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Interview With Michael D. Sellers, Who Produced

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An interview with Michael D. Sellers, who produced (with the help of intrepid moviebank studio

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Interview With Michael D. Sellers, Who Produced "Karla" for MovieBank Studios

The following is an interview with Michael D. Sellers, who produced (with the help of intrepid

Q: This is undoubtedly one of the most controversial, violent stories in modern Canadian history. How did you feel about you were making the film "too soon"?

A: Well, when the idea of doing a project on Karla Homolka and Paul Bernardo was first brought up, there were several unique aspects to this case which have kept it alive in unusual ways -- Karla's plea bargain, the fact that she was a mother, and the fact that she was a Canadian.

Q: You did research a great deal about the legal ramifications of telling this story, and were there any specific concerns?

A: From the beginning, Tim Danson--the attorney who represents the victims' families--said that he was concerned about the legal ramifications of telling this story.

Q: There were reports that you removed some scenes at the families' request.

A: We removed 8 frames -- 1/3 of one second -- of a long shot across a room because Tim felt that it was too graphic.

Q: What kind of changes?

A: Well, Tim was able to provide additional background on some of the sensitivities of the families, and we took that into consideration. One example would be the issue of Leslie Mahaffey being in the room with Karla.

Q: What was the point-of-view from which you wanted to present the film?

A: Point of view in this film is interesting, and challenging. On the one hand, it's Karla's story, but on the other hand, it's the story of the events in the past--everything from the early scenes with Paul through the crimes and eventual trial.

Q: Did your approach to the story evolve over time?

A: Yes and no. I always felt that it was Karla's story, not Paul's. But I think, as we got deeper into the story, it became more of a story about the legal system and the families.

Q: Such as.?

A: Such as the decision to use the interviews with the psychiatrist as a wraparound. We basically wanted to create a "dissenting voice" to help the audience understand the complexities of the case.

Q: What problems -- logistical, legal, ethical -- did you encounter in commencing production?

A: Logistically, we were shooting Los Angeles for Canada, which is a switch since usually it's the other way around. And red tile roofs, things like that. We thought originally that we would go for a more realistic look, but it would just confuse matters, rather than add value.

Legally, there were a number of issues. The most significant one, and the one that affects the

Ethically, it was a matter of constantly remembering, and reminding everyone on the show, that And that involves a lot more than the simple facts of the story. The simple facts--this happened rape of Tammy? Why did she stay with him? Why, when he brought Leslie Mahaffey home, did she j

Q: Among the aspects that seem to have transfixed the media and the public with this case are

A: In a way, it would have been much easier to cast a "killer couple" who were in some way over for the part -- which he did, along with hundreds of others. In the end, he was the hands-down read a little bit, I knew we had our Karla. She had a tremendous grasp of the character and an

Q: Some members of the Canadian government have called for a ban or boycott of the film. Your

A: The Canadian government, particularly the Ontario government, are viewed by many as having having seen the film -- or without even having read any legitimate reviews of the film. I would oppose the release of this one.

Q: You've said -- to paraphrase -- that this film is not a referendum on Karla's guilt or innocence. Could you please elaborate?

A: I think there may be a tendency in Canada for people, when considering Karla, to be overwhelmed by the factors involved as a result of having seen the movie.

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