

# Sara Ylen Convicted Of Filing False Rape Report And Tampering With Evidence

Sara R. Ylen's years of lying about numerous non-existent sexual assaults in two states resulted in her conviction on December 5, 2013 in Port Huron, Michigan of filing a false rape report in 2012 and tampering with evidence.

Ylen gained national notoriety in September 2012 when evidence of her history of making repeated unsubstantiated sexual assault accusations resulted in the overturning of James Grissom's 2003 conviction for raping her in broad daylight in the parking lot of a grocery store in Fort Gratiot, Michigan. Grissom was released on November 19, 2012 after almost ten years of incarceration. In retrospect the strange circumstances of Grissom's prosecution should have raised alarm bells. Ylen didn't report the alleged rape to the police, her doctor, or her husband until more than a year after she said it occurred in May 2001; she told police she believed that in June 2002 her assailant was driving a black Jeep Cherokee that pulled up behind her at a stoplight (Grissom didn't own or drive a black Jeep Cherokee); in October 2002 she identified Grissom as her assailant from his police mug shot, but when he participated in a live line-up she selected another man as her rapist; she told police she discarded the clothing she was wearing at the time of the assault; there was no physical or medical evidence she was raped; and during Grissom's trial her testimony was the only evidence a rape occurred and that he was the perpetrator.

Grissom was convicted in Port Huron on August 27, 2003 of sexual assaulting Ylen and he was sentenced to 15 to 35 years in prison. Grissom's conviction was affirmed on his direct appeal. Grissom filed a petition seeking a new trial based on evidence he discovered in 2006 impeaching the credibility of Ylen's trial testimony. The trial court denied Grissom's petition which the Michigan Court of Appeals affirmed. In July 2012 the Michigan Supreme Court issued its precedent setting ruling in [People v. Grissom](#), No. 140147 (Mich: Supreme Court 2012):

We hold that impeachment evidence may be grounds for a new trial if it satisfies the four-part test set forth in *People v. Cress*. We further hold that a material, exculpatory connection must exist between the newly discovered evidence and significantly important evidence presented at trial. It may be of a general character and need not contra-



Sara Ylen, May 2013 (Sanilac County Sheriff's Department)

dict specific testimony at trial. Also, the evidence must make a different result probable on retrial.

The Court remanded the case back to the trial court, which considered Grissom's new impeachment evidence and vacated his conviction in September 2012. The St. Clair County DA agreed to drop the charges which were dismissed on November 19, 2012 and Grissom was released later that day.

The statute of limitations barred Ylen's possible perjury prosecution for her testimony in Grissom's case. However, she set herself up to be prosecuted when on September 18, 2012 she reported being raped several days before by two men who invaded her home in Lexington, Michigan, about twenty miles north of Port Huron. The officer who interviewed the 37-year-old Ylen was "troubled" because there was no record at the Port Huron Hospital that she visited it after the rape as she claimed, and her account of the assault had a degree of details he had never before heard from a rape victim. The officer arranged for her to be examined by the Sanilac County Medical Examiner who didn't find evidence she had been raped. However, he did find that what appeared to be bruises and lacerations on her face was in fact make-up that he was able to wipe off. The ME later found a discarded makeup compact in the exam room.

Ylen was charged in June 2013 with filing a false rape report and tampering with evidence. The tampering with evidence charge was based on her application of make-up to make it appear she had been assaulted.

Ylen's trial began on December 3, 2013 in Port Huron. Key prosecution evidence was the police officer's testimony her account of the alleged rape "troubled" him, and the doctor's testimony there was no medical evidence she had been raped and what appeared to be injuries on her face was in fact make-up. Ylen did not testify. During closing arguments prosecutor Suzette Samuels [told the jury](#) Ylen's police statement reads "like a cheap novel."

The jury deliberated for 30 minutes before finding Ylen guilty of both charges. St. Clair County Judge Daniel Kelly revoked Ylen's bond and ordered the mother of two boys jailed while awaiting sentencing on January 17, 2013.

Grissom attended Ylen's three day trial. He [told reporters](#): "Strange. The last time I was coming down to this courtroom I had handcuffs on. I figured I had to be here, just to see what she gets away with and what she don't."

Over a period of years Ylen made reports to the police falsely accusing at least nine males of sexual assaulting or kidnapping her, including her father and her brother in California.

Ylen's legal problems aren't limited to lying about non-existent sexual assaults. During her divorce in 2011 after 18 years of marriage [her husband stated](#) in a court document the marriage "broke down due to the wife's complex lies and deceit involving fictitious rapes, kidnappings, pregnancies and illnesses — all attempts to control others by complaining of physical symptoms." Ylen [was charged](#) in May 2013 with two counts of financial fraud and two counts of false pretense, and one count each of using a computer to commit a crime and health care fraud by making a false statement. The financial fraud charges are based on Ylen's receipt of over \$20,000 from people sympathetic to her claim of having cancer. In addition to receipt of the money, there is evidence Ylen falsely claimed she had been a patient at Cancer Treatment Centers of America in Zion, Illinois and the University of Michigan Cancer Center in Ann Arbor, that she falsely received more than \$100,000 in hospice care over two years, and that she forged documents with the University of Michigan Medical Center letterhead. Ylen's trial is scheduled to begin on February 4, 2014 in Sanilac County, Michigan.



James Grissom after Sara Ylen's conviction of filing a false rape report (The Times-Herald)

## Sources:

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