

What makes a woman about being raped?

It's the crime we all fear most - so why on earth do some women pretend that they've been raped?

● Last January a 33-year-old mother of three reported she had been subjected to a two-hour rape in her home - even though she was under police protection.

Officers had installed a panic button and a video camera in her home after she'd claimed a stalker had been terrorising her. So how could this brutal attack have happened? After four months of investigations, the police announced they were closing the case because the woman's story didn't stand up. They found that facts didn't tally and she kept changing details in her statements. When the woman was told the search was being called off, she was offered psychiatric counselling and remained in secure police accommodation for the following few days. Now she may be charged with wasting police time on an inquiry that cost the taxpayer £200,000.

● Elizabeth Richardson claimed Gary Nitsch raped her while doing a painting job at her home. Nitsch was arrested and lost his job. Richardson then admitted to friends that the rape was a hoax - she had just wanted attention. The authorities were alerted and she was convicted of perjury and sentenced to 180 days in jail. She was also ordered to run ads in newspapers and on radio

A REAL VICTIM OF RAPE

'They should be jailed'

Jill Saward, 31

On 6 March 1986, three men burst into the vicarage home of Jill Saward in Ealing, west London, and subjected her to an hour-long rape. Not only did the brutal attack affect Jill physically and mentally, it also caused her marriage to break up and led to long periods of depression. She even contemplated suicide.

Jill is a genuine victim of rape - she knows the damaging effect it has and as a result she has no sympathy for women who falsely cry rape. "It makes me angry when women make up allegations," she says. "Not only is it a nightmare for those wrongly accused, but it is very damaging to people such as me who are genuine victims."

Jill believes that police officers and juries are less likely to believe real rape victims after hearing about 'fantasy' cases.

"It's very worrying to think that a woman might not be believed

because someone else had invented a rape," she says. "I can't imagine why anyone would want to invent such an horrendous and traumatic ordeal - except to seek attention."

In fact Jill wants to see women who make false accusations of rape given tougher punishment.

"I read of one case where a woman was charged with wasting police time after withdrawing a false rape complaint," says Jill. "All she got was 100 hours of community service. They should be given short prison sentences."

Jill knows the real trauma of rape



THE MALE VICTIM

I feel as if I've been raped myself

David McFadden, 44

David McFadden was wrongly accused of rape but it took six months for his name to be eventually cleared. A married father of three, he admits he was wrong in becoming involved with the woman - but doesn't feel he deserves the punishment of being called a rapist.

The whole ordeal has been the most devastating and degrading time of my life, says David. "Rapists should be severely punished for their crimes. In fact I think the sentences passed are strong enough."

After my experiences I am a more sympathetic man who are raped. I am hurt and loss of my business is impossible to describe. I've talked to rape victims, like them, I feel something has been taken away from me as a man - and I know I will never get it back."

The nightmare began in 1994 when David was accused of raping a woman at the pub he owned in Trent. He says that intercourse did take place, but only for about a minute, when he stopped because he was feeling guilty about his children.

David called away and told his wife and three children, recalls David. "I was nearly 20 years of marriage and I had never been unfaithful to Helen."

At nine the next morning there was a knock on the door. It was the police and David was arrested for rape. "I was in deep shock. I didn't understand what was happening. Anyone who knows me would realise I'm not capable of anything like rape."

Over the next six months David awaited trial. David's name was taunted, he got anonymous calls branding



David and wife Helen outside the pub where the alleged rape took place

She accused her lover

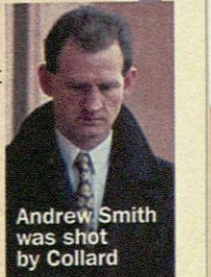
● Fearing what her husband Christopher would do when he found out she was pregnant by another man, Carol Collard, 28, claimed her lover Andrew Smith had raped her.

Christopher Collard then went to Smith's home in Gateshead and fired a shotgun at him, injuring Smith's thigh. At Newcastle Crown Court, the Collards were found guilty of conspiring to inflict grievous bodily harm, assault and having a firearm while committing an offence.

Mother-of-two Carol collapsed in the dock as her husband was jailed for eight years.



Carol and Christopher Collard



Andrew Smith was shot by Collard

TAXPAYERS FACE A MASSIVE BILL AFTER HUNT FOR FANTASY STALKER

The £200,000 lie

Psychiatric help for mother who made up story of violent two-hour attack in her home



saying she'd lied. "I want the public to know that these allegations were not true and that I made up the story for personal reasons," she told listeners to a local radio station. ● Cathy Crowell was a scared 16-year-old, worried she was pregnant by her boyfriend David Beirne. So

she made up a rape story and stuck to it. The man she accused, Gary Dotson, was jailed. Eight years later she became a born-again Christian and admitted she'd lied. "Every time I looked at my children I thought of the suffering I had caused the Dotson family," she said.

Why women lie about rape

- 1 Attention**
Elizabeth Richardson cried rape to win attention from her husband who was a truck driver and never at home. At first she pleaded with him to spend more time with her and their children, but when he refused she became desperate and concocted the rape story. It didn't work - he went on to divorce her.
- 2 Fear**
Cathy Crowell was a frightened 16-year-old when she made up her story. "I invented the whole thing because I had sex with my boyfriend and I thought I might be pregnant," she later admitted.
- 3 Abuse**
Some women who cry rape have been sexually abused in the past and are left with very confused feelings about men and sex.
- 4 Loneliness**
According to sex and marital therapist Anne Hooper, there is a type of woman who makes these allegations, but it must be remembered that in most cases these women aren't acting consciously. "They're usually very lonely," she says. "They are often psychologically disturbed. The need to cry rape takes these women over in spite of themselves."

THE MALE VICTIM'S WIFE

'I was angry because he cheated on me, but I know he's not capable of rape'

Helen McFadden, 40

David's wife Helen always believed her husband was innocent. "I was angry with David for being so stupid and for cheating on me, but I never once thought he was capable of rape," she says. Helen agrees with David on the woman's motives for

adultery aspect of what happened was terrible. It emerged before the trial that the woman had made up another rape story before. David believes she accused him out of greed. "It's only a theory but I believe she thought she could gain thousands of pounds in compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board," he says. "Of course in the meantime my life was ruined."

making the false accusations. "As far as I'm concerned there could only be two reasons for what this woman did," Helen claims. "She is either mad or after compensation. If I could get my hands on her I would kill her for what she's done to me, David and our family."

Real victims will always be believed

According to Detective Sergeant Mary Hanna of Merseyside Police, there is no immediate way of telling a genuine rape allegation from a false one. "Every case has to be given the benefit of the doubt," says DS Hanna, who trains police officers in the handling of sexual abuse and rape cases. "One victim might turn up to report an attack immediately afterwards covered in bruises and with torn clothes, while another might wait weeks." Although it may seem easier to believe the story of a distressed and dishevelled woman than someone who is calm and composed, according to Detective Sergeant Hanna it's not always that simple. "If someone is making untrue rape allegations, they're more likely to feign emotion and a dishevelled appearance to back up their story," she says. "Everyone gets gut feelings, but we teach officers to ignore them. We have a duty to investigate every offence thoroughly. The worst thing that could happen is someone not reporting a rape out of fear they won't be believed." Dave Murthwaite, a detective sergeant in police training, assures that every reported rape is taken very seriously. "The victim's welfare is our main priority during a rape investigation," he says. "Every case is treated on its merits. If it comes to light that the report is untrue, we'd investigate the evidence then assess the situation to see if Social Services or the person's GP should be consulted." Whatever the outcome, Detective Sergeant Murthwaite says the woman would be dealt with in a sensitive way. "There may be underlying reasons why that person has made a false report. In that instance we'd work out the best thing to do for her. "But any woman who has been raped must never be frightened to come forward because she's scared she won't be believed. She will be."

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"This whole ordeal has been the most devastating and degrading time of my life," says David. "Rapists should be severely punished for their crimes. In fact I think the sentences passed aren't strong enough."

"After my experiences I have even more sympathy for women who are raped."

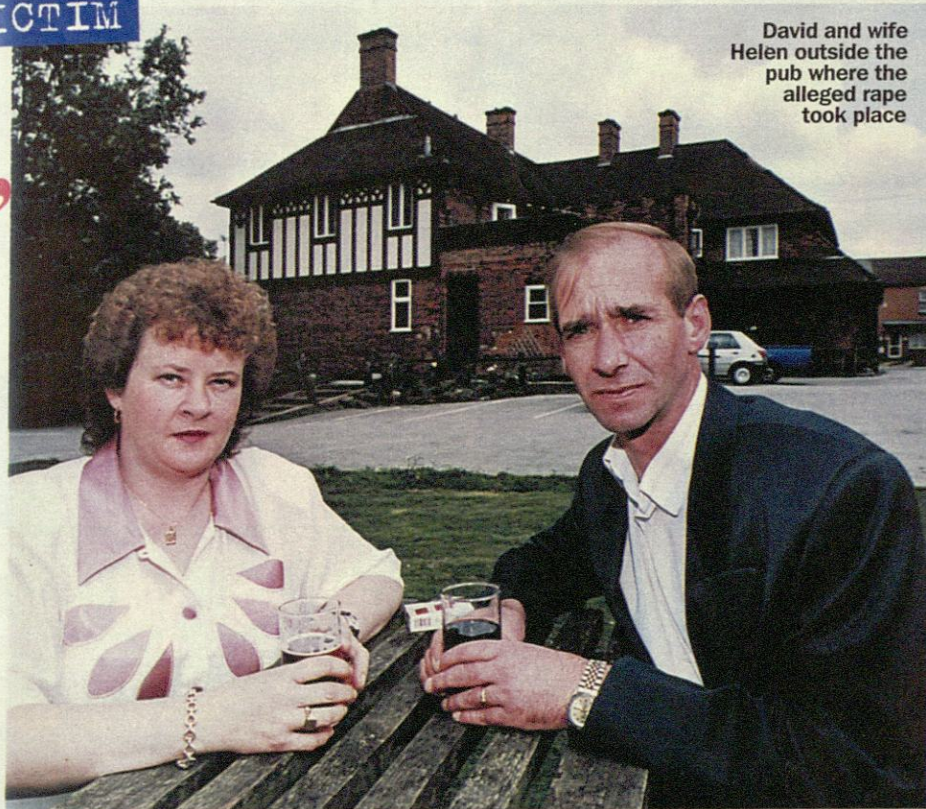
The pain, hurt and loss of dignity is impossible to describe. I've talked to rape victims and, like them, I feel that something has been taken away from me as a person – and I know I will never get it back."

The nightmare began in February 1994 when David was accused of raping a woman at the pub he owned in Burton upon Trent. He admits that intercourse did take place, but only for about a minute, when he stopped after feeling guilty about his wife and children.

"I pulled away and told her I had a wife and three kids upstairs," recalls David. "In nearly 20 years of marriage I had never been unfaithful to Helen."

But at nine the next morning there was a knock on the door. It was the police and David was arrested for rape. "I was in deep shock. I didn't understand what was happening. Anyone who knows me would realise I'm not capable of anything like rape."

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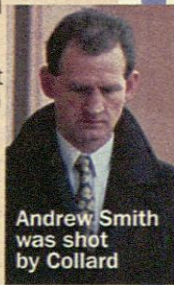
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Carol and Christopher Collard



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him a 'pervert' and business at the pub plummeted.

Even when David's name was cleared, his problems didn't go away. Takings had dropped by £2000 a week and he was forced to leave the pub and move his family into a rented home. His marriage suffered and he wasn't able to have sex with his wife for over a year.

"It affected us both very badly," says David. "The guilt I went through over the

adultery aspect of what happened was terrible."

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