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# Bronx Cop Charged in Rape

By David Kocieniewski

and Michael H. Cottman

STAFF WRITERS

A police officer arrested yesterday on charges of raping a Bronx prostitute is being investigated in connection with the slaying of another prostitute last year, police sources said.

Officer Kevin Burke, 31, of 1478 Shore Dr. in the Bronx, was suspended without pay yesterday and was awaiting arraignment in State Supreme Court in the Bronx, according to Steve Reed, a spokesman for the Bronx district attorney's office.

Burke, who was off duty at the time of the incident, has been on restricted duty since 1988 because of psychiatric problems and was working at a desk job, according to Sgt. Peter Sweeney, a police spokesman. Burke joined the department in 1982 and was assigned to the 45th Precinct in the Bronx.

Sources familiar with the case said Burke allegedly made comments while assaulting the victim yesterday that may tie him to the strangulation of a prostitute in the Bronx last year. The slaying occurred near the scene of yesterday's alleged rape.

About midnight Wednesday, according to police, officers from the 45th Precinct noticed a car parked in an isolated area near the Whitestone Bridge. Burke was ordered out of the car, and the officers saw the nude woman inside the car, bound and blindfolded.

Police said Burke had picked up a woman from an area known for prostitution traffic. Sweeney said the woman was not forced into the car.

Burke was charged with first-degree rape, first-degree sodomy, third-degree assault, unlawful imprisonment and patronizing a prostitute.

## Ex-cop guilty of paralyzing prostitute

By PETE DONOHUE

Daily News Staff Writer

A former cop was convicted yesterday of shooting and paralyzing a Queens prostitute who mocked him after he failed to perform sexually.

Rolando Hernandez, who shot the woman eight days after graduating from the Police Academy, clutched a small Bible as the jury foreman declared him guilty of attempted murder, assault and tampering with evidence.

Hernandez, 25, faces up to 25 years in prison when sentenced next month by Justice Richard Buchter.

But the woman he paralyzed, 28-year-old Gayle Hoff-

man, said Hernandez "deserves to have his arms and legs handcuffed for a month or so, so he can see what it feels like."

"He can feed himself, he can clothe himself," said Hoffman in a telephone interview from a long-term care facility in Queens. "He doesn't know what it really feels like to be a prisoner. I'm a prisoner in my own body."

Assistant District Attorney Kenneth Fischer said two lives were ruined by the shooting.

"This young woman, who already was leading a sad life as a drug addict supporting herself as a prostitute, is now a

quadriplegic," Fischer said. "And this guy in one night threw his life away."

During the trial, the wheelchair-bound woman described how Hernandez shot her with his service revolver in March 1996.

She said they had just left his apartment after the failed sex act and were walking down Beach 29th St. in Far Rockaway.

"I said he couldn't do anything, and I laughed," Hoffman said.

This enraged Hernandez, said Hoffman.

She said he brandished his gun and declared, "You'll never dis anyone like that again."

The first shot sent her sprawling. Four other shots missed the mark.

The former cop and a pal had solicited Hoffman on a Queens street, offering her crack for sex.

Jurors said yesterday that Hoffman seemed credible despite testimony that she smoked crack before the shooting and had abused drugs for 13 years.

Hernandez did not testify. "We knew she wasn't Cinderella," one juror said.

Hoffman has filed a \$75 million civil lawsuit against the city, the Police Department and Hernandez.

DAILY NEWS  
Wednesday, May 14, 1997

New York Daily News May 14, 1997

COPS RAPE/ SHOOT/ KILL PROSTITUTES