

Abuse of Process

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Those charming sports coach and manager cases must be about to come up in court and let me put a possible scenario forward which generally cannot be tested by evidence as many sexual encounters are and were private between two individuals, with no evidence unless immediate action was taken, for example, in the case of a rape, DNA would be available although consent or lack of it might be difficult to prove, depending upon whether the claimant had bruising or damage, either genuine or self inflicted.

If we are talking years ago, some of the young sports people may have been gay or bisexual or even keen to experiment. We used to call it You Show Me Yours And I'll Show You Mine - I even wrote a song with that title.

Many male lads at the time, when it was illegal unless you were over 21, might have been intrigued or even eager to find out whether or not such an encounter might be stimulating.

Some will even have initiated some kind of contact, with another lad or an older person giving off sympathetic vibes.

I stress here that this was more common with males than with females. The curiosity amongst girls was less although, as we know, there were groupies of all ages keen to indulge with their idols. And, of course, throughout the last century it was fine if the girls were over 16.

But back to the boys and their coaches or friends or even the odd teacher or hero.

Since those consensual encounters, times have changed. The lads have grown up. As it was necessary to hide such sexual experiments anyway, for legal reasons, they were buried deep inside. Remembered every now and then as the adolescent fumbles they probably were, with fondness or bemusement or, sometimes, regret. But essentially, like your first drink or cigarette, something natural and a part of life's experience.

But now, after the media has inflated some of those growth developments into dreadful crimes (and some, let's be honest, were - but not enough for the media which likes them regularly in order to boost interest in prurient listeners, viewers, readers) - many have started to revise those memories. A consensual, mutual fumble has become less consensual and less trivial.

Especially when there is money in it. From compensation or media fees. And when encouraged by greedy media people, wanting a great story, or police, instructed to get convictions so their bosses get promotion.

It's not always honest motivation that provokes claims. It can be a genuine attempt to help or to find the truth but it can also, often, be for baser desires.

And the law, blinkered and blindfolded, goes along with the stated facts, true or not. Because the law has found it is the only way to reach a conclusion where, let's be honest, many situations simply do not have a simple conclusion. In most examinations of a sexual nature between two people decades ago, we shall never know.

In my opinion, being aware of this, we should, in the majority of cases, cease to examine. It is expensive, can be unfair,

may lead to more misery than was there in the first place.

Like many things, it should be down to sensible assessment. The law calls it Abuse of Process. But it needs to be done, gently, fairly and intelligently, earlier and does not need the media, keen for the worst, stirring up hatred. If one in a hundred false, mistaken or manufactured complaints was eventually found to be true - a serial killer stopped, for example - the media instantly destroys the person who made the wrong decision. They are often fired, instead of being praised for the 99 correct decisions.

So police on the ground are forced to spend billions and waste time and effort better spent on stopping potential crimes (many impossible to stop) in duties which are causing incredible distress and costing society an absolute fortune.

This has to end. And I suspect only us old people can stop it, for the currently young and middle aged who will suffer and are suffering now.