

From Virtual Hero to Virtual Fraud

Deepfake Experts Amongst Us

by Sean L Harrington, *Esq.* Published March 02, 2025 | Last updated March 19, 2025

Introduction

Four things are required for a witness to be competent to give evidence in a legal proceeding, including: the ability to observe with fidelity; the ability to accurately recall what was observed; and the ability to effectively communicate what is recalled.

The fourth, about which this Comment discusses, is the willingness to take the oath and to testify truthfully. If any one of these four things is missing, the witness is not competent.

The bench and bar might be astonished to learn that we have deepfakes in the expert witness community. Lawyers are expected to perform due diligence on behalf of clients. Judges rely on lawyers, as officers of the courts, to perform that gatekeeping function. A failure to perform due diligence invariably results in miscarriages of justice.

Most of us believe that the very worst we can expect of experts are occasional misrepresentation of findings (or material omissions), lack of preparation for trial, or even lying under oath. As for those uncertainties, we rely on deposition banks, lawyer list serves, and word of mouth. But who would fake college degrees? Who would substantially fake his or her expert background and qualifications? Is it even possible to get away with this in the Information Age? I address these questions, by showing you both who and how.

Deepfakes (hereinafter, “Frauds”) count on lawyers not performing due diligence (or even reading the contract for services). Some, as discussed in the examples below, can be compared to the lead role in the movie *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993) — poorly executed, almost comical, and easily unmasked by a discerning person. But, a few others have perfected their game, that they’ve risen to the highest echelons, influencing the outcomes of cases, influencing lawyer regulations, and posing for photographs with judges and justices. They might be compared to the character in *Catch Me if You Can* (2002).

As a digital forensics examiner, cybersecurity consultant, lawyer, and former muckraker, I’ve had plenty of experience with frauds and fake credentials over the years. There was a time when I sought them out, and seem to have a knack for it. One example follows.

Back in the 2000s, when I was a muckraker and not yet an attorney, I exposed a handful of corrupt or fake experts. Purported psychologist Edwin Shockney was among them. The Colorado

Gazette, which provided a passing hat-tip to my exposé,¹ observed that Shockney, “claims to have earned a master’s from two graduate schools. State University of New York at Albany said he never attended. Crossroads Bible College, a small seminary in Indianapolis, said he never attended, and it doesn't offer a master's degree.” The reporter continued, “In reality, . . . He has no bachelor’s degree and no master’s. And his doctorate came from a defunct California seminary based in a strip mall. But through an ever-evolving string of embellishments and outright lies, Shockney has hoodwinked the Colorado professional counselors oversight board, the Catholic Church, local lawyers, police, a large defense contractor, and countless patients for more than a decade.” The Gazette noted, “He has gotten away with it despite repeated complaints to authorities.”

The prejudice to our clients and carnage within the justice system caused by these deepfake frauds is incalculable. As lawyers and officers of the Court, we are gatekeepers. Preventing this prejudice and carnage is something over which we do have control. But before I get to that, I'm going to share some examples that should make your hair stand on end. I will limit my examples to digital forensics experts because this is the discipline about which I know the most:

James Earl Edmiston

Federal agents became suspicious of the CV of Edmiston, who proclaimed he was a highly-qualified computer forensics expert. The agents and Edmiston were involved in child pornography (hereinafter, “Contraband”) cases. Edmiston’s CV claimed that he earned degrees from two colleges, but the degrees were not offered by either college. And certain other claims in his CV didn’t check out. Moreover, he had served time for a forgery conviction in the mid-1990s, which somehow also evaded the defense attorneys who hired him. Prosecutors further alleged that Edmiston sought copies of contraband images at issue in one of the cases, copied images that were in evidence, and left the federal law enforcement facility without deleting the images from his hard drive.²

Edmiston was sentenced to 21 months in prison, after pleading guilty to two counts of perjury arising out of the contraband cases for which he was hired as an expert.³

The Federal judge who sentenced Edmiston observed that this kind of deceit imperils cases where people's liberties are at stake, noting, “It goes to the heart of the criminal justice system.”

¹ https://gazette.com/news/a-broken-trust-longtime-psychotherapist-gamed-system/article_0c33d0ea-ecf0-5885-a86c-4a85f12eadd9.html

² Edmiston wasn't charged over the alleged exfiltration, but I can tell you as a defense examiner that I have to deal with onerous examination conditions because of faux experts like Edmiston.

³ See [indictment in United States v. James Earl Edmiston](#),

Judy Gosselin

Judy Gosselin was a purported computer forensics expert. She pled guilty to falsifying her certifications and credentials. I supplied the tip about Gosselin to Sharon Nelson, who wrote about it in her blog in 2014.⁴ As of the date of Nelson's writing, Gosselin was still doing forensics work, notwithstanding the conviction, and holding herself out as an expert in the field up until at least 2015.⁵

Chester Kwitowski

In 2016, Chester Kwitowski of Tampa, Florida, also acted —no pun intended— as an expert witness during five sexual battery-on-a-minor and possession of contraband jury trials in Polk County. Kwitowski provided a CV to the court and swore under oath as to his qualifications, which he claimed included a master's degree in computer science, Secret and Top Secret clearances from the Federal government, a commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force, work history with NASA, and multiple computer forensics certifications from Cisco and other software companies. He also offered his CV as an expert witness to private law firms, public defenders, and officials in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, Pasco, and Polk counties.

The Polk County Sheriff's investigation revealed that Kwitowski had no master's degree, and further, the degree of science in computer science and engineering he claimed wasn't offered by the college cited. Likewise, Cisco denied that Kwitowski had earned status as a Cisco Certified Engineer, as Kwitowski claimed. And NASA denied to investigators any involvement with Kwitowski. Despite Kwitowski's claims of being an Officer in the Air Force, investigators found that he was in the military for only four months, and that he had no Secret or Top Secret clearances. Kwitowski also claimed to have held "information technology and systems support contracts" with the Hillsborough County Clerk of the Circuit Court and the County Administrator's office, but those agencies reported no record of any contracts with or payments made to, Kwitowski or his company. According to one Orlando area attorney who hired Kwitowski and interviewed for a story, "He certainly seemed very confident and knowledgeable, and I never had any reason to be suspicious."⁶

⁴ <https://senseient.com/ride-the-lightning/certified-computer-examiner-pleads-guilty-to-lying-about-certifications/>

⁵ <https://patch.com/massachusetts/danvers/learn-how-keep-your-data-private-mobile-technology-at-north-shore-business-forums-meeting-june-19>

⁶ <https://www.tampabay.com/news/courts/criminal/defrocked-expert-witness-in-child-sex-cases-squeaked-by-with-little-vetting/2295080/?outputType=amp>

Kwitowski was found guilty in 2019 of a capital felony of perjury in an official proceeding.⁷ The Polk County Sheriff lamented that trust in the justice system was eroded because of Kwitowski's years of lying under oath, especially in cases concerning crimes against children.

Jim Bates

The Guardian broke the story of Jim Bates,⁸ yet another purported digital forensics investigator who falsified his credentials and was an expert for both the prosecution and defense in scores of cases.

Bates distinguished himself as an expert in trials involving defendants who claimed that they were wrongly accused of possessing contraband and, as one notable example of many high-profile cases, he leveraged his faux reputation to assail law enforcement for their handling of Operation Ore, a high profile investigation into British users of a Texas-based sex site that sold contraband. Bates urged that many of the 4,000-plus men arrested in the UK for accessing the site might have been innocent.

Despite the conviction, Bates defiantly told the Guardian, “My expertise and impartiality have never been questioned. There has never been any question that my claim to a degree has made any difference to any case.”

The Guardian’s reporter wondered, “. . . why the police—who used Bates in numerous complex fraud trials in the Nineties and as a lecturer at its Bramshill Training College in Hampshire—failed to check his credentials and have him removed from the National Centre for Policing Excellence Expert Advisers list, the police database of expert witnesses.” The reporter observed, “Even the most cursory of investigations would have found that Bates was not the impressive-sounding expert he claimed to be on his CV. Indeed, not only did he wrongly claim to have a BSc but he also gave false information about his time in the RAF, in which he claimed to have served for five years.” Evidence introduced at Bates' trial revealed that, three years after joining the RAF, Bates was discharged from the force with “Hysterical amnesia” after being judged to have an “Inadequate personality.”

⁷ Polk County, Fla. Case No. 2016CF007839A000XX

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2008/mar/23/ukcrime.law>

Mark Lanterman

To date, the longest-running of the digital forensics frauds is Mark Lanterman of Computer Forensics Services (CFS).⁹ My investigation into Lanterman serves as a case study on how to research an expert. If not that, it is the portrait of a liar possessed by unparalleled arrogance, driven by greed, and who incorrectly believes his critics are jealous and that he'll never be caught.

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<i>Go tell that long tongue liar</i>	<i>Well you may throw your rock and hide your hand</i>
<i>Go and tell that midnight rider</i>	<i>Workin' in the dark against your fellow man</i>
<i>Tell the rambler, the gambler, the back biter</i>	<i>But as sure as God made black and white</i>
<i>Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down</i>	<i>What's down in the dark will be brought to the light</i>
<i>Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down</i>	

You can run on for a long time
Run on for a long time
Run on for a long time
Sooner or later God'll cut you down
*Sooner or later God'll cut you down*¹⁰

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I've known about Lanterman since at least 2005, but made a good faith effort to ignore the myriad rumors about him in the legal community. As but just one example, I received an e-mail over **thirteen (13) years ago**, wherein the sender wrote, “[My partner] saw his LinkedIn page this week and wonders if his Bachelors and Masters in Computer Science are degrees legitimately awarded by the academic institution.”¹¹

I didn't entertain the question. But should have, if for no other reason than that it might've prevented him from later being appointed to the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board (LPRB) and might've prevented years of false testimony in state and Federal courts to the detriment of the legal system. I have even turned away attorneys who called, looking for dirt. But, in September of 2023, I couldn't look the other way any longer.

It was that month that I attended our annual Lawyers Professional Responsibility seminar, as a volunteer investigator for a committee of the Minnesota Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility (OLPR). The seminar is sponsored by the state for OLPR employees and

⁹ My inclusion in this Comment of one who has yet to be criminally prosecuted or otherwise meaningfully held to account is part of my broader effort to call attention to the fraud and, specifically, to invoke local, state, and Federal government action for the protection of the legal system and the public.

¹⁰ *God's Gonna Cut You Down*, Original lyrics by Bill Landford, covered by Johnny Cash

¹¹ See redacted [March 03, 2023 e-mail](#)

volunteers. Lanterman, who then was a non-lawyer member of our LPRB, was on the agenda to be the first speaker. That put me in a foul mood.

Lanterman began his presentation with a story arising from a keynote speech he claimed he delivered at “The country's biggest cybersecurity conference.” Only because of my background, I was likely the only person in the audience (including Zoom, by which I attended) who knew that was false upon hearing it. The largest conferences are RSA, Defcon, and Blackhat. I later confirmed that he never delivered a keynote speech at any of them. But, I already knew that.

Next, he explained how “Honored” he was that our OLPR Director had invited him to give the very same presentation a month prior for the National Organization of Bar Counsel.^{12 13}

As part of his research for the presentation, Lanterman claimed he stumbled upon a ransomware cache of law firm data on the “Darkweb.” He said he contacted the victim firm to offer “Free services.” He displayed for us the photo and profile of Curtis J Turpan, a partner of the victim firm, Harwood Lloyd, LLC. He then recalled that Turpan declined Lanterman's services and, for that reason, “They get to be part of my presentation,” Lanterman jested.¹⁴ The audience, which included lawyer regulators, judges (including the state’s soon-to-be chief justice), and volunteer investigators, laughed. He then displayed a **confidential memorandum** drafted by the firm to an opposing firm concerning the inadvertent disclosure they were hoping to claw back, and he mocked the firm for the difficulties they were experiencing. The audience laughed heartily.

Lanterman said that the cache also included client data. So, he next posted the photo and profile and the **unredacted passport** of one of the clients, Aaron Stiefel (himself a lawyer with Arnold & Porter). Attorney Stiefel who, to great effect, Lanterman called “The lead counsel for Pfizer,” also rejected Lanterman’s services, and so he, too, was mocked for the audience’s amusement.

Next, Lanterman told us a salacious story about the CFO of Upsher-Smith, who he claimed had authorized a wire transfer of \$52M because of a “CEO-spoofing” scam.¹⁵ Calling him an “Idiot,” Lanterman claimed Robinson was fired, noting, “If that CFO had picked up the phone, he would have been a hero, today, instead of working the afternoon shift at Arby's at Plymouth and 55. And guess what: they don't even let him on the register!” The audience roared!

The problem with Lanterman’s tale is that CFO Steve Robinson had nothing to do with the transfers; he didn't learn about them until eleven days after the first of 9 transfers was sent by an

¹² See [video excerpt](#)

¹³ Lanterman seems to be keen on use of the word “Honored” in LinkedIn, videos, and in presentations —not as a statement of humility, but to suggest that he is worthy to be recognized by very important people and organizations.

¹⁴ Apparently, this has become part of Lanterman’s comic routine for some time. See, e.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsM77MwXFec> at 37:30.

¹⁵ See [video clip](#)

employee much lower in the reporting chain.¹⁶ Robinson is now the CFO for Coughlan Companies in Mankato, MN, and has been for the last over 10 years. And it's a really long drive from Mankato to a second job at Arby's in Plymouth — Robinson wasn't working at Arby's.

After hearing all this, my mood quickly went from foul to outrage. In the coming days, I launched my own investigation —not state sanctioned— primarily moved by irritation, but also motivated by following quote: “[T]he computer forensics expert, Mark Lanterman, whose credentials are **undisputed** . . .”¹⁷ [bold emphasis added].¹⁸

Lanterman claims to have been involved in numerous high-profile cases, including Tom Petters, Denny Hecker, Martha Stewart, Bernie Madoff, and Paul McCartney's divorce,¹⁹ none of which I've been successful at verifying. Let's take a look at an excerpt from one of his recent CV versions submitted in court:

I graduated from Upsala College with both a Bachelor of Science and a Master's degree in computer science. I completed my post graduate work in cyber security at Harvard University.

I am currently adjunct faculty of computer science for the University of Minnesota Technological Leadership Institute's Master of Science and Security Technologies program (MSST). I am a faculty member at Hamline University and a professor of cybersecurity at the University of St. Thomas School of Law. I am also a faculty member for the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada and the Federal Judicial Center in Washington, D.C. I have previously provided training or delivered keynote addresses for the United States Supreme Court; the Eleventh Circuit Federal Judicial Conference; the Eighth Circuit Federal Judicial Conference; the Southern District of Georgia; the Western District of Tennessee; and several state judicial conferences. I delivered the keynote address at the Chief Justices' Conference in Newport, Rhode Island and at Georgetown Law School's advanced e-discovery conference.

I was appointed by the Minnesota Supreme Court to serve as a member of Minnesota's Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board ("LPRB"). I currently serve on the LPRB's Rules and Opinion Committee.

I am a co-author of the Minnesota State Bar's e-Discovery Deskbook, and I also write monthly articles for Minnesota Bench & Bar magazine.

¹⁶ See [March 22, 2019 Judge Tunheim's Order](#) in [Upsher-Smith Laboratories, Inc. v. Fifth Third Bank](#) (D. Minn) (recitation of facts).

¹⁷ [March 12, 2020 decision](#), [Law Enforcement Labor Services v. City of Eden Prairie](#), Minnesota.

¹⁸ And I might not have conducted this thorough of an inquiry but for a very nasty and threatening letter I received from Lanterman's attorney, Chris Madel.

¹⁹ <https://www.lakevillerotary.org/bulletin/View/23b2d82f-26bf-4549-a9e6-d4c9169cc1a8>. And see <https://twincitiescfe.org/meetinginfo.php?id=12&ts=1399927367>, <https://youtu.be/KgKlm3tWo8w?si=jCJCRd1giiioFWvHI> at 5:21.

CFS holds a corporate private detective license issued by the State of Minnesota Board of Private Detective and Protective Agent Services (License No. 2341).

CFS was awarded a Multiple Award Schedule contract (contract #47QTCA22D004L) for the 54151HACS (highly adaptive cybersecurity services) SIN by the General Services Administration (GSA). GSA awarded CFS the contract after a rigorous inspection and technical competence evaluation of knowledge, abilities, competency, policies, and procedures. CFS is the exclusive, contracted computer forensic service provider for 38 law enforcement agencies in Minnesota, including Hennepin County Sheriff's Office. CFS also serves the Metropolitan Airports Commission, also known as the Minneapolis/Saint Paul International Airport. CFS is partnered with the U.S. Secret Service to assist with its electronic investigations.

Lanterman's charade is based not only on this exemplary résumé, but also on his regular speaking engagements around the country at state and Federal judicial conferences and in news interviews, where he rides the wave of and claims expertise in whatever the cybersecurity topic *de jour* may be: ransomware, blockchain, and the “Dark Web,” to name a few. At the time of this writing, his latest alleged specialty is “Deepfakes.”²⁰ That’s some irony right there.

We begin our analysis with an apt quote from a recent court filing: “*Mr. Lanterman is a complete fraud and any real accomplishments on his résumé were a direct result of the false information he has been touting for years.*”²¹ *N.B.*, if you’re an attorney or investigator, hoping to do the most cursory investigation with an Internet search, you won’t find anything by searching for “Mark Lanterman” and “Fraud” or “Scam.” That will only turn up scores of his interviews or presentations about frauds and scams — not about *him* being the fraud or the scam.

Like our previous examples, Lanterman claims to have an impressive “secret agent” background, including police work and the Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force.²² That seemed like a good starting place (he *never* omits the Secret Service when giving an interview).

One of Lanterman's biographies claims, “He went on to become *the* senior forensic analyst for the United States Secret Service electronic crimes task force.”²³ Another says, “Mark spent 11 years as a police investigator and as a member of the U. S. Secret Service Electronic Crimes Taskforce.” One article published on the ABA's Web site says his time working for the Secret

²⁰ See M. Lanterman, *Artificial Intelligence and Deepfakes* (November 2024),

https://coverage.memberclicks.net/assets/LawSymposium-2024-UofMinnesota/ACCC_2024InsLawSymp_MN_Papers_Nov15_1435_EthicsDeepFakesAndAI_20240905.pdf

²¹ *Vision Industries v. ACU Plasmold*, No. 2:18-cv-6296 (D. NJ), [Dkt. 294-1](#)

²² Federal task forces have been around for a while. The FBI has a joint task force on terrorism. The DEA has a drug task force. And I'm sure there are others. A task force allows Federal agencies to tap into Podunk police departments to deputize officers, who can then be used to assist in serving warrants across state lines, among other things. They typically pay all or a portion of the municipal police officer's salary back to the municipality. See <https://www.fbi.gov/about/faqs/do-fbi-agents-work-with-state-local-or-other-law-enforcement-officers-on-task-forces>

²³ See H.K. Wilson, “Mark Lanterman: A Virtual Hero,” *C-Level Magazine*, May 12, 2017 (last retrieved March 05, 2025 from <http://c-levelmagazine.com/mark-lanterman>).

Service was “Nearly 30 years.”²⁴ Lanterman testified, “Five years,” when asked, “How long did you stay with the Secret Service?”²⁵ In another deposition, he said, “Four or five years.”²⁶ In another deposition, “Q: So, you were a sworn investigator for the United States Secret Service for approximately 8 years from, form 1995 to 2003? A. Yes.”²⁷ Likewise, in response to an inquiry, Lanterman’s friend and attorney, Chris Madel clarified, “Please be advised that Mr. Lanterman was a sworn member of the United States Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force from approximately 1998 to 2003,” (even though the ECTF wasn’t created nationally by Congress until 2001).²⁸ Another 2019 biography claims, “He is a *current member* of the U.S. Secret Service Electronic Crimes Taskforce,”²⁹ and a 2023 CV says he is *currently* partnered with the Secret Service. However, in 2023, an agent answering the phone with the Minneapolis field office denied that Lanterman had any involvement with the field office during the agent’s time there since 2014. Lanterman’s various CVs submitted in courts state, “During his last three years in law enforcement, he was assigned to the United States Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force.” Now we’re at three years. 3 or 5 or 8 or 11 or 29 years? He’s *currently* on the task force? — maybe I’m just being nit-picky?

In several sworn declarations filed in 2024 in Federal courts, Lanterman also claimed to, “serve on the Sedona Conference’s Steering Committee on Artificial Intelligence and the Law.” But, according to Kenneth J. Withers, Executive Director of the Sedona Conference, “Mr. Lanterman . . . has no leadership position in the organization.”³⁰ Withers further stated, “The membership of the Working Group 13 on AI and the Law is listed here: <https://thesedonaconference.org/wgs/wg13> and it was announced for the first time in the attached email to our members dated February 19, 2025. His name appears on neither posting . . .”³¹

Consistent with Withers’ statement is a Sedona Conference Facebook post from February 21, 2025, which states, “The Sedona Conference’s Working Group 13 on AI and the Law (WG13) is making progress with the appointment of it’s newly established Steering Committee. On February 17, the committee met for the first time. . . We are proud to announce the individuals appointed to the WG13 Steering Committee . . .” and Lanterman’s name is not among them.³² It appears that Lanterman appointed himself to a committee a year before it came into existence.

²⁴ https://www.americanbar.org/groups/judicial/publications/appellate_issues/2023/winter/safe-and-secure-are-you-sure/

²⁵ October 22, 2019 trial transcript, Lanterman v. Afremov

²⁶ See [May 06, 2022 deposition transcript](#) in Tumey v. Mycroft at p. 14.

²⁷ See [Feb. 11, 2025 deposition](#) in Laundry Alliance v. Adams at p. 68.

²⁸ <https://www.congress.gov/107/plaws/publ56/PLAW-107publ56.htm>

²⁹ See <https://www.wyomingbar.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-Annual-Meeting-Registration-1.pdf#page27> (last retrieved March 02, 2025). Lanterman’s attorney Chris Madel claims this is true because, “in 2019, CFS entered into a public/private partnership with the USSS’s Minneapolis field office related to its Electronic Crimes Task Force”

³⁰ [March 17, 2025 e-mail from Kenneth J. Withers to Harrington.](#)

³¹ [Second March 17, 2025 e-mail from Kenneth J. Withers to Harrington.](#)

³² <https://m.facebook.com/SedonaConference/photos/the-sedona-conferences-working-group-13-on-ai-and-the-law-wg13-is-making-progres/1052703370208655/>

Next, Lanterman typically claims in court filings and elsewhere to have “Completed his postgrad studies in cybersecurity at Harvard University.”³³ In one deposition, he was asked, “Should I be calling you Dr. Lanterman?”³⁴ “No, Mark is fine,” he replied. How very gracious. In another deposition, he testified, “I think it was 2012 I completed a nine-month program at Harvard University in cybersecurity.”³⁵ And so, as every proud Harvard alum does, he lists Harvard University on LinkedIn and Facebook as a past educational institutions.

But, there’s a problem: Lanterman didn’t complete postgrad studies at Harvard University. Rather, he attended an 8-week “Online short course” administered through *GetSmarter*[®] in 2018.³⁶ The program grants a digital certificate,³⁷ has no undergraduate prerequisites, and awards no college credit.³⁸ Registrants are advised, “As a Harvard Online participant . . . you will not be considered a Harvard student. When you earn your certificate or credential, you will not be considered a Harvard alum,” and that it should be cited on résumés, including LinkedIn, as “Certificate Programs,” and “Harvard Online.”³⁹

But, the online short course isn’t “Postgraduate” for another more glaring reason: “*Mark Lanterman never earned any degrees from Upsala College but continues to assert falsely—under oath—that he did.*”⁴⁰ Well, isn’t that a bummer? Because degrees are very important to Lanterman’s clients. One of his clients, recently mocked the opposing party’s expert, writing, “Mr. Lanterman’s credentials as explained in his declarations are widely recognized . . . According to his LinkedIn profile, [opposing party]’s new declarant graduated college in 2023.”⁴¹ At least the “new declarant” graduated college.

When Upsala College closed its doors in 1995, Felician University was designated as the successor custodian of records. In response to my 2023 degree verification inquiry, the registrar replied, “after numerous attempts” to locate any official transcripts for Lanterman, none were found. The reply had the wrong date (2030) and looked like a carelessly-completed form letter.⁴² So, to be certain, I asked a registrar by phone in February 2025 to personally research the records. Two days later, she called back and confirmed that the written response had been “Correctly processed.”

³³ “Postgraduate” is defined as, “relating to a course of study undertaken after completing an undergraduate degree.”

³⁴ [June 06, 2019 deposition transcript](#) in [BuildingReports.com v. Honeywell, Int’l](#) at p. 25

³⁵ See [May 06, 2022 deposition transcript](#) in [Tumey v. Mycroft](#) at pp. 6-7.

³⁶ See [October 18, 2023 attendance confirmation e-mail](#)

³⁷ <https://www.getsmarter.com/products/harvard-vpal-cybersecurity-online-short-course>

³⁸ See [October 19, 2023 registrar e-mail](#)

³⁹ <https://www.harvardonline.harvard.edu/faq#:~:text=By%20taking%20a%20Harvard%20Online,be%20considered%20a%20Harvard%20alum.>

⁴⁰ See [March 14, 2025 Motion to Strike Expert Declaration of Mark Lanterman and Exclude Mark Lanterman’s Testimony. Laundry Alliance v. Adams](#), No. 23-cv-22130.

⁴¹ See Jan. 16, 2024 Plaintiff’s Reply Brief in [Vision Industries Group v. ACU Plasmold, Inc.](#), No. 18-cv-06296 (D. New Jersey).

⁴² See [Nov. 26, 2023 registrar reply to Harrington](#); see also [Jan. 16, 2025 registrar e-mail to Perkins Coie](#)

Lanterman's sworn declarations claim he earned his bachelor's degree in 1988 and his master's degree in 1990,⁴³ yet he has also testified that he attended the Univ. of Minnesota for "A year and a half."⁴⁴ The U of M Student Directory lists his enrollment for the '85-'86 academic year,⁴⁵ during which he certainly couldn't have been attending six years of college in New Jersey, as he has testified in at least one other deposition. But, in 2017, he apparently forgot about the master's degree, and **denied** having any advanced degrees.⁴⁶ His attorney-friend, Madel, who is ordinarily prompt in countering allegations he deems are potentially defamatory, declined to respond to a November 2023 inquiry confirming or denying that Lanterman has no degrees.

Although Madel's silence is dispositive enough for me, another way to determine how long one has been claiming (or not claiming) degrees is past employment applications. The Hopkins, Minnesota police department, where Lanterman once worked, claims the records were destroyed pursuant to a records retention policy. Before that, he worked for the Springfield Township police department in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, from July 20, 1992 through 1995 (despite claiming in one deposition that he started there in 1989, four months after earning the purported master's degree).⁴⁷ So, I recently decided to look into that. I was a few days too late.

Lanterman felt the walls closing in, so on February 12, 2025, *the day after* being deposed in Laundry Alliance v. Adams⁴⁸ and interrogated over his degree claims, he e-mailed the police chief of the Springfield Township: "I have a quick question regarding my personnel jacket. I assume it has likely been destroyed per the city's document retention policy. Would you mind confirming whether that is the case?"⁴⁹ The Chief replied that it had not, and asked, "Any concerns about the content from years ago?" Lanterman responded, "No concerns at all."

Despite no concerns, Lanterman traveled to Pennsylvania. He walked in to the police department on February 14, 2025 and, according to the Chief, said he had been given a terminal diagnosis, and really needed to borrow that file. The Chief, believing the story, handed it over —without making a copy. On March 7, 2025, the Chief e-mailed him, noting, "I find it odd that you just couldn't copy what you needed and shipped it back to me in this time period. The file is police department property so I'd like to have it back." The records are, indeed, public property under Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know law.

⁴³ *But see* [May 06, 2022 deposition transcript](#) in Tumey v. Mycroft at p. 6 (claiming that he earned the bachelor's degree in 1987 and the master's degree in 1989).

⁴⁴ *See* [May 02, 2017 deposition transcript](#) in Lanterman v. Stillman (Fourth Judicial District Court, Minnesota) at p. 5 (of 162).

⁴⁵ *See* [Univ. of Minn. Student-Staff Directory, 1985-1986](#)

⁴⁶ *See* Note 44, *supra*.

⁴⁷ *See* [May 06, 2022 deposition transcript](#) in Tumey v. Mycroft at p. 11.

⁴⁸ No. 23-cv-22130 (N.D. Fla.)

⁴⁹ *See* [e-mail transcript](#)

Mr. Lanterman seems to have a very busy travel itinerary and speaking schedule for someone with an alleged terminal illness. One colleague with whom I shared this report chided me: “Shouldn't joke about the terminally ill. I know that if I get that diagnosis, I'm going straight to my high school and college houseboat resort job to get my employer file.”

Then there's this claim, under oath: “I am faculty at the Federal Judicial Center in Washington DC, so I train federal judges on digital evidence.”⁵⁰ Retired Admiral John S. Cooke, Director of the FJC, in responding to my inquiry, wrote: “Mr. Lanterman's involvement with the Federal Judicial Center consists of two one-hour webcasts in 2016 and 2017 and a 75-minute presentation at a Center workshop for judges in 2017. We have no plans to invite Mr. Lanterman to speak at future Center programs.”⁵¹

Fourteen months after I exposed Lanterman's college education fraud, among other things, in a LinkedIn post (with 13 addendum-comments, due to post character length),⁵² another attorney with Perkins Coie found me, and we began comparing notes. He had already done his own research and found much of the same evidence I had published. Under deposition, Lanterman was unable to name even one student at Upsala with whom he had attended classes, claimed the degrees are at his grandmother's house in New Jersey, and flatly refused to retrieve them (although he flew to Pennsylvania three days after the deposition, a mere 90 minute drive from the purported stash of degrees).⁵³ Moreover, Lanterman doesn't appear in any of the yearbooks or commencement programs, the Perkins Coie lawyer found.⁵⁴ He wrote, “*Rare is the case—perhaps once in a lifetime—where an expert not only lies about his background but goes to such lengths to cover up the lies and destroy evidence along the way.*”⁵⁵

The real mystery is why, after so many years, has Lanterman's obvious fraud not resulted in any accountability. That's a common theme in the preceding examples: complaints were ignored until the proverbial dam finally broke. Indeed, Lanterman's fraud was known at least ten years ago, when the Vice Chancellor and CIO for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities testified

⁵⁰ [May 06, 2022 deposition transcript](#) at p. 23. See also <https://law.stthomas.edu/about/faculty-staff/directory/mark-lanterman/> (“Mark also conducts annual training for the entire Federal judiciary as faculty of the Federal Judicial Center in Washington, D.C.,” last retrieved, Mar. 12, 2025). *N.B.*, Lanterman has testified that he reviews biographies before they are posted (see, e.g., [June 06, 2019 deposition](#) in [Buildingreports.com, inc. v. Honeywell Int'l](#) at 26).

⁵¹ See [Nov. 21, 2023 e-mail from FJC Dir. John Cook](#)

⁵² https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sean-l-harrington-6b20958_powerhouse-powerhousemediation-cybersecurity-activity-7123156926175023104-taIK?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_ios&rcm=ACoAAAFvfqYByq_mXx_myzgv94uKGo9QHU_d9Vc

⁵³ At the time of this writing, the deposition has been made provisionally confidential.

⁵⁴ See [March 14, 2025 Motion to Strike Expert Declaration of Mark Lanterman and Exclude Mark Lanterman's Testimony](#). [Laundry Alliance v. Adams](#), No. 23-cv-22130.

⁵⁵ *Id.*

that Lanterman engaged in “False advertising,” and made a “False claim” in his biography, which resulted in the cancellation of a contract between Lanterman and the State.⁵⁶

In another state case, the trial judge found that “Most of Lanterman's testimony . . . is not credible . . . The Court has significant doubts about Lanterman's credibility about billing issued based on the lack of disclosure, the lack of documentation, the apparent double billing . . . the significant questions raised by what little documentation does exist . . . and other factors. There are additional reasons to question Lanterman's credibility.”⁵⁷ The judge also acknowledged that Lanterman gave false testimony under oath in the related Federal case:

The Court concludes that billing for computer run time is a fiction that Lanterman used to avoid the problems created by his **false testimony in federal court** that he had 11 people working full time 24 hours a day in shifts on the Afremov project for a total of 1,500 human work hours. To explain away the fact that there were not enough people working on the project to come anywhere close to account for an \$800,000 bill, Lanterman later unbelievably testified that the hours were both human and computer run time.⁵⁸

[bold emphasis added]. The Minnesota Lawyer featured a story about Lanterman’s false testimony,⁵⁹ but it doesn't appear to have slowed his roll.

And, CFS, Inc. appears to be an alter ego. In the stories I've read —certainly not all of them— Lanterman has taken credit under his name for work performed by CFS staff. The Web site marklanterman.com is branded with the CFS logo, and contains CFS services and staff directory. In one deposition, he readily admitted that some checks are made out to CFS, while others are made out to him personally for computer forensics work.⁶⁰ The Eight Circuit noted, “Here, Lanterman is clearly using 'CFS' as shorthand for ‘Lanterman and CFS.’ Elsewhere in his brief, Lanterman notes that the subpoenas served on him and his company ‘demanded the identical documents.’”⁶¹ And Lanterman has testified, “I think I am the company, and the company is me.”⁶² One, therefore, might consider whether damages for harm caused by CFS or Lanterman are recoverable from either or both under the doctrine of joint and several liability.

⁵⁶ See [May 18, 2017 affidavit of Ramon Padilla, Jr.](#), Lanterman v. Stillman, Fourth Judicial District Court, No. 27-CV-16-10860

⁵⁷ [July 17, 2014 Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order for Judgment](#), Minnesota Fourth Judicial District, No. 27-cv-12-22089, Lanterman v. Afremov. The Minnesota Court of Appeals reversed the money judgment and remanded it because the trial court did not have the discretion to weigh the evidence and witness credibility on a Motion for Judgment as a Matter of Law, but the appellate court did not disturb the underlying findings of fact.

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ Forensic Expert Not Credible About His Own Bill, Court Says (July 18, 2014) <https://minnlawyer.com/2014/07/18/forensic-expert-not-credible-about-his-own-bill-court-says/>

⁶⁰ See [May 02, 2017 deposition transcript](#) in Lanterman v. Stillman (Fourth Judicial District, Minn.) at pp. 14-14, 44 (of 162)

⁶¹ United States v. Afremov v. Computer Forensics Services, Inc., 611 F.3d 970 (8th Cir., 2010).

⁶² See [May 02, 2017 deposition transcript](#) in Lanterman v. Stillman (Fourth Judicial District, Minn.) at p. 7 (of 162).

As of 2019, Lanterman’s biography in the Minnesota Bench & Bar claims that he’s testified in over 2,000 state and federal cases. Given his penchant for lying, we can at least conclude that it’s scores. He has handled digital forensics for municipalities and state agencies — his CV claims “38 law enforcement agencies in Minnesota,” assuming this is not also a lie— affecting the rights of victims, litigants, and criminal defendants. Any prosecutor who has used Lanterman’s testimony or even underlying work is now required under Brady to notify defense counsel.

As an example, Stephen Allwine is incarcerated at the time of this writing, convicted of the first degree murder of his wife, based in part on Lanterman claiming to have found a 34-character string attributed to Bitcoin on a laptop computer. Lanterman has testified, “I conducted, personally, all of the analysis on this case.”⁶³ As noted in a recent order in his *habeas corpus* case,⁶⁴ Allwine argued, “Mr. Lanterman lied to the jury about his qualifications and constitutes impeachment evidence against Mr. Lanterman.” Allwine’s Motion for discovery and a hearing was denied — but he didn’t have access to any of the evidence that is discussed here.

In addition to being a past member of the Ethics Committee of a state’s Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board, Lanterman writes a monthly column for the state’s bar association, and is an adjunct professor at a law school. He’s presented at scores of conferences at the highest levels of the judiciary and the attorney regulation system nationwide, using his toxic mix of defamatory tales, mockery, and shaming of others, of which his audiences can’t seem to get enough. He’s before the public about weekly as the go-to consultant for every news station in Minneapolis. Even CBS News consulted with Lanterman, based on his Secret Service marketing, for an independent review of the Hunter Biden laptop.⁶⁵ It’s little wonder why none will touch this story, because it’s an admission that they put a fraud before the public for so many years.

One article about Lanterman, discussing all the amazing things he’s done, “After completing his undergraduate and master’s degrees in computer science,” is entitled, *Mark Lanterman: A Virtual Hero*, featuring a portrait of him looking wistfully off into the distance.⁶⁶ A senior judge who interviewed Lanterman for a podcast was so impressed with his claims, he said, “Those are incredible — for our listeners, incredible institutions that make so many phenomenal contributions to what we do in the law. So, thank you for your service in that way and for the educational focus that you’ve brought to us.”⁶⁷

Because Lanterman has never been held accountable for his misconduct, the harm he has or is alleged to have caused the justice system, the legal profession, and the digital forensics

⁶³ See [May 06, 2022 deposition](#) in *Tumey v. Mycroft* at p. 84.

⁶⁴ *Allwine v. Bolin*, 24-cv-439 (JRT/DLM) (D. Minn. Aug. 30, 2024).

⁶⁵ See <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/copy-of-hunter-biden-laptop-data-appears-genuine-independent-experts-find/>

⁶⁶ Note 23, *supra*.

⁶⁷ *Open Ninth: Conversations Beyond the Courtroom: Cybersecurity — Safety in the Digital Age* | Episode 93 (February 10, 2020), hosted by Chief Judge Donald A. Myers, Jr., last retrieved December 01, 2023 <https://ninthcircuit.org/sites/default/files/openninth/transcripts/Transcript-Episode%2093.pdf> transcript at p. 12.

profession is incalculable. Many years ago, he began including an arbitration agreement in his contracts, because he had so many disputes, and this is the only way to prevent them from becoming public. Nevertheless, the record is replete with examples:

- In 2014, to collect a paltry disputed \$2,000 sum, Lanterman threatened to place a “lien” on a law firm’s data and put it up for “Public auction.”⁶⁸ The aggrieved attorney testified, “After this incident, I noticed Mr. Lanterman’s marketing was everywhere as he has ingratiated himself in all of our legal community institutions. . . . Lanterman has been a member of the Minnesota Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board . . . the most blatant hypocrisy.”⁶⁹ Six years earlier, Lanterman sent an \$87K invoice to another law firm, which the firm found unreasonable and refused to pay. Lanterman “Conducted a public sale” of its client’s trade secrets, the firm alleged.⁷⁰
- In Tumey v. Mycroft, plaintiff, an attorney, consulted with Lanterman and provided non-public information about his case. Lanterman provided him with an engagement letter via e-mail with the subject line: “Confidential and Privileged CFS Engagement.” Mr. Tumey ultimately elected not to move forward with Lanterman. To his absolute dismay, Lanterman went to work for the opposing party. No. 21-cv-00113 (W.D. Mo., 2021).
- In one case, arguing that he should work both sides, Lanterman incredibly claimed to have “developed technology that allows him to make a perfect physical image of of cellular data . . . His technology is proprietary. . .”⁷¹ After a reasonably diligent search, I was unable to locate a patent or patent application for Lanterman. There’s no indication that his alleged technology—which he represented as verified and validated for commercial use in litigation in 2019—has been marketed or even recognized. A Complaint filed with the Office of the Inspector General alleges that the memorandum was actually referencing Graykey, a law-enforcement-only tool—certainly not developed by Lanterman—that was licensed to the Government, and to which Lanterman had privileged access as a contractor.⁷²
- In 2010, the Minnesota Criminal Justice Society formed a Source Code Coalition and retained Lanterman to review the source code for and bring a challenge to the Intoxilyzer 5000EN.⁷³ Lanterman claimed vaguely that he had favorable findings and said it would “Border on malpractice” for the Coalition not to pay him an additional fee—\$350 per

⁶⁸ See [January 12, 2014 e-mail](#)

⁶⁹ See [October 26, 2022 Declaration of Kimberly Hanlon](#)

⁷⁰ [May 11, 2009 counterclaim](#), Extrusion Dies Industries v. Computer Forensics Services, Inc., No. 27-CV-09-6284 (Fourth Judicial District, Minnesota)

⁷¹ See [memorandum](#) in re Lundin v. Castillo, et al., no. 2019cv000452, Circuit Court, Walworth County, Wisconsin

⁷² See Note 29, *supra*, in which Lanterman’s attorney confirms his client was in a contract with the USSS in 2019.

⁷³ See https://ramsayresults.com/source-code-update-source-code-coalition-announces-experts/page/5/?back_page=137&et_blog (last retrieved March 14, 2025).

person— to testify as to his as-of-yet released findings.⁷⁴ The Coalition declined, because it believed that the generous flat fee agreement already included Lanterman’s testimony. According to two people familiar with the dealings, “In the end, he produced results that fucked us.” Lanterman seemed quite smug about that outcome.⁷⁵

- In Computer Forensics Services, Inc. v. BraunHagey & Borden, a law firm client cordially disputed Lanterman’s invoices. In response, he attempted to collect directly from the class action plaintiffs, explaining, “. . . [O]ur contacts are completely appropriate . . . BraunHagey & Borden LLP is in breach of the contract for non-payment. We have made attempts to keep moving forward, but again you have chosen to ghost us. [We] are no longer bound by any confidentiality obligation. We consider all property in our possession abandoned and will dispose of it as appropriate.”
- Lanterman once said, “Data is power today. It’s worth money.”⁷⁶ In one case in which he was retained, he billed more than \$133,000 in data hosting fees for preserving device images.⁷⁷ When his client sought to recoup these costs from the opposing party, the magistrate judge denied the claim, finding that the fees were “exorbitant.” The parties later stipulated that the proper rate for storage was \$464 per month, rather than Lanterman’s monthly charges in excess of \$25,000.⁷⁸
- Like Edmiston, Lanterman also sought to transport copies of contraband to his office.⁷⁹

Not only have lawyers failed to investigate Lanterman, but he’s been protected at the highest levels. He’s repeatedly dropped the name of Senator Amy Klobuchar, claiming that she was his career advisor.⁸⁰ Chris Madel, the lawyer who describes himself as a pal who protects Lanterman *gratis*, floated a gubernatorial run for 2026 in Minnesota and represents Alpha News.

Since Madel has chosen to associate with a fraud, his future in politics is probably bright. Just joking. But, more seriously, the facts described above were provided to the Minnesota Supreme Court, the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board, St. Thomas University School of Law, MetroState University, the Minnesota State Bar Association, the Minnesota School Board Association, the Minnesota Attorney General’s Office, the International Risk Management Institute, among many others where Lanterman is involved. None took any action.

⁷⁴ See [November 08, 2010 Affidavit of David Risk](#)

⁷⁵ See [May 06, 2022 deposition transcript](#) in Tumey v. Mycroft at pp. 34-36.

⁷⁶ Note 23, *supra*

⁷⁷ E. Coast Test Prep, LLC v. Allnurses.com, Inc., No. CV 15-3705 (JRT/ECW), 2018 WL 7050303, at *7 (D. Minn. Dec. 11, 2018), report and recommendation adopted, No. CV 15-3705 (JRT/ECW), 2019 WL 1487812 (D. Minn. Apr. 4, 2019).

⁷⁸ *Id.* At *5

⁷⁹ [Order granting Motion to Compel Discovery](#), Third Judicial District Court, No. 81-CR-09-1180, State of Minnesota v. Carney-Blount

⁸⁰ See [May 02, 2017 deposition transcript](#) in Lanterman v. Stillman (Fourth Judicial District Court, Minnesota) at pp. 13, 15, 19, and 44 (of 162).

For example, when I brought this information to the LPRB in October, 2023, the reply, in pertinent part, was, “The Board will not take any action on your email . . . he is a member in good standing. The Board has no grounds to pursue your concerns.”⁸¹ If the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board has no problem with a board member and Ethics Opinions Subcommittee Chair as a fraud, then who am I to question them? In fact, during a call with the Board Chair, Ben Butler, he incredibly said, “What’s ethical is in the eye of the beholder.”⁸² So, for all you Minnesota attorneys out there: the next time you’re responding to an attorney misconduct complaint, you can quote the LPRB Chair. And see how that works out.

I’ve been asked numerous times why no action has been taken against Lanterman. Some speculate he is “Protected.” Perhaps it’s because he has employed former Federal law enforcement. Although I am aware of no allegations concerning money or favors improperly changing hands, it’s anyone’s guess whether he’s courted judges or other officials at his famed boat parties on Lake Minnetonka.⁸³ The easiest answer sometimes is the least conspiratorial: that judges, school administrators, and others don’t want to admit they were duped for years.

But there’s certainly *some* glad-handing going on: as an example, one of the LPRB members, Kristi Paulson, on the Board at the same time as Lanterman when the Board received information about the fraud, has been reciprocally promoting Lanterman on LinkedIn for many years. And, months *after* receiving information that Lanterman is a fraud, she posted on LinkedIn, “PowerHouse Mediation is thrilled to announce that Mark Lanterman has joined the neutral roster at PowerHouse mediation.” She features him prominently on her site,⁸⁴ and recently added him to a consortium she calls the Professional Education Group. And a few weeks ago was photographed with him at a conference in New Hampshire.

Lanterman has had a long run —over 20 years. But, on March 12, 2025, a Federal magistrate judge was asked to refer him for criminal prosecution for felony perjury.⁸⁵ And he might have other problems: Lanterman has procured a multiple award GSA contract that specifies job roles.⁸⁶ His role appears to correspond to “Cyber Forensics Managing Director” (noting a training of SCERS, a certification that Lanterman claims) and a minimum education of “Master’s Degree.” Because Lanterman has apparently falsified the master’s degree and has received taxpayer monies, it may constitute a violation of the Federal False Claims Act or other statutes.

⁸¹ See [October 24, 2023 go-pound-sand memo](#)

⁸² It was Ben Butler who selected Lanterman to speak at the September 2023 Annual Lawyer Professional Responsibility seminar discussed above. Despite the fact that Lanterman used the platform to mock ransomware victims and defame CFO Steve Robinson, Butler said he offered Lanterman as the ethics speaker because the presentation was entertaining and well received at the earlier National Organization of Bar Counsel seminar.

⁸³ Lanterman has posted numerous photos of himself with judges on LinkedIn. And the court chastised him and Madel during his trial testimony for repeatedly attempting to influence the jury by mentioning his association with judges (*see* Note 25, *supra*).

⁸⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20250318041127/https://powerhousemediation.com/mark-lanterman/> (last retrieved March 18, 2025).

⁸⁵ *Vision Industries v. ACU Plasmold*, No. 2:18-cv-6296 (D. NJ), [Dkt. 295](#). *And see* Note 9, *supra*.

⁸⁶ https://www.gsaadvantage.gov/ref_text/47QTCA22D004L/0WVWVIR.3SN8HG_47QTCA22D004L_FSS.PDF

Likewise, if the work he is doing on behalf of any of the law enforcement agencies was made possible by a Federal grant, as I believe to be the case, then he is an indirect beneficiary of funds.

According to one deposition, Lanterman's contract for Hennepin County, Minnesota is worth \$250K of taxpayers' money, annually.⁸⁷ The Ramsey and Washington County contracts are \$50K annually.⁸⁸ And there are others. At the time of this writing, Hennepin County has begun issuing Brady notifications to defense counsel, as it has launched an investigation.⁸⁹

Now under the microscope, Lanterman has acknowledged in a memorandum to a Federal magistrate judge that the registrar could not locate *any* transcripts or evidence of diploma[s] for his *entire six years* alleged attendance at Upsala College,⁹⁰ suggesting this may be the result of "Unresolved money-related issues,"⁹¹ which nevertheless means no diplomas were awarded, yet contradicting his testimony on February 11, 2025 that the diplomas were at his grandparents' house in New Jersey, and thrown away when his grandparents died. He also admits that he did not "attend graduation ceremonies" (despite claiming, "I graduated from Upsala College . . . ," for the last 20 years).⁹²

Lanterman further confessed the allegation that his "Harvard University" postgraduate studies claim was a non-credit certificate for an 8-week online course through GetSmarter,[®] a/k/a HarvardX (and also not the "nine month program at Harvard University" he discussed under oath in his May 06, 2022 deposition).⁹³

Recall one of our previous examples, Jim Bates, who defiantly told a reporter, "My expertise and impartiality have never been questioned. There has never been any question that my claim to a degree has made any difference to any case." Lanterman is taking the same parting shot:

For nearly 25 years, I have . . . consistently [lied about] Upsala College on my CV without objection from employers, opposing counsel, or the numerous courts before which I have testified. This is probably because my professional endeavors have never required holding a degree from any academic institution, but here we are.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ See [June 06, 2019 deposition](#) in [Buildingreports.com, inc. v. Honeywell Int'l](#) at p. 94-96

⁸⁸ *Id.*

⁸⁹ See [March 2025 Brady notification](#)

⁹⁰ See Note 40, *supra*.

⁹¹ See Lanterman's [March 17, 2025 memorandum](#) to magistrate judge (*N.B.*, certain present-tense statements constituting libel *per se* have been redacted).

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ See [July 26, 2018 online course certificate](#)

⁹⁴ Note 89, *supra*.

Dean Boland (a/k/a Jack Boland, a/k/a John Taylor)

The final example is Attorney Dean Boland of Ohio, who—at last check— goes by the name of John Taylor. I include him in the list of frauds because of his desultory efforts to obliterate his history. But, before continuing with this example, I'd like to take this opportunity to laud and encourage anyone who has a doubtful past, whether arrived at by poor judgment, lack of wisdom that comes with age, poverty, abuse, or any other unfortunate circumstances, and who endeavors in earnest to overcome that past by thrift, learning new skills, making contributions to society, and reinventing himself or herself. There are no shortcuts.

Boland established himself as a defense expert in the subject matter of contraband, and championed the novel theory that “it is now impossible for any individual to know from a mere viewing of digital images on a computer whether or not those images portray actual children.”⁹⁵ The first time Boland introduced his theory in a court probably was in April 2004, when he testified as an expert witness on behalf of a defendant charged with actual or attempted possession of contraband.⁹⁶ He presented “before” photographs of children that he had obtained as stock images, and followed by photographs which he altered (“morphed”) to depict the same children engaging in sexually explicit conduct with adults. Boland’s defense theory was that if he could fabricate contraband so easily, then there should be reasonable doubt that the alleged contraband with which defendant was charged might also have been fabricated.

At the conclusion of that hearing, the prosecution asserted that Boland’s “after” exhibits were contraband. The judge pointed out the exhibits were prepared “at court order,” but instructed Boland to delete them. Instead, Boland called the US Attorney’s office in his hometown, Cleveland, for an opinion as to whether these exhibits were contraband. Boland did not receive a return call, and he proceeded to ship his computer from Oklahoma to Ohio. He continued to use the exhibits in testimony in Ohio cases.

The following month, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) began investigating Boland’s conduct related to the contraband images he had fabricated. The FBI obtained a search warrant for Boland’s home and seized devices containing electronic files. The U.S. Attorney’s Office asserted that Boland’s prepared exhibits were contraband under 18 U.S.C. § 2256(8)(C), which defines as “child pornography” any image which is morphed to make it appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct. To avoid prosecution, Boland executed on April 5, 2007, a pre-trial diversion agreement in which he admitted he violated federal law 18 U.S.C. § 2252A(a)(5)(B) by morphing the images of identifiable children into contraband.

Federal prosecutors identified two children in the stock photos and contraband and informed the children’s parents. On September 14, 2007, they sued Boland in the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division under 18 U.S.C. § 2255, the civil-remedy provision of the child pornography statute, which provides statutory minimum damages

⁹⁵ United States v. Shreck, N.D. Oklahoma No. 03-CR-0043-CVE, 2006 WL 7067888 (May 23, 2006).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

of \$150,000 to victims of child pornographers. After an appeal to and remand from the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, judgment was entered against Boland for \$300,000. Boland was also ordered to pay plaintiffs \$43,214.11 in attorney fees. In partial satisfaction of those judgments, plaintiffs garnished a \$70,000 payment Boland was owed by the state of Ohio.

In 2010, Boland brought an unsuccessful suit for declaratory and injunctive relief against the Attorney General of the United States, seeking to enjoin the United States from enforcing any of the child pornography statutes against Ohio criminal defense attorneys or defense experts.⁹⁷

In January 2016, Boland filed a bankruptcy petition in the Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Ohio, seeking to discharge the civil judgments entered against him. On appeal, the Bankruptcy Appellate Panel of the Sixth Circuit concluded that Boland's actions in using the images of the children were "malicious" and that the judgments therefore could not be discharged in bankruptcy.⁹⁸

The destruction of Boland's life and career—certainly financially and perhaps otherwise—due to his carelessness cannot be understated. Seemingly in an effort to reinvent himself, he legally changed his name to Jack Boland in 2016. When that proved ineffective, he legally changed it again in 2019 to John Taylor,⁹⁹ also demanded that Google remove indexing of court opinions, newspaper articles, and blog posts about him, including from Above The Law, Jonathan Turley, PopeHat, Simple Justice, TechDirt, Reuters, Bloomberg, L.A. Times, Cleveland Plain Dealer, and many others. He also threatened several bloggers and journalists with defamation for running stories about him.¹⁰⁰ Boland attempted a new career as a physician assistant in 2019.

When Boland—er, I mean Taylor—attempted to renew his physician-assistant license pursuant to one of his name changes, he was questioned by the State Medical Board of Ohio about the rationale for the name change history. The Board launched an investigation and found that he had submitted false answers in his original license application. In January, 2022, Boland consented to a permanent surrender of his physician-assistant license.

Boland's conduct with the Medical Board was called to the attention of Ohio's Board of Professional Conduct. At his disciplinary hearing, rather than concede that he provided false answers on the application, Boland blamed the Medical Board for using ambiguous language and punctuation in the application. The Board of Professional Conduct rejected Boland's explanations, finding that the questions on the application were plainly stated and that Taylor's answers were false. The Ohio Supreme Court found that Boland violated Rule 8.4(c) (prohibiting

⁹⁷ *Boland v. Holder*, Case No.: 1:09 CV 1614 (N.D. Ohio Sep. 30, 2010).

⁹⁸ *In re Boland*, 596 B.R. 532 (6th Cir. BAP 2019).

⁹⁹ Boland has offered the explanation that the name changes were necessary because he was a victim of domestic violence.

¹⁰⁰ *Lawyer Threatens Another Lawyer with Defamation Lawsuit if Old Blog Post Loaded with Facts isn't Removed Immediately*, techDirt (Oct. 27, 2015), last retrieved 28 February 2025 from <https://www.techdirt.com/2015/10/27/lawyer-threatens-another-lawyer-with-defamation-lawsuit-if-old-blog-post-loaded-with-facts-isnt-removed-immediately/>

an attorney from engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation), and suspended him from the practice of law for six months.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

In 2011, I authored an article for the Wlm. Mitchell Law Review discussing digital forensics experts ethics,¹⁰² but never imagined how much new material I could encounter for any future article. If you've made it this far, you may be wondering, "Where's the advice about how to avoid all this?" But, I suspect you already know the answer: due diligence. And there are no shortcuts. You're busy, and you want to be trusting. But you can't.

The National Institute of Justice provides an excellent checklist of red flags to watch out for with your experts, and they are: providing outright false data; not conducting an investigation; altering data; giving false testimony; intentionally ignoring available data; recanting prior contra positions; allowing improper attorney influence; reaching conclusions before research is conducted or completed; allowing conflicts of interest; using fraudulent credentials; overstating conclusions; and giving false or misleading testimony.¹⁰³ The only item I can possibly add to this excellent list is that you should very carefully read the contract for services, to make sure you're not getting hit with hidden fees, and that your data and work product are protected.

Of all of the red flags, the easiest one to address when considering a digital forensics expert is found in the common theme amongst most of the fraudsters described above: false credentials. If they claim to have certifications, ask to have them sent to you in color as a scanned PDF or photo image. If the certifications can be verified through a credentialing authority (*e.g.*, Credly), look them up. Ask to see a copy of the actual degrees. If the expert scoffs or delays, you have a red flag. If the expert claims to have published myriad articles, ask to read a random sampling of three of them. If the expert provides a list of prior cases and testimonies, look up a few of them and call the attorney who retained the expert for a reference. Look up the expert in LexisNexis, Westlaw® (or whatever investigatory tool is available to you). Ask the expert to respond in writing whether he or she has ever been disqualified as an expert or if any judge, court commissioner, magistrate, or other authority has found the expert's testimony is not credible. And do not rely on cursory Internet searches. As the examples I've provided above aptly illustrate, everything you find online is probably going to make your expert appear flawless.

¹⁰¹ *Disciplinary Counsel v. Taylor*, 2024 Ohio 1082.

¹⁰² <https://open.mitchellhamline.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1437&context=wmlr>

¹⁰³ <https://nij.ojp.gov/nij-hosted-online-training-courses/law-101-legal-guide-forensic-expert/ethics-experts/ethical-violations>