CRIMES AGAINST GENEALOGY

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August 2021
#1 The Case of the Relative Hoarder

(Alias: The Undocumented Connection Creator)
Why is “Nanny” on the X-Men Family Tree???
THE SUSPECT— “BORIS”

THE CHARGES:

• Taking people and information from other peoples’ trees and attaching them to his own trees without documentation

• Collecting “relatives” as the primary goal (he currently has 133,538 people in his trees)

• Assigning relationships between my relatives and his that aren’t proven or accurate

ACCOMPlice: THE “COPY/PASTER”
The “Copy/ Paster”

Definition—Someone who finds suspected (or even actual) relatives on someone else’s tree, and copies the information, photos, and documents, en masse to his/her own tree. The copy/paster does this without doing the research to verify that the material and family connections are accurate.
THE FACTS:

• Entries from my tree have appeared on other family’s trees

Look at all the people in my tree!

It’s on the Internet, so it must be right.

A copy/paster

Where from? Why are they attached to me?

Boris

Me

• These connections are frequently incorrect and without documentation, based solely on what “Boris” posted
• Occasionally, I have had to revise my tree to correct an error; the uncorrected information is still floating around out there and multiplying

• “Boris” does have some amazing documents that go back to the 1700’s. Very tempting! Unfortunately, he attached them to my people even though I have no proof that they are mine. 😞
THE VERDICT:

Guilty of spreading false, unproven, and confusing information

THE SENTENCE:

Boris and all copy/pasters need further education in the importance of accurate genealogy. Collecting hundreds of thousands of relatives is not the same as tracing your family.

Someone else’s tree is not proof!
#2 THE CASE OF THE DECEPTIVE DUCK
If it looks like a duck...

...swims like a duck...

...and quacks like a duck...
...it may not be your duck! 😳

Who Me???
THE SUSPECT – ME!

THE CHARGES:
Locating a name and assuming it’s a family member without deeper research

Ignoring new information that doesn’t fit my preconceived idea

La..la la la...la...la la la
THE FACTS:

My husband’s great grandfather Akiva “Kiwo” Yacov/Yankel Frydman from Rajgrod, Poland (pop. 2400 in 1937).

This is obviously him, right?

Folders full of records, gravestones, and first-person family knowledge.
But wait—what’s this?????

New information?
Documents/letters/gravestones, new BMD info?
How can we have two Akiva Yakov/Jankel
Friedmans from Rajgrod who married two Yente
Baila Zeitmans? I already proved that there was
only one of each!

I was good before. Now I have...
A Brick Wall of Ducks!
SO THAT WOULD MAKE MY SECOND COUSIN ONCE REMOVED THE GREAT AUNT OF MY FIRST COUSIN TWICE REMOVED... NO, WAIT, THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT.

WHY EINSTEIN QUICKLY MOVED ON TO GENERAL RELATIVITY
THE INVESTIGATION:

Time for good ole-fashioned detective work!

Pencil/paper
Dates/places/sources
I made contact with other family members to share new info do some problem solving
Read and translated Hebrew names on the family gravestones

Cross checked sources against each other

Checked BMD dates to see if they make sense

Revisited old correspondence and saved/filed information
“I don’t remember if I told you--my ancestor’s nickname was “Der langer Kiwa,” Yiddish for “the tall Akiva.” Could this be evidence of two Akivas? Or just one tall one?

More questions—some things still don’t fit
Possible Breakthrough in the Brick Wall of Ducks...
But too many discrepancies and questions remain. Was Akiva's father Ezriel Zelig or Ezriel Hirsch Zelig or Ezriel Hirsch or Eliezar Yacov? 1 or 2 Akivas?

Brick wall isn’t broken through yet
I ignored info from JRI Poland that didn’t fit. It looks like I may have skipped a generation,

I had many answers all along but never dug in and put it together

This isn’t finished. I need to keep working and collaborating and won’t make assumptions

THE CONFESSION:
THE VERDICT: PROBATION

• I will continue to work with the two relatives in Israel

• If I am right, I will no longer be related to one of them 😊 Or maybe we are still related but in a different way

• If I am right, I will fix the errors on both of my online trees and on my computer software

• I resolve to check and recheck my assumptions, even when there are documents to back things up.

• I will continue to research, look for documentation, and clear up discrepancies
A FEW MISDEMEANORS ON THE DOCKET:

1. Failure to check for the latest on JewishGen

2. Committing DNA breaches of etiquette

3. Being too “clingy” or too distant with newly-discovered relatives
JEWISHGEN – SUBSCRIBE TO DISCUSSION GROUPS AND DATABASES

JewishGen.org Discussion Group main@groups.jewishgen.org

Welcome!
The JewishGen.org Discussion Group unites Jewish genealogical researchers worldwide as they share information, ideas, methods, tips, techniques, and resources.

Group Information
- www.jewishgen.org
- 15,999 Members
- 688,968 Topics, Last Post: 1:30pm
- Started on 11/13/04
- Feed

Group Email Addresses
Post: main@groups.jewishgen.org
Unsubscribe: main-unsubscribe@groups.jewishgen.org
Group Owner: main-owner@groups.jewishgen.org
Help: main-help@groups.jewishgen.org

Group Settings
- All members can post to the group.
- Posts to this group require approval from the moderators.
- Posts from new users require approval from the moderators.
- Messages are set to reply to group.
- Subscriptions to this group require approval from the moderators.
- Archive is visible to anyone.
- Wiki is visible to anyone.
- Only moderators can create hashtags.
- Members cannot edit their messages.
- Members can set their subscriptions to no email.
**All JewishGen Databases**

14 total matches found

Surname (phonetically like): FRYDMAN AND
Givenname (DM soundex): KIWO AND
Town (phonetically like): RAJGROD
Run on Tue, 20 Jul 2021 15:47:12 -0600

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Press the Button to view the matches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="JewishGen Family Finder" /></td>
<td>List 1 record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Jewish Records Indexing - Poland" /></td>
<td>List 13 records from Łomża Gubernia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Miriam Weiner “Roots to Roots” collection
DNA ETIQUETTE: CONTACTING MATCHES

- “Are you Jewish? If so, I guess we are related. Send me everything you know.”

- “We have Y DNA match and 2nd Cousin - 3rd Cousin. My grandparents are from Galicia. Do you know something?”

- Always answer any inquiry. Be kind.
AFTER YOU CONTACT NEW RELATIVES...

People have different expectations; don’t assume that you will soon be sharing Shabbos dinners. Also don’t assume that the new relatives want a close relationship with you.

If you want more contact, be sure to respect boundaries. Some folks just want to share genealogical information.
We are all perpetrators and victims of “Crimes Against Genealogy.”

No matter how experienced we are, we are still learning!