Prof Don Foster by David Freed



The Atlantic, David Freed, May 2010: *Don Foster, a* ***professor*** *of* ***English*** *at Vassar College and a self-styled literary detective, who had achieved modest* ***celebrity*** *by examining punctuation and other linguistic fingerprints to identify Joe Klein, who was then a Newsweek columnist, as the author of the anonymously written 1996 political novel, Primary Colors.*

Historic Mysteries: Foster was praised for his keen sleuthing skills. Don Foster also analyzed .. The Night Before Christmas and questioned if it was indeed written by the unanimously-accepted Clement Clarke Moore.

Foster first came to prominence in his graduate school work regarding the famous sonnets of Shakespeare. An early edition of the sonnets was dedicated to "Mr. W. H.", and scholars have debated for centuries who this mysterious man could be.

Foster developed a theory that the dedication should actually read "Mr. W. S." or even "Mr. W. Sh." indicating ***Shakespeare himself.***

Later, Don Foster ***stumbled onto*** *what he proclaimed to be a* ***lost poem of Shakespeare****'s titled "A Funerall Elegye in memory of the late Vertuous Maister William Peeter."*

It ***wasn't*** *one of Shakespeare's best poems, but* ***if*** *it was written by The Bard it* ***would have been*** *the first newly* ***discovered*** *work in more than 100 years.* ***Immediately****, some scholars* ***believed*** *that Foster was* ***correct*** *in his summation, and* ***several*** *anthologies included the "new" poem in their collections.*

Historic Mysteries: *Foster later came to the attention of law enforcement officials who requested his help in attempting to determine the authors of two crime-related documents. Foster approached these documents with in-depth analysis using both* ***computers*** *and his common sense.* (including the Jon Benet Ramsay murder)

Prof Foster (letter to Patsy Ramsay, June 1997): *I know you are innocent - know it, absolutely and unequivocally. I will* ***stake*** *my personal* ***reputation*** *on it. .. The near universal belief - a view encouraged by police behavior - is that you wrote the letter to protect this person who murdered your daughter. I find that impossible to believe.*

(Ramsay lawyers declined Foster's offer to help.)

Prof Foster (to Boulder police, 1998): *In my opinion, it is not possible that any individual except Patsy Ramsey wrote the ransom note.*

Foster had since ***consulted*** *with the* ***FBI*** *on investigations of the* ***Unabomber*** *and Atlanta's* ***Centennial Olympic Park bombing****, among other cases.*

Foster surmised that the killer was ***an American posing*** *as an Islamic jihadist.*

(A) limited number of American scientists would have had a working knowledge of anthrax.

One of those scientists, ***Foster concluded****, was a man named* ***Steven Hatfill****, a medical doctor who had* ***once*** *worked at the Army's elite Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases* ***(USAMRIID****), which had stocks of anthrax.*

Prof Don Foster, (English) Vassar College February 2002: *When I lined up Hatfill's known movements with the postmark locations of reported biothreats, those hoax anthrax attacks appeared to trail him like a vapor cloud.*

Atlantic/David Freed: *Scouring the Internet, (Prof) Foster found an interview that Hatfill had given while working at the* ***National Institutes of Health****, in which he described how bubonic plague could be made with* ***simple*** *equipment and used in a bioterror attack.*

Foster later tracked down an ***unpublished novel*** *Hatfill had written, depicting a fictional bioterror attack on Washington.*

He discovered that Hatfill had been in Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) during an anthrax outbreak there in the late 1970s, and that he'd attended medical school near a Rhodesian suburb called ***Greendale*** *- the name of the invented school in the return address of the anthrax letters mailed to the Senate.*

The deeper Foster dug, the more Hatfill looked to him like a viable suspect.

Foster says he met Rosenberg over lunch in April 2002,

Prof Don Foster: *(We) compared notes .. laid out the evidence, such as it was, hers and mine .. found that our **evidence** had led us in the same direction.*

David Freed: ***Weeks** dragged on* while he and Rosenberg tried to **interest the FBI** in their theories.*

Don Foster: *(T)he bureau remained stubbornly unwilling to listen. (2mths later) patience exhausted. Rosenberg met on Capitol Hill with Senate staff members **Special Agent** Van Harp, the senior FBI agent on what by then had been **dubbed** the "Amerithrax" **investigation**, was summoned to the meeting, along with other FBI officials.*

* Luxury!

Revision #5
Created 2022-04-29 08:47:26 UTC by dulandrift
Updated 2022-04-30 23:23:20 UTC by dulandrift