



More alleged victims of alleged rapist cop is no shock

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When a man in a position of authority is exposed for raping a minor, it's natural to wonder how many more victims there are. That question must have been asked about Marcellus White, a New Orleans police officer who was booked and suspended in September for forcing himself on a 14-year-old relative. Last week, the 46-year-old White - who also worked as a karate teacher and led a student group with an emphasis on character development - was booked for abusing three more minors over a span of 16 years. White resigned from the New Orleans Police Department.

When White was arrested in September on the accusation that he performed oral sex on a 14-year-old male relative, police said White had acknowledged his crime in an email exchange with the boy's mother. That mother, who demanded that he "step down from all positions" that provided him access to children, was obviously operating on the belief that if White had forced himself on her child then he would force himself on somebody else's.

Officer Marcellus White, a 19-year veteran of the force, apologized in an email to the victim's mother for 'the trust I have violated,' according to court documents.

According to that September arrest affidavit, even as White was professing to feel remorse, even as he was begging the mother's forgiveness, he was refusing to put any distance between himself and minors. He reportedly wrote in an email, "Words cannot explain how I am sorry for the pain I have caused the family and the trust I have violated. In closing, your asking me to step down from 'all' positions that would put me in contact with minor children ... Doing that would put further financial stress on me, due to having no other source of income other than my job."

Well, now White has no job - and because it's hard to imagine a jury acquitting him after seeing that email - he can should be preparing to say goodbye to his freedom.

The Police Department's Public Integrity Bureau deserves credit for discovering that the 14-year-old relative wasn't the only minor or former minor with a story about White. All three additional alleged victims belonged to the Beta Club, an organization White led. According to his November arrest warrant, White admitted - in the presence of his attorney - that he had engaged in sex acts with the other three alleged victims

Suspended NOPD officer Marcellus White admitted to sex acts with underage boys, according to a warrant for his arrest.

According to Cato Institute reports issued in 2009 and 2010, allegations of police officers engaging in sexual misconduct were second only to allegations of police using excessive force. The Associated Press reports that at a 2007 meeting of more than 70 of the nation's police chiefs, the top cops were asked to indicate if they'd had to deal with an officer accused of sexual misbehavior and "nearly every attendee raised a hand." That AP story, published in November 2015, followed a year-long investigation into the prevalence of police sexual misconduct. The story's most troubling conclusion was that the problem is far worse than the number of yanked badges suggests.

Some accused officers are allowed to quietly resign, the AP report says, which means they can get hired by a new law enforcement agency and resume their predatory behavior.

Some guilty officers are never accused. Victims believe there's no chance they'll get justice or they fear reprisals.

Chief Bernadette DiPino, who runs the police department in Sarasota, Fla., and helped study the issue of officer sexual misconduct for the International Association of Chiefs of Police, told the AP, "It's happening probably in every law enforcement agency across the country. It's so underreported and people are scared that if they call and complain about a police officer, they think every other police officer is going to be then out to get them."

New Orleans police say that White began raping one boy when he was 10. The alleged victim - who is not yet 20 - told authorities he was scared "because he (White) was a well-known police officer."

Really well known. As a leader of the Beta Club and a karate instructor in the Iberville housing development he was seen as a model officer.

A 2001 Times-Picayune feature story about White said that he spent three nights a week at an Iberville area community center, teaching karate classes: "To dozens of children in the Iberville development he is 'Sensei Mark,' their karate teacher, mentor, role model and friend."

Was he also grooming them?

It's a sickening thought. Three Beta Club members have pointed fingers at White. Will some of his former karate students do the same? That's another consequence of learning about a sexual predator: It's hard to have confidence that the last person who came forward will be the last person to come forward.