

DNA schoolgirl rape man cleared

A man who was accused of raping a schoolgirl 10 years ago has been cleared at Cardiff Crown Court.

Daniel Cronin, 44, from Ton Pentre, was arrested after DNA evidence proved he had sex with the girl in 1995.

But Mr Cronin, who was also cleared of kidnapping, told the jury the girl consented to sex.

The court heard the 16-year-old was drinking with friends in Pontypridd after celebrating her GCSE results when she decided to walk home alone.

The defendant picked her up in his Ford Sierra and drove her to an isolated country lane where they had sex.

He told a jury: "It wasn't a gentlemanly thing to do, but I did not rape her or force her to have sex with me."

Secluded spot

A routine DNA swab on a relative arrested for a petty crime then led police back to Mr Cronin.

Now 26, his alleged victim told the court that she had been forced into sex and was crying and screaming to be let out of the car.

But he insisted the girl was a willing partner.

Mr Cronin said he offered her a lift because she had lost her boyfriend, who was 20 at the time.

He said: "I tried to make advances but she kept talking about finding her boyfriend. "I said: "What's it worth then". I hinted that I wanted sex and she never knocked me back".

He said he pulled over when she smiled at him, drove her to a secluded spot and had sex with her in his Ford Sierra.

"But after we had sex I felt I didn't want to take her to her boyfriend's house.

"I took her to a roundabout and asked her to get out of the car."

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