

Pathologist sorry for wrongful conviction

by UPI

TORONTO - A Canadian pathologist apologized Thursday to a man who spent 12 years in prison after being wrongly convicted of killing his niece. Dr. Charles Smith, once considered an expert on forensic pathology at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, is now the subject of an inquiry into his work. James Lockyer, a lawyer representing nine people convicted based on Smith's testimony, pressured Smith to tell Bill Mullins-Johnson he was sorry, the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. reported. Smith was a witness at Mullins-Johnson's trial on charges that he molested and strangled his niece. "I'm sorry," Smith said in a low voice. "I do want to make it very clear to you that I am profoundly sorry for the role I played in the ultimate decision that affected you." Mullins-Johnson accepted the apology. "You destroyed my family.... They hate me because of what you did to me," he said. "I'll never forget that, but for my own healing ... I must forgive you." Lockyer grilled Smith for several hours. A team of pathologists who examined Smith's work found at least 20 autopsies in which he made dubious conclusions about homicide, with 13 leading to criminal convictions.

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