

Ex-officer guilty of sex assaults

Feb. 4, 2007 by *John Diedrich of the Journal Sentinel*

A fired Milwaukee police officer who once wielded considerable political power was convicted Saturday of sexually assaulting two women he met on duty.

Steven Lelinski, 42, was handcuffed and taken into custody by order of Circuit Judge Jeffrey Wagner. Lelinski **had been free since he was first charged a year ago.**

Assistant District Attorney Miriam Falk, who portrayed Lelinski as a sexual predator in a police uniform, said the verdict shows that anyone with power, including police officers, must be held accountable.

"If there is a message, it is that the authority people have shouldn't be abused," Falk said. "(Police officers) have taken this oath to protect and serve and when that's abused, that undermines public confidence in the whole system."

The jury of eight women and four men deliberated more than 10 hours before announcing a mixed verdict, which found Lelinski guilty on the two most serious charges.

Lelinski was convicted of second-degree sexual assault and attempted second-degree sexual assault, both felonies, and fourth-degree sexual assault and lewd and lascivious behavior, both misdemeanors. He was acquitted on two counts of third-degree sexual assault.

Lelinski, a 16-year veteran of the force, was fired in August, but he continued to be paid under a state law unique to Milwaukee police. As a convicted felon, he will "vacate" his position as a police officer at sentencing, thus ending his pay.

Lurid trial

During the often lurid five-day trial, Falk said Lelinski used his police powers to pursue his victims and ultimately assault them. That pattern, Falk argued, stretched back at least 10 years.

Lelinski targeted prostitutes, drug addicts, strippers and women with warrants on the assumption that his credibility would protect him from their accusations, she said.

It worked for years as case after case was investigated by police internal affairs but rejected by prosecutors in the office where Falk works. Lelinski also avoided punishment by the department and continued in his position, which included training rookie officers.

The first case Falk was involved in was an October 2005 assault. The victim said Lelinski met her on a routine call and then pursued her, ultimately coming to her home one morning and assaulting her in front of her 18-month-old daughter. Lelinski threw a \$20 bill at her as he left and said she could expect to be arrested on a warrant, she said.

After that case was charged, the district attorney's office dusted off a 2002 case it had earlier rejected. In that one, a woman said Lelinski, while in uniform and armed, assaulted her in her home, also leaving a \$20 bill. That woman performed a sex act on Lelinski, she said, because she felt threatened.

The third case involved a woman who said in January 2005, Lelinski took her into a room during a police call and pulled up her shirt, exposing her and making sexual comments and then slapping her on the buttocks. Her allegation surfaced after Lelinski was charged.

The jury convicted Lelinski on the two crimes from 2005 and acquitted him of the 2002 incident.



Steven Lelinski, Milwaukee cop
Pillar of the Community
Convicted rapist

....continued next page

...continued from previous page

Pillar of the community, devoted husband, father of 6 and religious man, convicted rapist of prostitutes and other vulnerable women, Police Officer Steven Lelinski

TMJ October 2007

MILWAUKEE -A fired Milwaukee police officer convicted of sexually assaulting two women he met on duty will spend **21 years and 9 months behind bars.**

Steven Lelinski, 42, was convicted earlier this year for the crimes. He's remained behind bars since then. On Thursday, he came out of the jail cell deputy escorts. He was wearing an orange jail jumpsuit and shackles. The courtroom was filled with family and friends, including **his wife, the mother of their six children, who vowed to stand by his side.**

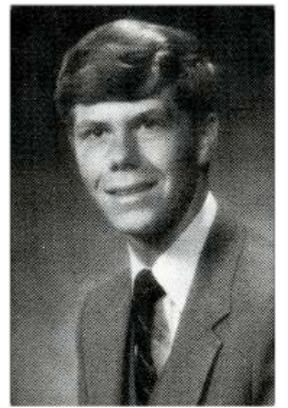
Prosecutors described Lelinski as a man who lived two lives - **one a devoted husband, father and a religious man, the other a police officer who used his authority to manipulate and exploit vulnerable women.**

The Journal Sentinel: June 12, 2012: The records showed Lelinski had **27 complaints filed against him during his 16-year career.** The Journal Sentinel's investigation revealed that **Lelinski's complaint total was three times more than the average number of complaints against other officers with similar tenure.**

Lelinski had been accused of **sexually assaulting nine women over a decade but was never charged.** Records showed police had presented at least five of the cases to prosecutors, who declined to issue charges, saying the accusers were not credible. **Not credible because they were prostitutes?**

The Journal Sentinel found that the records revealed a pattern of a police officer using his authority to repeatedly sexually assault vulnerable women he encountered while on duty. **He targeted women with records whose word would be unlikely to hold up against the word of a police officer in court.**

If it weren't for that pesky, insignificant conviction for rape of prostitutes, isn't he the ideal cop to put in charge of 'protecting' the poor prostitutes from being raped by their non violent, non abusive clients, employers and associates?



Steven Lelinski

Officer accused of assaults wrote thesis on abuse

By John Diedrich and John Diedrich of the Journal Sentinel Oct. 4, 2006

Steven Lelinski, a fired Milwaukee police officer accused of sexually assaulting nine women, several in their homes, interviewed domestic abuse victims in their homes for a master's thesis on why they stay in abusive relationships...

Lelinski, 42, is charged with sexually assaulting three women - one of them during the time he would have been working on the master's thesis - and, in court documents, also is accused of assaulting six other women whose cases are too old to prosecute. Prosecutors allege Lelinski used his position as an officer to aid him in meeting and assaulting the women and blunting some of their efforts to complain to authorities...

Lelinski's 90-page thesis for Springfield College, which has a satellite office in Milwaukee, was titled, "**Domestic Violence Re-Victimization: Rationalizations Utilized by Milwaukee Domestic Violence Victims for Remaining in Their Relationships.**" It was completed in December 2002 and a copy was obtained by the Journal Sentinel. **One of the sexual assaults for which Lelinski is charged took place in July 2002, according to the complaint.**

Officer tracked down names

Lelinski, who joined the department in 1990, sought the names of every person who filed a domestic abuse complaint in Milwaukee in May 2002. He first tried to get the names from Sojourner Truth House, a shelter for domestic abuse victims. Lelinski wrote in the thesis that he didn't get the names from Sojourner and officials there confirmed that, adding they never release names of the people they serve.

Using records from the district attorney's office and Police Department, Lelinski found 264 victims' names, according to the thesis. It appears he got those names using information available under state law.

Damn those whores! Who do they think they are, ruining this devoted family man's career in law enforcement over a little thing like rape?