

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." (Edmund Burke)

SAFARI has a new easy-to-remember web site address! You can now find us at <http://safari-uk.org>. (The old address of <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~safari/> will continue to work.)

WARREN BLACKWELL, who has fought for years to clear his name after being wrongly jailed for a sex attack, was dramatically cleared, following a referral of his case by the CCRC, after it emerged that his 'victim' is a serial liar with a long history of crying rape. But because of laws that protect the anonymity of accusers in sex offence cases, it has been claimed that it is impossible to name her, leaving her free to make more false accusations against blameless members of the public. Mr Justice Tugendhat admitted that similar tragic cases could follow because of the lies of the woman. "Parliament does not seem to have contemplated this situation. ...There appears to be no means of displacing her entitlement to anonymity."

However, SAFARI would like to remind readers, papers, judges and the public that there IS a mechanism by which she can be named. She can be charged herself with perverting the course of justice, at which point, as a defendant, she currently has no right to anonymity. SAFARI has published a number of stories of people (named) who have cried rape, and subsequently been charged with perverting the course of justice. This was not a case where a vulnerable person or a child was coaxed, coerced or pressurised into making false claims, and therefore she should clearly be called to account for what she chose to do.

Sadly, even the dramatic and public clearing of Warren's name, and the decision of the Crown not to oppose his appeal, will never be enough in the eyes of some people to 'clear' him. Of course, anyone who's been falsely accused, and subsequently cleared, will be very much aware that the problems don't end with a successful appeal. The 'no smoke without fire' mentality is all too prevalent - and, sadly, it's human nature.

Many years ago we spoke with an expert, who said to us: "Nothing is ever going to be the same again. Don't kid yourselves. No matter what happens, for some people you'll always be guilty. If you're found guilty, then you're guilty. If you get acquitted, then you 'got away with it.'" Everyone - even those who've been falsely accused themselves - needs to be wary of falling into the same trap. We still get letters from people saying words to the effect of: "I'm totally innocent - and now I find myself locked in here with the scum of the earth, rapists and paedophiles.....". Granted, many of them will be genuinely guilty. And some will NOT be. We've had people shocked by the news stories they read about their own case. One reader said: "I couldn't believe it was me they were talking about. It was like reading pulp fiction." If you were unlucky enough to have had your own case featured in the press, you'll know what they wrote about you. You'll know just how accurate or otherwise it was. You'll know that they quote the words of the Prosecutor and the Judge. You know what the Prosecutor and the Judge said about you - and just how wrong it was. Remember, always, that what you read or hear about others is NEVER 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'.

If you're a prisoner, and you receive your copy of the newsletter in an envelope with no postage stamp on it, it means there's at least one other person in your prison who's on the SAFARI mailing list. Here's the 'top ten prisons' list as of this month:

Prison	Number on list
HMP Albany.....	51
HMP Wakefield	43
HMP Frankland	36
HMP Parkhurst.....	26
HMP Wymott.....	21
HMP Littlehey.....	19
HMP Rye Hill.....	19
HMP Dovegate.....	15
HMP Whatton	13
HMP Full Sutton.....	12

CINZIA SANNINO, 18, from Llanishen, Cardiff has been given six months youth custody after falsely accusing four men of rape. She had danced naked for the men (but later claimed she had remained clothed), had accompanied them home and encouraged them to have sex with her. The following morning, Sannino, wishing to get herself back home, telephoned the Police to ask for a lift. When this was refused, she claimed that she had been raped, saying she felt as though she had been drugged beforehand. A full investigation followed, involving three doctors and a forensic team, and a recently-shut Police Station was re-opened. The men involved were arrested, and spent a nightmare 36 hours in Police custody. Eventually, however, one of the men produced a mobile-phone video which proved that Sannino had stripped naked to perform a private lap-dance and was encouraging the men to have sex with her. *As soon as she saw the video evidence, she withdrew her complaint.* Faced with this incontrovertible proof, she admitted attempting to pervert the course of justice. Her conduct, called "evil" by a judge at Cardiff Crown Court, could well have ended up with four innocent men being jailed, possibly for life, for a gang rape which never occurred - all because Police declined to give her a lift home. As so often happens, the only reason she *admitted* that the accusation was false was when she was confronted with compelling *proof* of her lies. Without that video, the Police and Crown could have had another 'successful prosecution'. It's high time that the Police and Judiciary realised that, in the majority of false accusation cases, the accuser will simply not admit to having made a false accusation without this weight of proof against them - and high time that the innocent had better safeguards than having to provide their own video evidence that accusations were false! Most innocent people simply don't have access to such evidence. These four innocent men were incredibly lucky.

Donations very much appreciated at:



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Contact us by eMail at SAFARI_Editor@yahoo.co.uk

(We can accept no responsibility for errors in this newsletter as we only share information received)

LISA FRASER has admitted making up a horrific story about how she was brutally raped on an Oxfordshire road - a lie that wasted 600 hours of police time. Her punishment? An official caution. What more proof do we need that the issue of false allegations is simply not treated seriously? Fraser's false claims spread fear among local residents. Police had launched a massive operation, searching neighbouring fields and the lay-by, and interviewing hundreds of motorists. Part of the A420 westbound was closed while forensic checks were carried out. Police spokesman Victoria Bartlett said: "The woman has received a formal caution, and the decision to take this action was made in liaison with the Crown Prosecution Service."

ALEXANDRA GRANTHAM has been sentenced to a woefully inadequate eight months suspended sentence, plus £549 costs, after falsely accusing an insurance salesman who called at her home many years ago. Grantham made the false allegations in the past, then made a retraction in 1998; she then got married and moved, evading prison for perverting the course of justice. She was eventually traced in August 2006 and held on remand pending the trial.

THE HOME OFFICE STATES (repeatedly!): "It is a serious matter for anyone to make a false allegation that a criminal offence has been committed, and there are a range of offences to deal with those who might seek to pursue such allegations, including the offences of perverting the course of justice, wasting police time, and perjury." They seek to reassure us that 'effective deterrents' are in place, therefore, to protect the innocent. From this month's newsletter alone: six months youth custody; eight months suspended sentence; an 'official caution'. Effective deterrents? We beg to differ.

BARONESS WILLIAMS OF CROSBY has said in the House of Lords: "There is no doubt that it has become something of an industry for some people to make allegations of a kind that have no substance against parents and teachers. We came across a number of examples over the past couple of years of people who had reasons, not any justified claim, that led them to make allegations against teachers that were simply false - in some cases because they believed that they had been wrongly graded, in other cases because they believed that their references had gone against them, and matters of that kind."

...BUT THE GOVERNMENT is planning to change the law that allows appeal judges to quash a conviction because of unfairness in the trial process. This is to stop 'obviously guilty' people going free on technicalities, and follows a promise by the Home Secretary, John Reid, to "re-balance the criminal justice system in favour of the victim".

When will the Government learn that the falsely accused are victims too? And that those making the false allegations are the perpetrators? It is being suggested that convictions should not be overturned 'just because the Police breached the Police and Criminal Evidence Act' or 'just because the judge misled the jury'. This is ludicrous; those involved in the prosecution must be accountable for their actions, too. If we carry on down this route, the Government could next suggest that people 'found' guilty shouldn't have their convictions overturned 'just because' it later transpires that the Police tampered with, fabricated and planted evidence. It must always be remembered that an existing conviction can be overturned *and a re-trial ordered*. That should prevent the genuinely guilty from going free - and go at least *some* way towards protecting the innocent.

FASO (THE FALSE ALLEGATIONS SUPPORT ORGANISATION) has called for anonymity for those accused of rape in light of the acquittal of two Hampshire men. Margaret Gardener, director of the voluntary organisation, which supports anyone affected by a false allegation of abuse, said: "Their family gets put in the limelight and their reputation gets tarnished. Their lives are often ruined even though they are cleared." Rape Crisis, a national organisation that supports rape victims, said: "You cannot have special rules for the accused in rape cases as this will feed the myth that women who report rape are lying, that it is easy to report rape etc." A spokesman for the Attorney General's office said those charged with different kinds of crime should be treated alike.

SAFARI agrees with all three; let's have anonymity for *all* defendants accused of *any* crime, ideally until conviction. And, when an innocent person is freed on appeal, let's have some kind of guidance that states that every newspaper which printed the original story should have to give the same amount of space, on the same pages, to the final clearing of the innocent person. This would go some way towards restoring their character.

ENHANCED STATUS - RESPONSE AWAITED: We constantly receive letters about prisoners who are refused Enhanced Status as a direct result of maintaining their innocence. We wrote to the Home Secretary, John Reid, on 11th August 2006 and are still awaiting a reply. We will chase for a reply this month if we've still heard nothing, and report back in a future newsletter.

UNDERHAND TACTICS: We've come across a number of cases where falsely accused people have provided Police with the names of witnesses who could support or even clear them - only to find later that their 'defence witness' has been stated to be a 'prosecution witness', and bail conditions applied to stop defence being able to communicate with them. What happened to 'equity of arms'? How *can* you get statements from your own witnesses if you're not allowed to communicate with them? The Police and CPS certainly won't undermine their own case by attempting to get the truth of the matter from your witnesses!

SAFARI readers are often looking for a 'good solicitor', but what *makes* a solicitor 'good'? A 'bad' solicitor can still win a case provided it's virtually impossible to lose, and just because a solicitor wins a case it doesn't make them 'good'! A 'good' solicitor is one who is prepared to *seek out* all the available evidence for your trial or appeal, and do all they can to *win* it. One who will *communicate* with you, give *clear advice* and *act on your instructions* - and won't sit on your case, wasting months (or even years) of your time, without having done a stroke of work. Don't be afraid to ask solicitors for their track record. Ask them what successes they have had *despite being hampered by problems*.

Thanks to Terry McCarthy (Parole Board for England and Wales) for statistics of those who achieved release on Parole whilst maintaining innocence.			
Figures for month of August 2006			
<i>Non-lifers:</i>			
All offences	10	of 54	18.5%
Rape	2	of 18	11.1%
Indecent Assault	2	of 8	25.0%
Other Sex	0	of 6	0.0%
Violence	0	of 3	0.0%
Property	0	of 2	0.0%
Drugs	4	of 7	57.1%
Others	2	of 10	20.0%
Total Sex	4	of 32	12.5%
Total Non Sex	6	of 22	27.3%
<i>Lifers only</i>	0	of 0	n/a
[No lifers' cases were considered this month]			