

Forensic Genealogists Prove Best-Selling Holocaust Book a Lie

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Colleen Fitzpatrick, PhD

Tel: (714) 296-3065

Email: colleen@forensicgenealogy.info

www.forensicgenealogy.info

April 9, 2008

Forensic Genealogists' Investigation Triggers Confession of Fraud by Best-Selling Holocaust Author

“It was not the truth” confessed Misha Defonseca, author of the best-seller *MISHA: A Memoire of the Holocaust Years*. Forensic genealogist Colleen Fitzpatrick, PhD, of Fountain Valley, CA, knew that. Fitzpatrick was called in as an expert by Sharon Sergeant, the investigator who cracked the Defonseca case.

“The photographs provided us clues on her real age and her real relationships to family members. Our breakthroughs with the archival records proved that we were right,” Fitzpatrick stated. “Still I almost feel disappointed that Misha confessed. I was looking forward to identifying her through DNA. This would have verified that she had not been substituted for a deceased child as she claimed, but that she was actually living with her own family. This case demonstrates the use of all three components of forensic genealogy: photographs, archival records, and DNA.”

Had Defonseca not confessed, Fitzpatrick was prepared to trace the maternal line of her family to obtain living relatives to serve as references for mitochondrial DNA analysis. Fitzpatrick consults with the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory on such high profile cases. She has consulted on the identification of the Unknown Child on the Titanic, and on the identification of human remains discovered in the debris of Northwest Flight 4422 that crashed in Alaska in 1948. She is highly successful at locating missing owners of unclaimed property worldwide.

Sergeant comments, “Oddly enough, my work with Colleen on the Sheboygan Dead Horse photograph introduced me to the full potential of forensic genealogy. That was fun. Defonseca’s case was much more serious.”

“I’m really proud of Sharon and the team she assembled,” Fitzpatrick stated. “This puts forensic genealogy on the map.”

Dr. Fitzpatrick will be a featured speaker at the Southern California Genealogy Society's 39th Annual Genealogy Jamboree at the Burbank Convention Center, June 28-29, 2008. See www.forensicgenealogy.info.