

Mother-of-three Sophie Skinner jailed for false rape claim

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A mother-of-three has been jailed for falsely claiming she was raped.

Sophie Skinner, 25, from Llanfoist in Monmouthshire, denied perverting the course of justice but was found guilty by a jury.

Newport Crown Court was told the life of her victim Damon Osborne was "turned upside down" by the accusation in 2016.

She was sentenced to 18 months in prison by Judge Daniel Williams after he said she had shown "no remorse at all".

The court heard that Skinner went out drinking in Abergavenny "looking for attention" on Saturday, 4 June in 2016.

CCTV showed her in a Wetherspoons pub, before going to public toilets in White Horse Lane.

"You then saw Damon Osborne who was waiting for a lift home - at the time he was 18 and you were 23," Judge Williams said.

"You ran over to him and hugged him... the CCTV at the toilets could not be clearer - you initiated the sex with him.

"When he gave into your persistent demands for sex you told him you could get him into trouble for having sex with you."

The court was told that Skinner then made a false claim that she had been raped to Wetherspoons' door staff, and was interviewed by police.



Mr Osborne "strenuously and completely truthfully" denied the accusation, Judge Williams said.

"After a commendably swift review of the evidence by police, the decision was properly made that Damon Osborne would not be prosecuted for the claim made, and to arrest you," he added.

Mr Osborne said since he was accused in 2016 his life had "been a mess" in a victim statement.

After a jury in the first trial against Skinner failed to reach a verdict, he agreed to give evidence against her again.

"I was accused of rape by Sophie Skinner, that turned my life upside down," Mr Osborne said.

"I was locked up for 17 hours, I had to undergo an embarrassing medical.

"I still think of the worst case scenario - if there had been no CCTV in this case - Sophie Skinner would have been believed and I would not have been giving this statement, because I would be in jail."

'No empathy'

Judge Williams described Skinner's allegation of rape as "patently false".

"You maintain your denials," he said.

"You have no victim empathy, you have no remorse at all."

"As the court have said before rape is a repulsive crime. The victims of rape should be treated with every possible consideration.

"On the other hand, just because rape is a repulsive crime, a false accusation can have dreadful consequences."

Judge Williams said such accusations could have an "insidious" effect on genuine victims, sometimes "allowing doubt to creep in where none should exist".

The court heard Skinner had never been in trouble with the police before, but she had been taken into care as a child and was described as "a vulnerable young woman".

She was sentenced to 18 months, of which she was told she would serve half before being released on licence.

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