

Former Monticello police officer pleads guilty to sex abuse.

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2016 Cop Domestic Violence And Rape Jerad Gale

Gale, 32, is also charged with aggravated criminal sexual assault, criminal sexual assault and aggravated domestic battery for attacks on two other women in Champaign County.

Gale was named Champaign's officer of the year at a ceremony March 30, 2015. He was arrested June 23, while still serving as an officer for sexually assaulting a former girlfriend in Champaign County in November 2013.

In a plea deal worked out with Champaign County prosecutors, in collaboration with their Piatt County counterparts, Gale is expected to agree to an identical deal at 9 a.m. Friday in Urbana. The probation term and jail time are to be served concurrently with the Piatt County sentence.

The victim in the Monticello case sat a few feet away from Gale as she read her victim impact statement Thursday. Gale sat at the adjoining defense table, set in an L-shape against the state's table, staring at her without showing any expression.

"The state can't give me back what you destroyed, but they can make you sit in this room and not interrupt me when I'm talking to you," the victim said, as she sat between Piatt County State's Attorney Dana Rhoades and Assistant State's Attorney Elizabeth Dobson. "They can prevent you from inflicting further destruction upon my being."

She said that his actions took away her confidence, friends, mental health and voice, but worst of all he took her body from her. She said she cared for her body, treasured it, and screamed at him that night that she did not want him to touch her.

"You killed a part of me that day," she said. "You killed my sense of safety. I will always be afraid now."

The young woman said that during the legal process she had to endure "endless questioning about an evening that I see as the vilest mark on my life." She had to hear from people who told her she was a liar, or made public comments that she was "out for money," or for attention.

"Why else would a woman seek justice for being raped?" she said.

Four victims came forth against Gale, including one whose case was not prosecuted, because it occurred several years earlier. She was slated to testify at the Champaign County trials, along with the other victims.

Dobson said the most important factor in agreeing to a plea deal was that the four victims agreed to it. The victims said they wanted an outcome that included three factors: Gale would never work

as a police officer again, never own or carry a firearm and would have to register as a sex offender for life, so they would know where he was living.

“All four victims agreed with this outcome,” Dobson said, adding that there was a fear that if the cases went to trial, he could be acquitted and none of those interests would be served.

Rhoades said this resolution prevents the victims from having to testify multiple times.

“Three of the women testified at a Piatt County motion hearing,” Rhoades said. “It gave them a taste of what it would be like. That is asking a lot to ask for a crime victim to testify that many times.”

Dobson said she believed all of the victims, but jurors are unpredictable, especially in cases such as this in which there was no forensic evidence and the victims did not report the attacks immediately after they occurred.