

From False Rape To False Harassment



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By Alexander Baron

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What does a man do if he is falsely accused of rape? That is not a simple question. If he is charged and remanded in custody, there is little he can do except put his faith in his lawyers. Unless he is wealthy enough to hire his own legal team, he may end up with third rate representation, although to be scrupulously fair, in the UK if he is accused of any extremely serious crime he is likely to be allocated a top barrister or even a QC if only to ensure there is no appeal on conviction.

Fortunately for Alexander Economou, he was not remanded in custody, and was not actually charged with the rape of Eleanor de Freitas. He is also rich, and having spoken to him at length I can tell you that he is a single-minded determined individual who would have made a great detective, because after he was bailed pending further inquiries he did what the police either couldn't do or more likely couldn't be bothered to do, he uncovered the evidence that proved his accuser was lying. The case against him was then dropped.



Alexander Economou and Eleanor de Freitas

Having not spent a day in custody, most men would have been willing to let it go, but not Alexander Economou. There are reasons for this, in particular it was not simply *his* good name that he felt had been dragged through the mud but that of his family. So he mounted a private prosecution of his accuser, and rather than face the music, Miss de Freitas took her own life. She appears to have accused Mr Economou of drugging and raping her – two weeks after it never happened – out of revenge. Being if not an alpha male then relatively young, articulate, charismatic, handsome, and most of all rich, he would be a catch for any young woman. By the same token she was young, stunningly attractive, and, he says, great company. They met through a mutual friend, and would have made the perfect couple, but after she began throwing money around like confetti he became curious about not only her mental state but her source of income. She was clearly working in what is known generically as the sex industry, and he suspected she was a prostitute, not the type of girl he felt he could take home to meet mother, so he ended their relationship basically after a one-night stand.

This case has been [discussed here previously](#), and while the suicide of Eleanor de Freitas was tragic, it was in no way Mr Economou's fault. I said in my previous article that Miss de Freitas was the mistress of her own misfortune, implying that she and she alone was responsible for her tragic death. I will now if not withdraw then qualify that statement, because the evidence unearthed by Mr Economou suggests that her parents, in particular her father, are partly to blame. Why? Because not only had she previously accused another man falsely of rape, she had also accused them of both holding her prisoner and poisoning her. She was Sectioned shortly after this, yet Mr de Freitas supported his daughter's claim uncritically when at the very least he should have suspected it of being untrue.

In short, like most of the *faux* rape victims [on the American campus](#), Eleanor de Freitas was a head case, and her parents knew it. But it gets worse, in order either to assuage his own guilt or to exact revenge on the man he blames for killing his beloved daughter, her father, David de Freitas, has together with a feminist lawyer, brought an allegation of harassment against him. The police have now charged Mr Economou with harassment, and he will appear in court next month.



David de Freitas

The *Protection From Harassment Act*, 1997 is an insidious, widely drafted, nebulous piece of legislation that has at times been misused either to shut people up or actually harass them. It was brought in initially to combat so-called stalking, in particular to protect women from men who had sexually fixated on them, although it has also been used against women. It requires a course of conduct, which can be as few as two incidents. To give the reader some idea of how liberally the authorities interpret these actions, in 1998 a man was charged with harassment for smiling at a woman on a train. He did this on three separate occasions, the last time she had a plainclothes police officer with her. The implication was that he was masturbating, which was untrue. Leaving that aside, why did she not simply move to another carriage, another seat, or simply look away?

Mr Economou has been charged with something very different, in particular persistently proclaiming his innocence to Mr de Freitas, the lawyer Harriet Wistrich, and the world. His “crimes” include setting up a website about the case. This has been taken off-line prior to his trial on legal advice, but you can access [the archived version](#). While it is true that he sent a large number of e-mails to Miss Wistrich, these concerned the allegations that were being spread about him by her client through a media campaign, and which would result in death threats to his family. The communication with her was by no means one way. As David de Freitas did not retract his allegations, this was very reasonable. Mr Economou went on to issue a libel writ against Mr de Freitas, and now, surprise, surprise, a criminal charge has been filed against him.

A cynic might interpret this as a facile attempt by an unscrupulous lawyer to stay the libel action. Hopefully so too will the bench on January 11.

This is likely to be a very interesting encounter, because like her American cousin, feminist attorney [Gloria Allred](#), Miss Wistrich fails to distinguish advocacy from objectivity, and like all feminists, she and the truth are strangers, at least as far as women and rape are concerned. Miss Wistrich is a founder of the [Justice For Women](#) website – don’t be fooled by the name. At the side of its homepage is a notice that says if for personal safety reasons you need to exit this site quickly, click this link to be taken to Google. One would imagine that a woman who was capable enough to switch on a computer and surf the Web would be equally capable of leaving a violent partner, alas no, but if she decides to murder him, she can count on Harriet and her motley crew to leap to her defence, however spurious her claim.

One of the killers Harriet's organisation has supported is Zoora Shah, who murdered her lover in 1993. Shah was convicted on overwhelming evidence, but after her trial, another motley crew called Southall Black Sisters totally rewrote the history of the case in order to overturn her conviction. You can read what the Court of Appeal thought about this false rape accuser, thief and arsenic poisoner [here](#); the judgment contains some background about their bizarre relationship which saw Shah and her victim simultaneously snogging each others' faces off while litigating against each other in the civil courts.

Another murderess they supported was [Jane Andrews](#), who like Shah was a kept woman who killed a generous lover. They even supported Sara Thornton, who murdered her husband as he lay asleep in a drunken stupor. Wistrich's group portrays the victim as a drunken thug, in reality she and Malcolm Thornton were a pair of drunks. He had been married twice before, and both his ex-wives spoke well of him. [One said](#), "Yes, he drank too much but he was a happy drunk".

The behaviour of the police in the Economou case leaves much to be desired. Although they dropped it, they refused either to view the CCTV evidence or even to question Eleanor de Freitas when her story was shown to be untrue. It was left to the victim to bring his own prosecution, which was taken over by the CPS. At this point, DPP Alison Saunders could have dropped the case, but although she has swallowed whole many of the rape myths propagated by the likes of [Lisa Longstaff](#) and her gang, to her credit Saunders decided to continue with the prosecution. Women have to understand that gratuitously false allegations of rape will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. This in no way creates any sort of chilling effect for real victims; everyone should recognise the difference between a simple not guilty verdict (an extreme case of which was the [OJ Simpson double murder case](#)) and the man or woman who is genuinely innocent whether or not a case is actually brought to trial.

Whatever the outcome of the current harassment case, there is a lesson to be learned from it. If a man is accused by a woman, any woman, of rape, he is guilty until he is proved innocent then he is guilty all over again. Women seldom if ever make false allegations of rape, and if they do, it is the man's fault, because women have no agency. Furthermore, a man who proves his innocence and shouts it from the rooftops is guilty not only of harassment but of discouraging genuine victims from coming forward. Watch this space to see how this madness plays out.

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