



## Dear Court News UK : child sexual abuse is not "kinky sex"



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Ex Dragons' Den star paid 13-year-old girl for kinky sex session after meeting her on 'sugar daddy' website

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Doug Richard is on trial in relation to a sexual offence relating to a 13 year old child. He is charged with ["three counts of sexual activity with a child, one of causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity and a charge of paying a child for sexual services"](#). You would not know this from the [Court News TV](#) coverage which refers to "kinky sex" rather than child sexual abuse.

Granted, Richard's involvement with Dragon's Den is an important fact since it follows a pattern of wealthy and famous men who misuse their power to sexually abuse children, but Richards was also an advisor to David Cameron and was involved in a project with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The inclusion of his "celebrity" status without mentioning his political connections is questionable. These are salient because the vast majority of criminal trials dealing with child sexual abuse do not get this level of media coverage. We need to ask questions about how celebrity culture impacts the criminal justice system.

Calling the sexual abuse of a child "kinky sex" is a deliberate misrepresentation of facts and the Sexual Offences Act. It's irresponsible journalism, particularly since Richard's does not deny the 'sexual activity' but claims it was consensual and that he thought the girl was 16 - as though a middle aged man paying a 16 year old for 'sex' wasn't in the least bit problematic. There are some quite serious questions arising from this trial in relation to power and privilege, but a man charged with five separate sexual offences with a child isn't having "kinky sex".