

Canadians Name Former Colonel Russell Williams as Top Newsmaker of the Year (26%)

*Justin Bieber (13%), Prime Minister Stephen Harper (12%),
Julian Assange (10%) and Sarah Palin (9%) Round Out Top 5*

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Toronto, ON – Reflecting back on the year 2010, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively for Postmedia News and Global National has named former Canadian Forces Colonel Russell Williams as Top Newsmaker of the Year.

Among a list of twelve possible candidates, one quarter (26%) of Canadians believe that Russell Williams is 2010's top newsmaker. A former Colonel and Commanding Officer of CFB Trenton, this year Mr. Williams was tried and convicted for two murders, sexual assault, forcible confinement and burglary, and is currently serving a life sentence at Kingston Penitentiary.

In second place is international singing sensation from Stratford, Ontario, Justin Bieber (13%), who was also just named one of the most followed individuals on Twitter this year. He narrowly beats out Prime Minister Stephen Harper (12%) who is in third place, despite the international stage that was set for the Prime Minister for the Olympics and the G20 summits.

In fourth place is WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange (10%), likely for two reasons: the unprecedented release of U.S. diplomatic cables that have revealed secret diplomatic discussions and has thrown a lot of egg on the face of the United States government and many of its diplomatic allies. Second, he was recently arrested by British authorities due to charges being brought against him in Sweden related to sexual offenses.

Rounding out the top 5 is American Republican and former Vice-Presidential candidate Sarah Palin (9%), who currently has a reality television show and has been hinting at a Presidential run in the 2012 election.

Potential Top Newsmakers who were picked by fewer Canadians include: former Governor General Michaëlle Jean (8%), Canadian citizen Omar Khadr who is being held in Guantanamo Bay (7%), Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg (6%) – winner of Time Magazine’s Man of the Year Award, CEO of the Vancouver Olympics Organizing Committee John Furlong (5%), current Governor General David Johnston (1%), former Veterans Ombudsman Pat Stogran (1%), and finally, former Conservative Cabinet Minister Helena Guergis (0% -- rounded down).

He Said, She Said...

Here’s how men and women stack up in their opinions:

Women’s Choice for Newsmaker

- Russell Williams (27%)
- Justin Bieber (16%)
- Sarah Palin (11%)
- Stephen Harper (9%)
- Michaëlle Jean (8%)

Men’s Choice for Newsmaker

- Russell Williams (25%)
- Stephen Harper (15%)
- Julian Assange (14%)
- Justin Bieber (9%)
- Sarah Palin & Omar Khadr (tied 7%)

Difference of Opinion Among Young, Middle Aged and Older Canadians...

Young, middle aged and older Canadians had a difference of opinion as to who is the top newsmaker.

One quarter (23%) of **younger Canadians** between 18-34 years of age feel that Justin Bieber is the top choice for newsmaker followed by Russell Williams (17%), Marc Zuckerberg (14%), Stephen Harper (11%) and Julian Assange as well as Omar Khadr (tied for 8%).

One third (34%) of **middle aged Canadians** between 35-54 years of age believe that Russell Williams is top newsmaker of the year followed by Justin Bieber (11%), Julian Assange (10%), Sarah Palin (10%) and finally Stephen Harper (9%).

One quarter (24%) of **older Canadians** older than 55 years of age say the top newsmaker spot belongs to Russell Williams. He is followed closely by Stephen Harper (16%), Michaelle Jean (14%) and Julian Assange (12%).

Top 5 Newsmakers Among Canadians from Coast to Coast

British Columbians are tied in their pick for top spot between John Furlong (18%) and Russell Williams (18%) followed by Sarah Palin (13%), Stephen Harper (12%) and Julian Assange (11%).

One in five (19%) **Albertans** are enamored with Justin Bieber since they believe he is the top newsmaker of the year followed by a three way tie consisting of Julian Assange, Russell Williams and Stephen Harper (all 17%) as well as Omar Khadr (9%).



One quarter (24%) of residents of **Saskatchewan and Manitoba** say that Russell Williams should receive the newsmaker of the year title followed by Sarah Palin (15%), Justin Bieber (14%), Julian Assange (13%) and Stephen Harper (11%).

One third (36%) of **Ontarians** believe that Russell Williams is newsmaker of the year. Next in line for the title is Justin Bieber (13%), Julian Assange (9%), Sarah Palin (8%) and Stephen Harper (8%).

Russell Williams is the newsmaker of the year (18%) in **Quebec** followed by Stephen Harper (16%), Justin Bieber (12%) and a three way tie among Julian Assange, Marc Zuckerberg and Michaelle Jean (all 10%).

One third (32%) of **Atlantic Canadians** say Russell Williams is top newsmaker. He is trailed by Michaelle Jean (13%), Justin Bieber (11%), Stephen Harper (10%) and Sarah Palin (9%).

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between December 9 and 14, 2010, on behalf of Postmedia News and Global Television. For this survey, a sample of 1,044 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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- 4 -

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- 5 -

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