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# Amanda Todd suicide: RCMP repeatedly told of blackmailer's attempts

## Family questions why more not done by police while B.C. teen was alive

CBC News Posted: Nov 15, 2013 5:00 AM ET | Last Updated: Nov 15, 2013 7:54 AM ET



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RCMP in British Columbia were alerted at least five times over the course of nearly two years about the ongoing sexual extortion of Amanda Todd before the teen committed suicide, CBC's *the fifth estate* has learned.

Amanda, 15, committed suicide in her mother's Port Coquitlam home on Oct. 10, 2012.

Her death garnered intense public attention because of a YouTube video she posted weeks before her death detailing the relentless bullying she endured after a topless picture of her was shared via social media.

The B.C. teen had been the target of a sexual extortionist for nearly two years after she flashed a crowd by webcam while on a live streaming chat site.

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Someone captured a freeze frame of the teen topless and then used that photo to repeatedly try to blackmail her for more webcam "shows."

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After Amanda's death, the internet exploded with rumours about who drove her to commit suicide. The case became a priority for the RCMP. Twenty officers were assigned to the case.

RCMP say the investigation is ongoing and would not comment on their progress or if the focus of their investigation is on those who bullied Amanda, or finding those responsible for the blackmail.

## 'Nobody dug deep'

But Amanda's family is questioning whether more could have been done by authorities while the teen was still alive.

"Nobody dug deep enough to find the answers for Amanda," the teen's mother, Carol

Todd, told *the fifth estate's* Mark Kelley. "Maybe for the reasons that no one anticipated her outcome either. So you think of it as just another report, just another child."

Carol Todd contacted the Mounties each time Amanda received a new blackmail threat, *the fifth estate* found.

Watch *the fifth estate* Friday at 9 p.m. (9:30 in N.L.) for an exclusive look into the online world of Amanda Todd.

CBC-TV's investigative show also obtained exclusive access to the B.C. girl's two computers containing extensive chat logs that reveal how she dealt with the fallout from the ongoing extortion efforts.

Amanda's troubles began in late 2010 when she was on her webcam with more than 150 viewers watching her on the now-defunct BlogTV livestream video site. When she lifted her shirt, someone captured a freeze frame and posted the photo to a porn site.

Then someone sent a link to that picture to her Facebook friends, including her mother. A friend told her parents and they called police.

RCMP tracked down Amanda at her father's house, knocking on the door at 4 a.m. to check whether the Grade 7 student was safe. She played it off as goofing around and said it wasn't a huge deal.

## Tormented at school

On Christmas Eve, Amanda's mother received an anonymous Facebook message warning that her daughter was being extorted by men who troll sites looking for such pictures and then blackmail the girls for more photos or online performances. Carol Todd quickly shared the message with the police.

Meanwhile, the picture made the rounds at school via social media. Schoolmates tormented her by calling her a "camwhore" and "porn star." It drove her to change schools, hoping for a fresh start, her father Norm Todd says.

In the spring of 2011, the blackmailer tracked down Amanda and again used threats to try to elicit more webcam shows. Carol Todd alerted the RCMP again.

Then in the fall of 2011, police were notified for the third time. Staff at Amanda's new school alerted them after several teachers were sent her topless picture by email.

Carol Todd said she felt like police weren't taking her concerns seriously, despite the case moving beyond the realm of cyberbullying into sexual extortion – a new crime exploding on the internet.

In October of 2011, the blackmailer appeared for the fourth time, this time sending a Facebook message, which was obtained by *the fifth estate*.

"U already forgot who I am? The guy who last year made you change school. Got your door kicked in by the cops," the message said. "Give me 3 shows and I will disappear forever. you know I won't stop until you give



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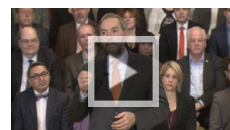
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me those 3 shows.”

“If u go to a new school, new bf, new friends, new whatever, I will be there again,” it continued. “I am crazy yes. so your answer?”

## Police strategy questioned

Carol Todd handed this clue to the RCMP in hopes they could catch whoever was responsible for tormenting her daughter.

In November, an RCMP constable emailed her about the case, suggesting they couldn't do much to help her.

“I would highly recommend that Amanda close all her Facebook and email accounts at this time,” the constable wrote to the then 14-year-old's mother. “If Amanda does not stay off the internet and/or take steps to protect herself online ... there is only so much we as the police can do.”

Carol Todd responded by suggesting the police might be able to bait the predator. Both parents, who are separated, were feeling helpless.

“When the police can't accomplish anything, what does that tell you?” said her father, Norm Todd. “It's very difficult because how can you comfort your daughter or anybody when you've got something you can't control yourself and they can see that you can't stop or control it?”



Port Coquitlam, B.C. teen Amanda Todd took her life in 2012 after years of being tormented online. (Courtesy the Todd family)

Though the RCMP in B.C. did not act on Carol Todd's suggestion, baiting a predator is strategy employed successfully by the Ontario Provincial Police's integrated child exploitation unit.

“We'll actually assume their accounts and we'll continue chatting with [the] individual to try and get ourselves in a position where we can identify them and then go get them,” said Det.-Sgt. Frank Goldschmidt, the unit's provincial strategy co-ordinator.

Asking people to cut their online ties isn't a strategy that tends to work, said Det.-Sgt. Goldschmidt.

“It doesn't take long for the offender to re-establish a connection through another means, whether it's another chat forum on the internet or simple email,” he said.

The RCMP in B.C. never took over Amanda's accounts to try to track down the blackmailer, even though in November of 2011 he returned again.

## 'Cry myself to sleep'

A fake Facebook account was created by someone posing as a new student at Amanda's school. The person connected with her Facebook friends then switched his profile picture to the infamous photo of her topless.

It was nearly a year since the picture of Amanda had first circulated and the stress was taking a toll.

“Ever since all this happened, I just cry myself to sleep because it hurts no matter what,” Amanda said in one Skype chat obtained by *the fifth estate*.

On Sept. 7, 2012, a month before her death, Amanda took to her webcam

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again, this time to try to tell her side of the story and to explain how she became a victim of bullying.

Some mistakenly believed the cue-card video was a message about her suicide plans.

"It was not," said Carol Todd. "It was a release. She wanted her story out there, especially to the people that were harassing her."

Watch the fifth estate *Friday at 9 p.m. (9:30 in N.L.)* for an **exclusive look into the online world of Amanda Todd.**

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• MWebb1 Guest

If he did it to Amanda, it is only a matter of time before he does it to another girl.

The RCMP did nothing with the East Side ladies going missing at Pickton's farm until years after the fact and with intense public pressure. Looks like they need an intense push again.

• 1 year ago

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• ArchAngelIWC Guest

@MWebb1

A. This is going to sound horrible but...As a person who lives within a block of Kiddie Corner..I'm not going to fault the RCMP for looking the other way...It allowed the Hell's Angels to clearly define the acceptable areas for criminal activity in the city of Vancouver (read: NOT Residential areas or near the Port :) lol)....also the downtown Eastside is policed by the VPD aka The Hell's Angels

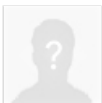
B. This is not a case of ignoring an evil for a greater good...this is a case of LAZY... [» more](#)

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• MarkinBC Guest

anyone remember recently there was a motion in parliament put forward to give police freer access to tracking online activity....anyone remember all the outcry about "big brother"? I bet those same people are now pointing fingers..

There are some many armchair quarterbacks, do any of you even have the remotest idea of how difficult if not even impossible it is to track someone online? .. if you think you can please volunteer your expertise.

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- Macloudjim Guest

@MarkinBC If I threatened Harper using my computer how much time before I'd be tracked down and prosecuted?

The extortionist repeatedly tracked her down so apparently it can already be done. We don't need more or 'better' laws, we need adequate and equal enforcement of the ones we have. We need a police service that services us into of the powers that be.

- 1 year ago
- 5 Likes
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- Don712 Guest

Every one of our police forces seem to be useless these days.. Maybe we should reduce their pay..

They are becoming the laughing stock..

- 1 year ago
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- MarkinBC Guest

@Don712

Yeah because reducing their pay would certainly produce better results.

- 1 year ago
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- shadowbright Guest

I am seeing so much, 'crap,' in these comments - absolute 'crap.' Yes, let's blame the RCMP, or Harper (yes, I personally would like to blame Harper, but in this case even he is not responsible), or the parents or Amanda herself. Amanda was a victim. Whatever teenage mistake she made on-line, someone specifically targeted her. How many similar incidents does the RCMP receive a day? We, the adults in this so-called cyber continuum, have given our children the ability to extend their confused... » [more](#)

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- MarkinBC Guest

@shadowbright

Because people dont like to take responsibility, it's far easier to blame the police.

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- Macloujdm Guest

@MarkinBC Especially when they do nothing in spite of multiple opportunities to help..

- 1 year ago
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- Siegfredo Bercasio Guest

Reposting : If harassment of female RCMP officers was prevalent as it is alleged in court documents already filed by many female officers on sick leave, then that answers the question why authorities did not do more in the case of this teenager. Macho culture and a false sense of entitlement are twin traps many with guns and badges fall into. The paramilitary provincial police is not immune to it. The case of BC's missing women and the woeful lack of coordinated efforts by the Vancouver police... [» more](#)

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- plainview Guest

@Siegfredo Bercasio - "If harassment of female RCMP officers was prevalent as it is alleged in court documents already filed by many female officers ..."

If??

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- Siegfredo Bercasio Guest

@plainview

Presumption of innocence is still required by law and respondents are given their day in court. On balance of probabilities it is hard to disbelieve the complaining RCMP officers. They are not the ones who are so eager to maintain the status quo.

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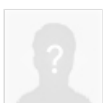


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- Siegfredo Bercasio Guest

If harassment of female RCMP was prevalent as it is alleged in court documents filed by many female officers on sick, then that answers the question why authorities did not do more in the case of this teenager. Macho culture and a false sense of entitlement are twin traps many with guns and badges fall into.

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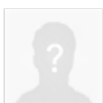


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- Proudman Guest

Did anyone ask the RCMP why they were refusing to do their job?  
Is this standard RCMP policy?  
They found 20 officers free to assign to the case after her death but couldn't find one before?  
How is it that 20 officers can't make any headway?  
Where does the Conservative government stand on this?  
I want answers. Do I need to wait until the next federal election to find out?

- 1 year ago
- 3 Likes
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- plainview Guest

@Proudman "How is it that 20 officers can't make any headway?"  
Internet crime needs to be investigated as soon as possible in order to have a better chance of tracking the criminal.

"Where does the Conservative government stand on this? " We as a society should be asking them. That's what the Parson's family did and they at least saw some laws come into effect in the past few months. As well there have been investigations into the school's responses and the medical care that Rehtaeh received.

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• [fctlmn](#) Guest

Every day I get more and more disillisioned by they that are "to serve and protect".

• 1 year ago

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• [Oscarthedog](#) Guest

And ministers.

• 1 year ago

• 0 Likes

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• [Oscarthedog](#) Guest

There are clearly a number of police who should be jailed for this.

• 1 year ago

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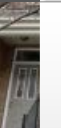
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