



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY**
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000

Release # 42-2007
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2007

CONTACT: KEVIN RYAN
NICOLE NAVAS
MERIS CAMPBELL
(718) 286-6315

D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH MARKETING FAKE DORA THE EXPLORER, BOB THE BUILDER, SCOOPY DOO AND BARNEY COSTUMES

Defendant Allegedly Told That Costumes Would be Used In Adult Movies

_____ Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Jamaica, Queens, man, who allegedly believed that the counterfeit cartoon character costumes that he was selling would be used in adult films, has been arrested on trademark counterfeiting charges and dozens of fake costumes – *including Dora the Explorer, Bob the Builder, Barney and Scooby Doo* – have been seized from his Queens storage location.

District Attorney Brown said, “A one-man counterfeiting operation like the one discovered here is capable each year of fleecing legitimate owners of trademark products out of tens of thousands of dollars, substantial sums in lost royalties. My office will continue to work with the television and movie industries to close down these illegal operations and prosecute those involved to the full extent of the law.”

The District Attorney added, “There isn’t a child around who doesn’t watch the exploits of *Dora the Explorer, Bob the Builder, Barney and Scooby Doo*. To corrupt the image of these popular cartoon characters or have individuals of unknown backgrounds dressed in cheap-looking costumes in close proximity to young children is particularly troublesome.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Julio Quevedo, 43, of 170-11 108th Avenue in Jamaica. The defendant, a native of Ecuador, was arraigned on Saturday, February 24, 2007, on a charge of Trademark Counterfeiting in the Second Degree before Queens Criminal Court Judge Fernando Camacho who released the defendant on his own recognizance and set a return date of March 13, 2007. If convicted he faces up to four years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that Hit Entertainment, the licensed trademark holder for *Barney, Bob the Builder*, and various other children’s characters, contacted the District Attorney’s Office several months ago when they discovered that the defendant Quevedo was selling counterfeit adult size costumes of children characters *Barney* and *BJ*, both of which are registered trademarks of Hit Entertainment.

The District Attorney said that based on information obtained during the investigation it is alleged that Quevedo believed he was selling the counterfeit costumes to an adult film producer who planned to use the costumes in films.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal complaint, on November 14, 2006, an investigator contacted the defendant by telephone and arranged for the purchase of a *Bob the Builder* costume for \$250 at a pre-arranged location – unbeknownst to the defendant – in front of the District Attorney’s Office. Later that day, an unapprehended woman, who identified herself as Millie, allegedly handed over a counterfeit *Bob the Builder* costume in exchange for \$250 in cash. The entire transaction was allegedly observed by District Attorney detectives from a nearby location.

The District Attorney said the complaint further alleged that after the sale, the private investigator established a ruse in which an undercover detective assigned to the District Attorney’s Detective Bureau posed as the investigator’s wife and sought the purchase of more costumes for roles in movies. On February 24, 2007, the defendant allegedly led the private investigator and the undercover to a U-Store Self Storage Facility at 138-54 94th Street where she was shown and offered for sale numerous costumes – specifically, *Barney, Thomas the Tank, Bob the Builder, Tasmanian Devil, Superman and Scooby Doo*, among others. Representatives from Hit Entertainment and Warner Brothers were subsequently brought to the scene and verified that the costumes were counterfeit and of poor material and quality.

The District Attorney said that, at the time of his arrest, the defendant allegedly admitted that his family members have been selling these types of costumes for the past four years, and that for the past year his father-in-law was manufacturing them at a factory in Lima, Peru, and then shipping them to the United States.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Evelyn Alegre, Jerome Pugh, Richard A. Lewis and Patrick F. Dolan and Sergeant John W. Kenna, of the District Attorney's Detective Bureau, under the supervision of Lieutenant Robert J. Burke and the overall supervision of Chief Lawrence J. Festa and Deputy Chief Albert D. Velardi.

The investigation was assisted by Shawn Lewis of the PICA Corporation, Angelo Mazza, Esq., and Brian Brokate Esq., of Gibney, Anthony & Flaherty, L.L.P., and Mason A. Weisz Esq., of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, L.L.P, along with Eugene Koenig of Warner Brothers.

Assistant District Attorney Joseph G. D'Arrigo, of the District Attorney's Economic and Environmental Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, and Christina Hanophy, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: E-version of press release posted at www.queensda.org.