor



Corby ... appealing her conviction for drug possession.

POLICE have seized photographs of Schapelle Corby with a man who has just been charged with marijuana smuggling.

The alleged drug dealer is pictured alone with Corby in some photographs and with Corby and another couple in others. They were found during a recent police search of the alleged dealer's home in South Australia.

He was the target of a joint SA-Queensland police operation into a hydroponic marijuana smuggling ring allegedly operating between the two states.

The photographs were taken before Corby was charged in October last year with importing 4.1kg of marijuana into Bali in her bodyboard bag.

Eamonn Duff wasn't slow to report on this false story either:

smh.com.au
The Sydney Morning Herald

News Entertainment Business Sport Travel Tech

→ Home » World » Article

Snapped with alleged dealer

By Eamon Duff and Catharine Munro
December 11, 2005

THE Federal Government confirmed yesterday that police had seized photographs of Schapelle Corby posing with a man who was recently arrested and charged with marijuana smuggling.

The pictures were uncovered by chance during a raid on an alleged drug dealer's home in South Australia.

The man is believed to have been the subject of an ongoing joint South Australia-Queensland police operation into hydroponic drug smuggling between the two states. In some of the photographs, the alleged dealer is reportedly pictured alone with Corby. In others, he is standing alongside Corby and another couple.

The McCauley Fabrications

However, McCauley himself was very clear. He categorically confirmed the facts, that he only met Schapelle through a chance visit, and that the photographs were taken at the prison: *"A mate and I were in Bali and we thought we'd go have a look see in court. She's high profile and she's an Aussie. That's why we were interested in it. Her sister and mother came up to us after and thanked us for being there, like they were doing with a lot of groups. We asked if we could sneak some photos in (while we were there) so we did"*. The following video also demonstrates this:

[[view the video at www.expendable.tv](http://www.expendable.tv)]

Schapelle Corby's mother, Rosleigh was devastated. She knew the truth of the situation, and demanded that South Australia Police release the photographs to prove that this was a malicious fabrication. She blamed herself for introducing McCauley to her daughter.

Alarming, South Australia Police refused to release them, allowing the misinformation to settle in the public psyche. Comments from the AFP at this time were also extremely unhelpful.

THE TRUTH EMERGES

What the AFP and South Australia Police *didn't* know was that a second copy of the photographs existed. Two copies had been developed, with fellow tourist David McHugh, who had visited Schapelle Corby with McCauley, having the other copy.

When David McHugh realized what was happening, he contacted Rosleigh and gave her his set of photographs.

However, by this time, the damage had already been done. The association of Schapelle with drugs had been made, even though it was false. Schapelle's prison sentence was re-instated to 20 years.

In addition, only a small part of the damage was ever recovered in terms of public opinion.

McCauley was subsequently sentenced to 3 years for another drug offence, of which he served 15 months. This is considered to be a relatively light outcome, for his circumstances.

NOTE: We can find nothing to suggest that Eamonn Duff made any effort to clarify his report. We can find no retraction, no correction, and certainly nothing to indicate that any steps at all were taken to undo the damage his syndicated report caused to Schapelle Corby or her family.

3.2 THE SOURCE

During his 15 months in prison for his latest offence, McCauley had plenty of time to consider how he could make the most of his situation, from a financial perspective.

He would have learned quickly about the nature of some in the media, from his experiences with the Kerobokan photographs, and the misinformation generated by the police.

He would also have known which journalists ruthlessly ran the false story, and which would be likely to run with any false allegations he had up his sleeve.



The nature of McCauley was also confirmed through David McHugh. Mr McHugh stated directly, and in writing, that he introduced McCauley to Schapelle Corby and her family as a tourist in the Bali court.

The McCauley Fabrications

13/07/06. 3 DAVID McHUGH.
9 FALCON CRT.
HALLETT GOW.
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

I AM WRITING IN CONCERN WITH SCHAPPELLE CORBY,
SIX MONTHS AGO A MAN IN ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA
WAS ARRESTED ABOUT DRUGS. WHILE SEARCHING
HIS HOUSE POLICE FOUND PHOTOS OF MYSELF
SCHAPPELLE CORBY HER MOTHER AND MALCOLM.
THE MAN CONCERNED WITH POLICE.
THE PHOTOS WERE TAKEN IN BALI WITH MY
CAMERA. POLICE STRAIGHT AWAY LINKED HIM
WITH SCHAPPELLE ONLY BECAUSE OF THE PHOTOS
NOT INVESTIGATING THE PHOTOS FIRST.
THE CHARGES OF DRUGS WHICH MALCOLM WAS
CHARGED WITH HAVE NOW BEEN DISCHARGED
IN ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

I MET MALCOLM IN OCTOBER 2004
ON THE PLANE COMING FROM AUSTRALIA TO
BALI. I DID NOT KNOW HIM BEFORE THAT
TRIP AND HE DID NOT KNOW SCHAPPELLE CORBY.
I GOT TO KNOW THE FAMILY THROUGH
GOING TO THE COURT HEARINGS.
MALCOLM ONE TIME CAME TOO THE COURT
HEARINGS WITH ME WHICH I INTRODUCED
MALCOLM TOO THE FAMILY.
THAT'S THE ONLY CONTACT MALCOLM HAD
WITH THE ~~SEA~~ CORBY FAMILY THROUGH MYSELF

DAVID McHUGH.

This, of course, wholly aligned with McCauley's own words at the time, and that of every other party.

3.3 EAMONN DUFF'S *EXCLUSIVE*

Eamonn Duff, however, was hard at work. He set the scene for his next major contribution by proudly presenting the results of previous media efforts: "*Schapelle Corby did it - so say most of us*".



His '*exclusive*', which followed this, was even more damaging. It directly contradicted every other account, including McCauley's previous words, and presented no sustainable evidence whatsoever.

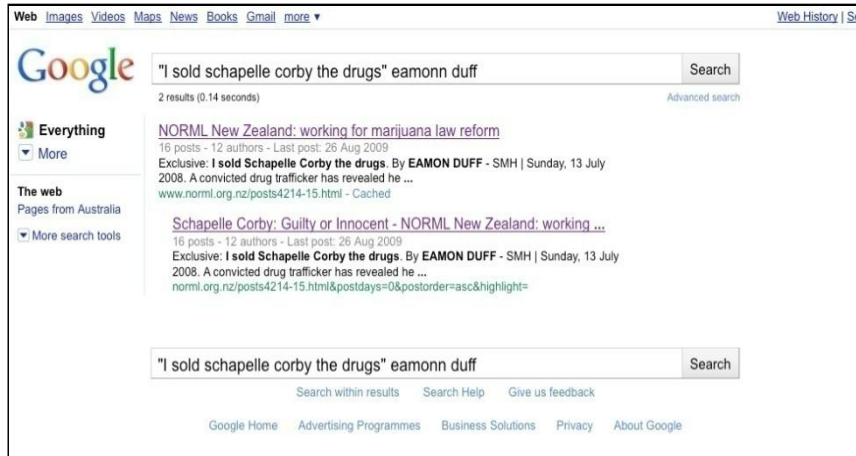


Note that the headline "*She knew her father was a drug dealer*" was not the original.

The original was "*I sold Schapelle Corby the drugs*" which took McCauley's implausible false story a step further, by stating that Schapelle Corby herself had bought the marijuana, something that even McCauley hadn't ventured to claim.

Exclusive: I sold Schapelle Corby the drugs

The hunger to spin a sensation, at the expense of truth, could hardly be more starkly illustrated. Fairfax subsequently withdrew and changed the headline, but not before it had been copied across the internet.



To this day, remnants of the original headline remain in the URL of the *story*:



The headline in *The Age* was perhaps even more disturbing. This tarnished the entire Corby family:



At the very least, this provided evidence of how the newspaper itself viewed the message from Duff's handiwork. It significantly damaged the reputation of the Corby family, and reduced public sympathy, for the incarcerated, and by now mentally ill, Schapelle Corby.

This internet page was still open to the public in January 2011:

http://newsstore.fairfax.com.au/apps/viewDocument.ac?page=1&sy=nstore&kw=schapelle+Corby&pb=all_ffx&dt=selectRange&dr=entire&sso=relevance&sf=text&sf=headline&rc=150&rm=200&sp=nrm&clsPage=1&docID=SAG080713127M56GUEN0

The McCauley Fabrications

The *story* itself was full of all the lurid comments one might expect, with even a reference to the wholly unsustainable Alan Trembath allegation, which has been shown to be absolutely impracticable (see Section 2.3).

It is hardly surprising that Duff didn't elaborate further on this.

Duff was apparently falling over himself with carefully selected sub-plots. For example: "*Schapelle's Bali-based sister, Mercedes, has publicly admitted to making a frantic dash to Denpasar Airport with cash in hand as the nightmare was unfolding, but by the time she arrived, it was too late*".

Anyone who has actually seen that clip of Mercedes, from the '*Ganja Queen*' film, will immediately recognize how Duff has stretched this. She took the equivalent of \$140 when she was called to the airport, imagining there was a micro-dot amount somewhere in some mix-up scenario.

But in Eamonn Duff's world she was apparently going to pay a \$140 bribe in respect of \$50,000 worth of drugs. And naturally, there was no mention of the general Balinese gratuity culture.

However much McCauley was paid, he had delivered handsomely, and had created the bullets for Duff to fire, taking full advantage of the legal freedom with respect to defamation, which was provided by Michael Corby's tragic death.

3.4 THE POLICE INTERVENE

A semblance of sanity was again restored by the police, who were clear about the nature of Duff's reporting, describing the McCauley claims as "*laughable*". They explained that they had known about McCauley's claims for 12 months, had investigated them, and had found them to be false.

They made a number of very direct formal statements to get the message across. For example: "*An investigation made by Queensland Police into statements made against Mick Corby found these statements to be unjustified*". And, "*Queensland Police has no evidence to link Mick Corby with involvement in the drug trade*".

This could hardly be clearer. Informally, the police were equally damning of this disturbing fabrication and opportunism:

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News

McCauley's Corby claim 'laughable'

KATE KYRIACOU
NIGEL HUNT

DETECTIVES have laughed off claims by convicted drug trafficker Malcolm McCauley that he supplied the drugs found in Schapelle Corby's boogie board bag.

And it has also emerged McCauley submitted paperwork to his local RSL Club stating he was a member of a World War II army battalion which disbanded one year after he was born.

The northern suburbs drug runner last week claimed he had sold the drugs discovered in Corby's bag to her father, Mick.

McCauley first hit the spotlight in 2005 when police discovered photographs of him visiting Corby in Bali's Kerobokan Prison.

At the time he said he had no connection with the Corby family and had visited Corby out of curiosity while holidaying in Bali.


Police involved in an operation that resulted in McCauley's arrest on drugs charges in Adelaide in 2006 have dismissed his claim he sold cannabis to Mick Corby.

When Adelaide detectives discovered the photographs of McCauley with Schapelle Corby, he was questioned about the images.

"He claimed he had no knowledge of the Corby situation at all," one officer, who declined to be identified, said.

"What he is saying now is quite laughable."

The officer said the photographs sparked an extensive



DRUGS: McCauley

investigation to determine if there were any links between McCauley's smuggling syndicate and the Corby family.

"We have found no links, nothing at all, no evidence linking the two situations," the officer said.

"If he had any further information, it would have been advantageous for him to have told us at the time."

"There is every likelihood he could have used that as a bargaining chip and that would have been taken into account when he was sentenced. That did not take place and he did not even hint at any connection with the Corby clan."

This week, a long-term member of the Salisbury RSL, where McCauley used to be a member, told the *Sunday Mail* he spoke to the drug trafficker after he met Corby.

"I remember him going over to Bali for a holiday and when he came back he had a bunch of photos that he was showing everyone," the member said.

"He told us he'd met the

mother (of Schapelle Corby) the night before and went to see Schapelle the next day.

"As far as we all knew, that was the first time he'd met anyone in the Corby family.

"We just reckon it (the latest claim) is all bulls..."

The *Sunday Mail* understands McCauley's application form to become a member of the Salisbury RSL club stated he had been part of Australia's 2/27th battalion.

The Australian War Memorial said the battalion operated between 1940 and 1946 in New Guinea and the Middle East. It was disbanded on March 18, 1946.

McCauley was born in 1945, according to his RSL application form.

RSL state executive director Guy Harley said: "His paperwork states that he was a service member - or he certainly claimed to be a serviceman."

"I can confirm that he was a member but no longer is."

McCauley, who was released from a Queensland jail in May, this week insisted he was part of the battalion.

"Was I a war veteran? Never," he said.

"I was a signal sergeant with the 2/27th battalion."

"Did I go overseas? No."

A spokeswoman from War Memorial Australia said no Malcolm McCauley was listed as serving with the 2/27th battalion.

McCauley said he had made the claims about selling drugs to Mick Corby because "he wanted the truth out there" and vehemently denied he had been paid to speak or have his photograph taken.

PUB: SUNDAY MAIL

20/7/08 24 STATE

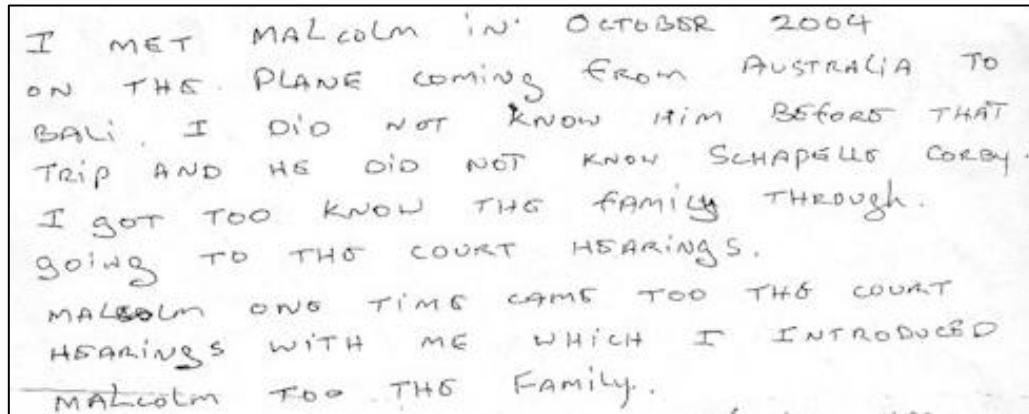
COL: K

Expendable.TV

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The McCauley Fabrications

David McHugh again sought to set the record straight, stating clearly that McCauley did not know Schapelle Corby, and that his only contact with the Corby family was through himself, as he had actually introduced him to the family in Bali. From Mr McHugh's letter:



I MET MALCOLM IN OCTOBER 2004
ON THE PLANE COMING FROM AUSTRALIA TO
BALI. I DID NOT KNOW HIM BEFORE THAT
TRIP AND HE DID NOT KNOW SCHAPELLE CORBY.
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HEARINGS WITH ME WHICH I INTRODUCED
MALCOLM TOO THE FAMILY.

These and other inconvenient interventions, which destroyed his story, were simply overlooked or omitted by Duff. He continued to push the fabricated and wholly discredited allegations relentlessly, even though they had been so clearly dismissed.

For example, in December 2008, a pop-song was released in support of Schapelle Corby in New York. Duff simply used this as an opportunity to repeat his debunked story. This was discussed at the time on the JournOz blog as follows:

Just a few weeks ago I came across the piece below in *XenoxNews* which was originally titled "*The Anatomy of A Smear*". It refers to an SMH report of 30th Nov 2008, and parodies its construction:

A Lament for Journalism - aka The Art of Opinion Management

.
[See JournOz.Com for full text]
.

And Junior-Scribe's finished article?

New York songbird's lament for Schapelle (Source: The Sun-Herald)
(<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/new-york-songbirds-lament-for-schapelle/2008/11/29/1227491892588.html>)

AN AMERICAN musician has gained notoriety after penning a political song about convicted drug smuggler Schapelle Corby. New York-based singer-songwriter Tara Hack has attracted rave reviews and 1000 hits on YouTube after releasing the track earlier this month.

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The McCauley Fabrications

When a longer two-part version was screened in Australia, it reignited debate about Corby's guilt or innocence, largely due to convicted drug smuggler Malcolm McCauley, who said he knew the truth. McCauley was arrested in November 2005 when a police raid on his Adelaide home uncovered evidence of trafficking and pictures of him visiting Corby in jail. He served 15 months for his part in transporting 100 kilograms of cannabis to Queensland.

In an exclusive interview with The Sun-Herald, McCauley said Corby's late father Mick had been the Queensland-based recipient of his drugs since 2000. He spoke of a "well-oiled machine", involving Mick Corby and Bali airport security personnel.

Hear the song and watch the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-EENMoK9tA>.

The SMH story is attributed to SMH employee Eamonn Duff, who I presume is "Junior Scribe" in the Xenox version. Ridicule though is perhaps the least he deserves.

Here, he essentially produced yet another re-run of a serious smear, which had already been debunked on a number of occasions.

Presenting claims by a convicted criminal as though they had credibility, whilst ignoring the referenced certificate issued by Queensland Police, and the comments by operational detectives that the claims were "laughable", appears to expose the standards to which Mr Duff works.

This was a story about a song, a talented artist on the other side of the world creating something extraordinary to support a suffering Australian. But he used it to re-enforce a message that had already been wholly discredited, and perversely to self-congratulate SMH for the offending "*exclusive interview*"!



YOUR HOMEWORK FOR TODAY

So, fellow journalists, shall we perform an elementary 'subject interview' as a class exercise, and construct some sensible questions for Mr Duff on his eloquent masterpiece? How about these just for starters:

Was that much trumpeted "exclusive interview" with convicted criminal McCauley paid for, Mr Duff?

If so, how much was he paid?

Did you not check his credibility with the police Mr Duff?

Why no quote from the police at all in your "exclusive" story Mr Duff?

Wouldn't a quote from the police strengthen your story? Or is it that you believed that their comments would blow your story away as a blatant smear?

Please allow a fellow journalist to assist:

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News

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20/08 24 STATE

COL: K

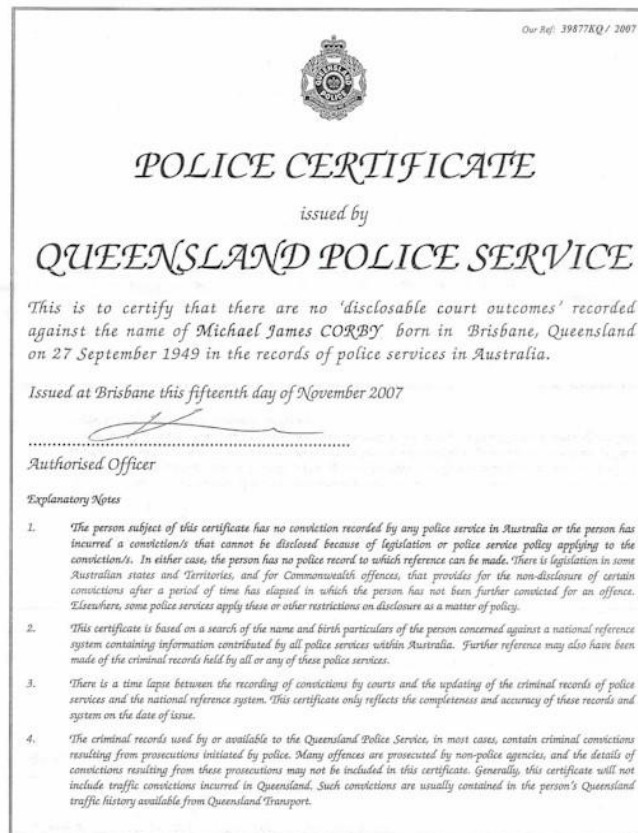
Do you see what he did there? He simply asked the police. That's what journalists do: they investigate the truth.

Why didn't you contact the lead subject of this story, Tara Hack, for a comment (and you didn't, because I checked)? Was that because you were too focused upon the objective of re-delivering a smear?

Did you obtain the Michael Corby police certificate Mr Duff?

If not why not? And if so, why didn't you mention it?

Allow me to help you again. Here it is:



Isn't the truth that the "exclusive" was wholly manufactured via the first drug runner who came along making such damaging claims, and that you avoided seeking credible substantiation like the plague, because you knew what the outcome would be?

Further, that you now re-run this smear as legitimate, even though you are well aware that it is bogus?

Following publication of this blog entry, Fairfax appears to have re-assigned reporting of the Schapelle Corby case to another journalist.

However, the damage to Schapelle Corby, which was considerable, had been done.

4. THE IMPACT & DAMAGE

The impact of these manufactured stories cannot be overstated. They became the base for a host of variations and countless references. Both were syndicated and copied repeatedly across the Australian media, and commonly reported as fact.

THE TIMING

It is also, perhaps, worth analysing the timing of these stories.

The two stories appeared within days of each other, and just a matter of weeks earlier Mercedes Corby had won a major defamation case against Channel 7, who had broadcasted lies and false allegations of a similar nature.

The beneficial impact of this court outcome on public perception of the Corby family, and the guilt or innocence of Schapelle Corby, as well as its effect in terms of reversing the influence of Stewart's and Duff's previous *work*, were cut short by their respective new initiatives.

No doubt Stewart and Duff will claim coincidence, but it is worth emphasizing that both must have been well aware of the outcome, and its implications regarding what they were about to produce.

DAMAGE

Regardless, the effects of the two manufactured stories were predictable.

Public support for Schapelle Corby fell, as people began to presume guilt, and to forget the reality of the Bali trial abuses.

The name of the whole Corby family was dragged through the mud and their reputation tarnished.

The public had been sold a series of fabrications. Their opinion had effectively been managed against Schapelle Corby and her family, by what amounted to baseless smears.