

WHO KILLED TERESA?

Justice is blind... and dysfunctional, and some cops aren't smart and dedicated like on tv

BY JOHN ALLORE JULY, 2010

Off to Vancouver to speak at National Victims of Crime Awareness Week

A very kind invitation from Sherry Edmonds-Flett and Marjean Fichtenberg to speak in Vancouver this weekend for National Victims of Crime Awareness Week. Marjean is a dear friend I have known for years (whom I have never met!). She guest blogged her for some weeks a number of years ago, and is a fiery victim advocate. I believe it was former Federal Victims Ombudsman, Steve Sullivan who first introduced us.

I met Sherry through Marjean, and I am her guest at this forum. I will be on a panel with Marjean and Misty Cockerill. Though Misty and I have very different trajectories, we have a lot in common (we don't play the victim). Should be interesting. Here is the press release:

Every Victim Matters: A L.I.N.C. Society National Victims of Crime Awareness Week Forum" April 23rd, 2010 at 7:00pm at the University College of the Fraser Valley Abbotsford Campus 33844 King Road in Room B101, Abbotsford, B.C. Free admission. Speakers are: Misty Cockerill, John Allore and Marjean Fichtenberg. Moderator is Fraser Simmons.

Background:

For the last 13 years, Misty Cockerill has been a victims' rights advocate. It all started with the occurrence and experience of a criminal trial. It was the trial and sentencing of the man who not only attempted to take Misty's life, but also murdered her best friend. He was sentenced to life in prison.

During the trial, a woman came up to her in tears. She explained that her daughter had been raped, beaten, and left for dead. She was afraid to charge her assailants. The woman said "It's been watching you and your strength that has changed my daughter's mind. She is now pressing charges and I think that she might even have the same "pep" as you." She thanked her and walked away. It was at that moment that Misty realized that she was capable of helping victims speak; even if she just lent them a voice to be heard. Since that day Misty has been speaking in high schools about the effects of crime and the impact on victims lives. She has spoken at rallies in an effort to take back the streets and give them back to our children.

She is currently pursuing studies at UCFV. She is scheduled to graduate this April and is ready to start her career in social work. She wants to be able to help more people during their time of need. Misty has been able to pursue her goal thanks to the help of the Canadian Crime Victim Foundation and its founder Joe Wambach. The organization has established a trust to support victims of crime as they work toward their education goals and improve their quality of life.

Her message to society has been to take care of victims of crime. "Strength is not just a word, it's the force that keeps you moving, breathing and laughing. There will always be violence and despair. It has followed us since the beginning of time. So instead of just trying to prevent violent

acts, as a society, we need to also learn how to support and nurture the victims of those acts. They should not feel as they are the ones being prosecuted. Encourage people to be successful instead of forcing them into failure."

John Allore's sister Theresa was a 19-year-old Canadian college student who disappeared in 1978 from her college campus in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. Five months later her body was discovered in a small body of water approximately one kilometer from her dormitory residence. Upon her disappearance police initially suggested she was a runaway. When her body was discovered police then suggested she was a possible victim of a drug overdose, perhaps at the assistance of fellow college students. In the summer of 2002, John Allore enlisted the support of an investigative reporter and friend, Patricia Pearson who produced a series of articles for Canada's National Post newspaper that gave compelling evidence that Theresa Allore was a victim of murder, and that her death was possibly linked to two other unsolved local cases. The theory was supported by geographic profiler and then FBI consultant, Kim Rossmo, who suggested a serial sexual predator may have been operating in the Quebec region in the late 1970s and advised police to investigate the three deaths as a series. About his sister's case, John Allore states; "Murder victims have multiple deaths. There is the physical death; but then there is a second death when they are driven into silence by the voices of law enforcement, or the media who co-opt tragedy to tell a story (and in so doing distort

the truth), and in some cases there is the death by the legal community who fashion facts for their own purposes. After a criminal death, there is only humiliation.”

This year's National Victims of Crime Awareness Week forum, sponsored by the L.I.N.C. (Long-term Inmates Now in the Community) Society, supported by the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of the Fraser Valley and funded by the Department of Justice (Ottawa) will focus on answering the questions:

1) How do you survive the devastating loss of a loved one or almost being killed yourself? 2) What services do people who have experienced this tragedy feel are needed? 3) How can the community contribute?

John and Misty will share the stage and speak together about their experiences as survivors and what has helped them get through the experience. Marjean Fichtenberg, mother of Dennis Fichtenberg who was murdered by an offender on conditional release and the principal researcher and writer of the L.I.N.C. Society's feasibility study on a healing centre for survivors of homicide, will outline some of the study's preliminary findings. Fraser Simmons, former regional director of the National Parole Board, Pacific Region, will lead the audience and panel in a discussion on realizing the vision for a healing centre for victims of serious crime.

This forum, like the forums of the past three years, is part of an ongoing process to help breakdown the walls/the stigma attached to being a survivor of violent crime, to listen and value people's experiences/lives, to educate the wider community about what survivors need and want – all from a holistic perspective.

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