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Eastern District of California

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EXETER MAN SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS AND ONE MONTH IN PRISON FOR RECEIVING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that ROBERT THOMPSON, 40, of Exeter, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger to 10 years and one month in prison. THOMPSON pleaded guilty to receipt of child pornography on March 16, 2009. He has been in custody since November 11, 2008.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office in Fresno, with assistance from the Fresno County Sheriff's Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Sheila K. Oberto who prosecuted the case, THOMPSON was identified by the ICE Cyber Crimes Center, Child Exploitation Section, as an individual who had obtained access to Web sites containing child pornography. When a search warrant was executed at his home, agents located a computer that contained child pornography as well as “morphed” images THOMPSON had produced by cutting and pasting school pictures of two minor girls he knew onto pornographic images of naked bodies of other girls.

In sentencing THOMPSON, Judge Wanger stated that what THOMPSON did “was to damage human beings on a daily basis” because every time someone turns on a computer and accesses an image, “the victim is violated again.” With regard to those victims whose images were morphed, Judge Wanger noted that “they, too, were violated.” Judge Wanger added that “society as a whole, should not and cannot endure the violation of children” in the manner done by the defendant.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, PSC marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information, visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov or call the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

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