

HOFSTRA PROFESSOR ROBERT LEONARD TO APPEAR ON COURT TV'S "FORENSIC FILES"

Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY ... Court TV's *Forensic Files* to air on Wednesday, June 27, 2007, at 9 p.m. dissects the Hummert murder case of last year and features the work of Hofstra Linguistics Professor Robert A. Leonard, Ph.D., who analyzed stalker and serial killer letters, and testified at the trial. Dr. Leonard's testimony was largely credited with showing premeditation.

Dr. Leonard's specialty is the forensic analysis of language. His clients have included the FBI, *New Yorker* Magazine, ABC-TV's Investigative Unit, PA State Police, NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force, NJ Attorney General, US Attorney's Office in NY, and law firms that specialize in both civil and criminal cases. This summer, Dr. Leonard will be working again with the FBI, training agents in the use of forensic linguistics in law enforcement, threat assessment and counter-terrorism.

Forensic linguistics is the emerging science of language as it applies to law enforcement and legal proceedings. Dr. Leonard is one of only a handful of forensic linguistics experts in the world.

He has been consulted in some well-known cases such as the Taye Diggs-Idina Menzel arson threat letters, the McGuire "suitcase" murder (in which he prepared testimony to bolster the FBI expert), the Alvarez spy case (in which he prepared testimony against FBI interrogators), and the John Karr episode of the JonBenet Ramsey murder (in which Leonard's findings presaged those of the DNA tests: no evidence of links.)

In addition to being a leading expert in forensic linguistics, Dr. Leonard has also received much attention for having been a rock star in the 60s and 70s as a founding member of the group Sha Na Na. As vocalist, he and the group opened for Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock. Rock 'n' roll ignited his interest in forensic linguistics: analyzing the group's recording contract he realized they were not receiving money due them. Dr. Leonard left the music business for a Fulbright Fellowship and a Ph.D. from Columbia. In addition to heading Hofstra's Forensic Linguistics Project he also serves as chair of the University's Department of Comparative Languages and Literatures.

A character based on Dr. Leonard will appear this summer in *Bones to Ashes*, a new mystery novel by Kathy Reichs, the real-life forensic anthropologist and author on whom the TV show *Bones* is based.

---Hofstra University Public Relations