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Academic Criticism

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Often documentaries are made about serial killers, in a way for the public to gain more knowledge on the background of the crime/case and about the serial killer. One of the most recent documentaries made is, “American Murder Family Next Door” which was released by Netflix. This documentary is based on the murderer/serial killer Chris Watts. Chris Watts and his pregnant wife Shannon Watts lived in Colorado. Their beautiful, picture perfect lifestyle turned into someones biggest nightmare when Chris decided to murder his family, in hopes of starting a new life with his mistress. Although this documentary touches base on the basic factors of this murder, it leaves out many important factors. Some important factors this documentary leaves out are, Chris’s motive, information about Chris’s mistress, and Chris’s messages.

Throughout the documentary the audience gets a insider on how Chris and Shannan relationship was from the time they met, till the day before the murder. Information about the crime scene is spoken about, along with multiple interviews that Chris had with police officers and detectives. However, the documentary didn’t touch much on Chris’s motive for killing his pregnant wife and two daughters. This was definitely a big gap of missing information, that had many viewers confused, wondering why the directors didn’t include this. The interview of Chris confession should’ve been included in the documentary, because it would’ve been interesting to analyze his responses compared to other interviews shown in the documentary. Also, had an

interview been conducted with Chris, asking him questions such as “Why”, “Who”, it would’ve left the audience with more knowledge of the case.

Another big important factor that this documentary didn’t touch much on is information about Chris’s mistress, Nicole. They introduce information about how Chris was having an affair with his co-worker named Nicole, and shared some pictures of them together. However, they don’t mention much information about who exactly Nicole was as an individual, her messages between her and Chris, and where exactly she was located when all of these events were occurring. Many viewers took their own time to gather more information about Nicole after watching the documentary because it left them with unanswered thoughts and questions. This documentary should’ve been a series rather than one clip because they missed on including a lot of important key factors and major details.