



No woman deserves to be raped. Ever.

No woman deserves to be raped is a statement that should need no qualifier. Every day we see excuses made for perpetrators and women, children and men blamed for their experiences of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. We highlight inappropriate, offensive or misleading language presented by the media. Despite our daily experiences of victim blaming, there are still days when we are shocked by the depth of hatred for women.

This article appeared in the Chicago-Sun Times. We have reproduced the entire document as it exemplifies everything wrong with rape culture:

1. Contrary to author Mary Mitchell's opinion, women involved in prostitution are still women.
2. Being held at gun point is a crime. One that charges around unlawful confinement should be applied.
3. Women involved in prostitution have the right to say no to a client - especially one who has a gun.
4. The police are legally mandated to investigate all crimes. Raping a prostituted woman is rape, therefore it is a crime. Insinuating that women involved in prostitution have no right to report their rape to the police is victim blaming.
5. The police should arrest any man they believe has committed rape.
6. Claiming that you don't believe rape victims are at fault and then stating that a prostituted woman is not an "innocent victim" are contradictory statements. Your victim blaming and hypocrisy are evident when you make such statements.
7. The innocent/good victim narrative is rape culture.
8. "mised some randy guy into thinking it's his lucky night" is victim blaming. You may say you don't believe women are responsible for rape but that type of statement is pretty clear that you do believe *some* women are at fault.
9. The phrase "off the streets" implies that March only views women raped by strangers at night as true victims of rape. This theory erases the experiences of sexual violence by the vast majority of victims who are targeted by men they know - many of whom are raped in their own homes by fathers, brothers, cousins, uncles and grandfathers.
10. There are many reasons women are involved in prostitution. None of these reasons make it acceptable to commit rape.
11. Inserting your penis into the body of a woman without consent is rape. Women's bodies are not object. It is not "theft of services". Theft of services is walking out of a restaurant without paying your bill. Inserting your penis without consent is rape.
12. Charging a rapist with a criminal offence does not minimise the act of rape. It makes it clear that any sexual activity without consent is a criminal act.

Mary Mitchell has made it very clear that she does not view women in prostitution as real women. It is also abundantly clear that Mitchell has no understanding of rape culture or victim blaming culture.

The Chicago-Sun Times must remove the article immediately and issue a full apology. We



suggest Mitchell undergo specialist training before being allowed to comment on rape cases again.

No woman deserves to be raped is not a difficult concept. It's time the media be held accountable for erasing perpetrator's responsibility for their crimes and for pretending that some women don't count.

A recent case involving a prostitute and a john is making a mockery of rape victims.

Authorities say Roy Akins went to *Backpage.com* and agreed to pay a prostitute \$180 for sex.

When the unidentified woman showed up at his Austin home for the transaction, Akins allegedly took her to the bedroom and, instead of handing over the cash, pulled a gun.



I imagine most prostitutes in this situation would have run straight to a pimp. But after leaving Akins' home in the 1100 block of North Lawler, the unidentified 24-year-old woman called the police.

Akins is now being held on \$750,00 bail, charged with aggravated criminal sexual assault.

I don't have one iota of sympathy for Akins' plight. But I'm grateful he isn't being accused of snatching an innocent woman off the street.

Mostly, though, I find this story disturbing.

For one thing, this is another example of the role *Backpage.com* plays in facilitating prostitution.

Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart has waged an intense battle to shut down paid sex ads on the site, setting up stings and asking credit card companies to block their cards from being used to buy sex ads.

"We try to explain that this is a highly dangerous act," Dart told me. "They go to the Website and meet at a hotel or people's houses. Things can get very volatile. This is not the first time something like this has happened."

Unfortunately, the way this case is being handled makes it look like sex trafficking is a legitimate business.

I'm not one of those women who believe rape victims are at fault because they dressed too provocatively or misled some randy guy into thinking it was his lucky night.

But when you agree to meet a strange man in a strange place for the purpose of having strange sex for money, you are putting yourself at risk for harm.

It's tough to see this unidentified prostitute as a victim. And because this incident is being charged as a criminal sexual assault – when it's actually more like theft of services – it minimizes the act of rape.

Thank you to Pastachips for bringing this to our attention.