

Jail for young mother who cried rape to cover up her secret one-night stand

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A young mother who tried to frame a secret lover for rape after her boyfriend found out about their one-night stand has been jailed for four months.

Stacey Challoner, 20, falsely claimed John Mullholland had attacked her in woodland before forcing her into intercourse.

Police later arrested Mr Mullholland, a 27-year-old married father-of-two and he was given a grilling about the incident.

But officers began investigating Challoner herself after he insisted he had a fling with her and described fully the inside of her house.

Accuser and victim: Stacey Challoner, left, falsely accused John Mulholland of raping her after the two had consensual sex during a one-night stand. She was trying to divert the anger of her violent boyfriend

Manchester Crown Court heard Challoner of Moorfield Avenue, Denton, had told her long-term boyfriend she had been raped by Mr Mullholland after he suspected she had been cheating on him.

The mother-of-three broke down and confessed she had made up the rape and has since claimed to have produced a child due to the encounter with the victim.

Mr Mullholland later told police he'd been subjected to a hate campaign and considered killing himself.

He had been referred to as a rapist in the area and locals had spat at him in the street.

He has had to have CCTV fitted and he is considering moving away. His marriage is now under threat.

Challoner admitted perverting the course of justice.

Passing sentence, Judge Iain Hamilton told Challoner: "An allegation of rape is one which is very easy to make and can be difficult for anybody who is falsely accused to refute.

"Rape is a very serious offence and those who are accused of rape are often vilified or shunned by friends or acquaintances within their community.

"The reason that you made the allegation was to dispel any suspicion that your partner had that you had been unfaithful to him. The allegation you made is of such seriousness that any person should be put off making such a false allegation.

"Mr Mullholland is a married man with two children and the facts of the allegation created significant difficulties in his marriage.

"According to his statement, he even reached a stage where he had considered suicide. All these consequences came from the lie that you told."

Earlier, the prosecutor William Donnelly said the incident occurred in August last year after Challoner's boyfriend was freed from jail where he had been serving a sentence for an undisclosed offence.

"Stacey Challoner says she came under pressure from him when he challenged her about what she might have been doing while he was away. She says he is a man who has used violence against her and she was in fear of him.

"On August 17, a complaint was made to the police about a rape. That report was not made by her but by her partner. She says it was made in the course of an argument between them."

Challoner gave an hour-long formal statement by video telling of an incident when she went to her friend's house and had had rather too much to drink.

Mr Donnelly added: "She said that she'd had a full bottle of spirits. She said that she wanted to go home and took steps to do so. She went outside her friend's house and bumped into the man whom she later accused of rape.

"She said that this man held her against a tree whilst he raped her.

"She made it clear that she didn't want anything to do with him, she hit him and then it stopped. So she went into detail of where, when and how.

"She says that after the rape, she pulled her clothes back on. She told nobody about it and eventually felt pressure from her partner.

"She says she didn't expressly tell him that she'd been raped but he must have assumed that from the distress she was in when she confessed her infidelity to him.

"There is no question that an act of intercourse did take place between the two of them."

Mr Mullholland was asked to attend a police station and he believed it was in connection with a report he had filed saying two men - including Challoner's boyfriend - called him a rapist.

"When he arrived at the police station, it wasn't anything to do with that and he described his shock at being arrested for a complaint of rape and was described as being extremely upset. He said later on that he couldn't believe what was being alleged.

"He was interviewed and told them about the intercourse that did happen between them but denies any act of rape.

"The following day, August 22, the police began to investigate the allegation further. The police interviewed the woman whose house Stacey Challoner was at when she had too much to drink.

"The police then went to see Stacey Challoner. On August 23, Stacey Challoner told the police that her complaint of rape was false and there was no truth in it.

In mitigation defence counsel Miss Carolyn Smith said: "She was in a relationship with a man who is described by her mother as manipulative and a bully.

"Stacey Challoner has three children and she says that her fourth child is the victim's.

"She was very much under the spell of her partner who is a violent man. When he came out of custody in July of last year, he had suspected that Stacey Challoner had been unfaithful.

"She admitted that she had had a sexual relationship with Mr Mulholland and they had an argument. She was seriously injured as a result of that argument and fled to her mother's but she went back to him.

"Having gone back to him, the arguments resumed of her infidelity. Whenever the incident was brought up, she began to cry so he became suspicious and asked: 'Did he force himself on you?' and she accepts that when that question was put she didn't desist him from that.

"He called the police despite her asking him not to. She was too frightened to go back on the situation that she had created.

"Her three children were taken away from her in November of last year. She gave birth in November to her fourth child.

"The defendant is maintaining that the son she gave birth to is Mr Mulholland's child. She says that the only person she had sexual intercourse with whilst her partner was in prison was Mr Mulholland.

"The other three children are with the paternal grandmother. The court heard that Stacey Challoner does not now intend to get back with her partner who is the father of her three children.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/jail-for-young-mother-who-cried-rape-to-cover-up-her-secret-one-night-stand-7243806.html>