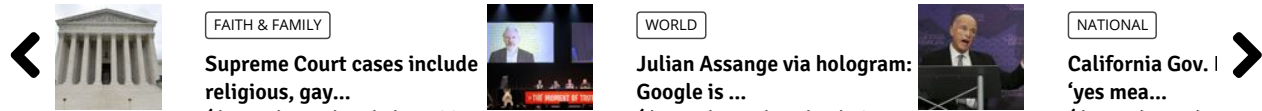


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Rabbi sentenced in Web sex sting

By - *The Washington Times* - Friday, December 1, 2006

A Rockville rabbi ensnared in a nationally televised sex sting was sentenced to 6 1/2 years in prison yesterday for attempting to have sex with someone whom he thought to be a 13-year-old boy.

David A. Kaye, 56, was convicted in U.S. District Court in Alexandria in September of enticement and traveling across state lines to engage in illegal sexual conduct.

Most of the evidence came from a televised sting on "Dateline NBC" that was conducted in conjunction with an Internet watchdog group called Perverted Justice.

A Perverted Justice member posing as a 13-year-old boy met Kaye in an online chat room in August 2005, and Kaye solicited sex acts.

When Kaye drove to what he thought was the boy's home in Herndon, he was instead confronted by a television reporter and camera crew and conceded he was there for "not something good."

During yesterday's hearing, prosecutors said Kaye's crime was not an isolated incident and submitted affidavits from others who claimed Kaye engaged in improper conduct, including one incident at a youth camp as far back as 1974.

Details of that incident were not discussed, and the affidavits are under seal. Kaye denied any improper conduct.

The 78-month sentence from U.S. District Judge James Cacheris was at the high end of federal sentencing guidelines, and will be followed by an unusually long period of supervised release — 10 years.

Kaye also will be required to register as a sex offender and is barred from having unsupervised contact with minors.

Kaye yesterday said that he thinks his actions last year were "a cry out for help."

"I do accept responsibility for my actions last year, and I know I need help," said Kaye, who broke down sporadically throughout the hearing, usually when he turned back to the courtroom gallery and made eye contact with his elderly father.

Kaye testified at his trial that he led a double life and frequently used the Internet to facilitate homosexual liaisons.

He said he knew the person he was chatting with was older than 13 and assumed he was an adult, but played along with what he assumed to be role playing.

Judge Cacheris, who convicted Kaye following the bench trial, wrote in his opinion that Kaye's testimony was not credible in "veracity, demeanor, cadence, tenor and inflection of his voice as well as the consistency of his answers on cross examination."

Kaye was a rabbi at a congregation in Potomac for 16 years and at the time of the sting he was vice president of a Rockville-based Jewish youth organization called PANIM: the Institute for Jewish Leaders and Values.

The Perverted Justice sting at the Herndon home, which ensnared 19 men over a three-day period, has resulted in multiple convictions and prison sentences.

Perverted Justice says its stings have resulted in more than 100 convictions nationwide since 2004. The group has an ongoing partnership with NBC to produce additional shows, titled "To Catch a Predator."

Critics say that Perverted Justice's methods border on vigilantism.

Last month in Texas, a man about to be arrested after being caught in a Perverted Justice sting shot and killed himself when police tried to arrest him.

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