



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 2008
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CRM
(202) 514-2008
TDD (202) 514-1888

PENNSYLVANIA WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY AND IS SENTENCED ON OBSCENITY CHARGES

WASHINGTON – A Pennsylvania woman pleaded guilty today to six counts of using an interactive computer service to distribute obscene materials, Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Mary Beth Buchanan of the Western District of Pennsylvania announced.

Karen Fletcher, 56, of Donora, Pa., pleaded guilty in Pittsburgh before U.S. District Court Judge Joy Flowers Conti and was sentenced to serve five years probation. In addition to the court-ordered term of probation, Judge Conti ordered Fletcher to forfeit computer equipment used to operate her Web site. Fletcher is to serve the first six months of her probation under home detention and pay a \$1000 fine. Fletcher was indicted on Sept. 27, 2006.

According to the plea agreement, Fletcher owned and operated a public Web site that distributed “text stories.” On the site, Fletcher posted story excerpts that described the sexual molestation and violent abuse of children. Individuals could buy memberships to additional areas of the site where full stories, describing the sexual abuse, rape, torture and murder of newborn to teenage children, were available. Furthermore, the plea agreement reveals that Fletcher, using the pen name “Red Rose,” wrote and offered the majority of the stories herself. Some of the stories were also available as audio files.

The case was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephen R. Kaufman and Trial Attorney Michael Yoon of the Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS). The case was investigated by the FBI and CEOS’ High Technology Investigative Unit.

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