

IN THE CROWN COURT

Sitting at LEEDS

Leeds Combined Court

Before :

Mr Justice McCombe

REGINA

- v -

MICHAEL DONOVAN AND KAREN

MATTHEWS

I would like to presenting a case brief between Regina (plaintiff) and Michael Donovan and Karen Matthews (defendants) from year 2009. It is case dealing with kidnapping, false imprisonment and doing acts tending and intended to pervert the course of reports. The case has given rise to an enourmous amount of publicity in the media and has been the subject of public comment there and by the police.

The facts of the case are as follows: the offences were committed between 19 February and 14 March 2008. Defendants were take away Shannon Matthews (the 9 years old daughter of the defendant Matthews). After that defendant Matthews made a false report to the police that Shannon was Missing and defandant continued to assert that her daughter had genuinely gone missing. Shannon was after school take away to the defendant Donovan's flat and there she was for 24 days.

Shannon was also drugged with the adult sedative temazepam and with the travel sickness preparation called „Traveleze“ – this drug induces drowsiness and lethargy.

The question raised by the case is whether defendants had some psychological problems. The report prepared on defendant Matthew was helpful to the court because of a difficult past (growing up in big family, few education,...).

Defendant Donovan has had medical problems, including episodes of depressive illness and physical illness called dystonia. Donovan's report was also helpful for the same reasons as Matthew.

The court ruled that in each of cases defendants was sentenced to total terms of imprisonment of 8 years. This was made up in each case of a sentence of 6 years imprisonment on count 1 for kidnapping, 3 years imprisonment on count 2 for false imprisonment, to be served concurrently, and 2 years imprisonment on count 3, for doing act tending to and intended to pervert the course of justice to be served consecutively to the sentences passed on the other two counts.