

False Allegations and the Can of Worms

Friday, 08 April 2016

False Accusers and the Can of Worms.

It has just struck me why the You Will Be Believed philosophy kicked in years ago. Apart from the pressure of media and the scandal of missed past abuse, the old defence habit of bringing up other matters in cross examination worried many victims who were terrified of the inevitable revelations in court that they had worked as hookers when young or had convictions for drugs or other offences.

Understandably many victims cried off appearing in court when it dawned on them that their previous crimes or indiscretions would be revealed and painted in the tabloids. Whilst sometimes this line of defence was legitimate often it went too far. So police went to the other extreme, virtually promising to keep such things out of the court room.

As in many things, neither extreme is right. Add to that, it now seems not to matter to juries. In my wrongful conviction 15 years ago, we found out that the main complainant had benefitted by the police dropping very serious charges against him, of being the get away driver in a smash and grab raid on a jewellery shop in St Neots. That was revealed in court.

The jury were not put off at all and still believed the lies - which the man has since retracted anyway (read the Bob Woffinden book The Nicholas Cases).

I suspect, with the change in times, the attacks will return now, with the defence making much more of the inevitable previous misbehaviour. Have we not all got some past activity which, if painted in lurid colours, could be very embarrassing? The details of the strange past in the lives of both Nick and Darren, the two key Midland claimants, have helped wreck all credibility for their stories.

Of course, lies are easier when against dead people because they will never get examined in court. But even there, now, the media has found certain lies can, when exposed, be great stories. That is why the absurd murder and penknife claims, easily disproved, exploded onto front pages. And the previous false allegations by some crying rape often get all fresh claims dropped.