

Last Updated: Friday, 2 February 2007, 15:07 GMT

Author sentenced over rape lies

A woman who became a best-selling author when she wrote about her secret life as a prostitute has been sentenced for making a false rape claim.



Dawn Annandale's book sold more than 100,000 copies

Dawn Annandale, 39, of Hawkinge, Kent, said a man broke into her home in March last year, tied her up and raped her.

But she later admitted she had made it up in order to try to avoid having to pay off mounting debts.

Annandale was given a 120-day suspended jail sentence and 200 hours' community service by Folkestone magistrates.

'Insecure and depressed'

The sentence was suspended for 18 months and she was also told to pay £5,000 compensation and £100 costs.

Her book, *Call Me Elizabeth*, published in 2005, was an account of how she became an escort in order to support her six children.

The rape claim led to a three-day investigation in Lyminge, the village where she lived, and a seven-month police inquiry costing £15,000.

But it emerged she had lied in an attempt to delay a county court hearing about money owed to a landlord, which had been due to take place three days after she made the rape allegation.

“ She would like to take this opportunity to apologise unreservedly ”

Rebecca Winfield, Dawn Annandale's literary agent

Annandale pleaded guilty to wasting police time last month and was sentenced at Folkestone Magistrates' Court on Friday.

Her literary agent, Rebecca Winfield, said outside court: "At the time of the incident, Dawn Annandale was feeling very insecure and depressed.

"She fully understands the seriousness of the offence, to rape victims in particular and the public in general.

"She would like to take this opportunity to apologise unreservedly to Kent Police."