

Polygraph Expert: Smith

Woman's Initial Confusion on Details Was Normal in

By Mary Jordan
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The polygraph specialist who administered a "lie-detector" test to the woman accusing William Kennedy Smith of rape said he believes she is "definitely telling the truth" and disputes defense claims that her "inconsistent" statements to police prove she is lying.

Warren Holmes, a leading polygraph examiner who has worked on hundreds of rape cases, made the statements in a 117-page affidavit released late Friday.

Holmes said the woman's initial confusion over several things—whether she had been raped once or twice by Smith, at what point

she took off her pantyhose, and why she mistakenly called Smith "Michael" after the alleged rape—was normal given the traumatic experience.

"In my opinion it lends credibility to her story," he said, adding that he would be "more suspicious of her" if all her details were precise and if each of her several accounts to police were the same.

Smith's lawyers, Roy E. Black and Mark Schnapp, cited these "inconsistent statements" and "bizarre behavior" in a statement filed with the court Friday in an attempt to prove that the woman was "mentally unstable" and lying.

Holmes said he believed the woman

THE WASHINGTON POST

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 1991 A23

Accuser 'Telling the Truth'

Context of Traumatic Experience, Affidavit Says

called Smith "Michael" as an understandable reference to her stepfather, whom she described to him as "oppressive."

The woman also told him that she had been beaten by her biological father when she was a child.

"It lends credibility to her story, because she's associating two distasteful things in her life," the polygraph expert said.

Holmes, a former head of the Miami Police Department lie detection bureau, said there was "no way" the woman could have fabricated the look on her face and emotion in her voice when she described Smith.

"She described him sitting there saying, 'Well, no one will believe you.' You see it

come in her face, the reliving . . . man, there's no way you can be making that up," said Holmes, who also administered polygraph tests in the investigations of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Holmes said several other factors also contributed to his "sticking his neck out" to believe her: She mentioned that Smith and she had kissed and "did not try to gild the lily and to make it worse than it actually was," and she did not attempt to fill in memory gaps.

"A liar would fill the holes not to look stupid. She didn't do that," he said.

He also said it was significant that she

tried to take little items—a notepad and a photograph—from the Kennedy house to prove she was there. "Everything I know tells me this girl is telling the truth," he said.

In another deposition released Friday, Chuck Desiderio, the Palm Beach resident who picked up the woman at the Kennedy estate around 4 a.m. March 30, said that when he arrived, the woman was "hysterical." Although he could not make out most of what she was saying, he said, "She did say rape . . . She was crying lots of tears."

Desiderio, who was accompanied that morning by the alleged victim's friend, Anne Mercer, also said private investigators working for Smith had come into a restaurant where he worked and told him "that there would be cocaine allegations used against me and I should not make up stories about a very nice young gentleman." He said his father threw the two investigators out of the restaurant.

Smith is scheduled to stand trial Jan. 13.