



Dani Mathers and the reality of intimate images shared without consent

By now, everyone will have heard of the incident in which model Dani Mathers took [an image of a naked woman in a gym](#) without permission and posted it on her SnapChat with the caption "If I can't unsee this then you can't either". The media went with the headline '[body shaming](#)' when they first started covering the story. And, whilst its true that Mathers was clearly engaged in body shaming a woman, which is appalling in and of itself, Mathers also took a picture of a naked woman without her consent and posted it online. This is a form of sexualised violence and could result in criminal charges for sexual harassment, sexual assault or so-called revenge porn (depending on jurisdiction). We are pleased to see that the police are now investigating as far too often these incidents, particularly when the perpetrator is male, are dismissed as inconsequential.

The following is the apology that Mathers wrote in response to media coverage and criticism on social media (some of which descended into misogynistic abuse which is also grossly inappropriate). This '[apology](#)' that isn't really an apology shows just how insignificant many people view online sexualised harassment and assault:

'I just want to acknowledge a photo that I accidentally posted.

'It was absolutely wrong and not what I meant to do.

'I chose to do what I do for a living because I love the female body and I know body shaming is wrong, that's not what I'm about and this is not the type of person I am.

'The photo was taken as part of a personal conversation with a girlfriend and because I am new to Snapchat I didn't realise I had posted it, and that was a huge mistake.

'I know I have upset a lot of people out there but please believe me this is not the type of person that I am. I have never done this before and I will never do this again, you have my word.'

Mathers did not 'accidentally' post this image. She made a choice to take this image in order to humiliate the woman involved - that she got the privacy settings on SnapChat wrong is irrelevant. Even posting such an image in a private setting on any form of social media is cruel and should be understood not just as body-shaming but a form of sexual assault. There is never a situation in which it is acceptable to take a photograph of a woman who is naked without their consent. An intended audience of 1 is no better than an intended audience of thousands - and we are utterly disgusted that the media has repeatedly posted the image involved, pixelation of the woman's body and face do not lessen the humiliation felt by the victim.

We were pleased to see that the gym involved, LA Fitness has banned Mathers from all of their gyms across the USA, and according to [LAist](#), reported Mathers to the police. We hope they will take this stance with any member of their fitness clubs who also take images without the consent of patrons for the purpose of humiliation or titillation, as well as those who engage in



the sexual harassment and intimidation of other members.

Make no mistake, Dani Mathers is not the only person taking these types of images of women to humiliate them. A scroll through Facebook will find numerous advertised 'media' sites like Dibly that specialise in sharing images of women for the sole purpose of humiliation - customers at Walmart deserve their privacy and safety respected just as much as the victim of Mathers. Whilst we are pleased Mathers has already been held accountable for her actions, we want to see everyone take responsibility for choosing to publish or consume images designed solely for humiliation or titillation.