

Husband's acquittal of rape outdated

Well that jury sure taught her a lesson. She'll never be raped again.

A Columbia, S.C. jury decided to acquit a man of rape after viewing a videotape of him having sex with his wife after tying her up and putting duct tape on her eyes and mouth.

Why? There are all kinds of solid reasons. For one thing, the couple was man and wife, and as the husband said at the trial, "How can you rape your own wife?"

And she no doubt enjoyed the session, as anyone could tell by her recorded screams. "Was that a cry of pain and torture, or was that a cry of pleasure?" asked the husband's attorney, Wayne Floyd.

And lastly, the wife, whose name along with her husband's, has not been publicly disclosed, probably deserved it, since everybody knows women who are raped usually instigate it.

Women especially buy into this belief, as Candy Kern, state president of the National Organization for Women noted. Want proof? The female-to-male ratio of the Lexington County jury who acquitted the man was eight woman to four men.

The acquittal obviously was not due to lack of evidence; the videotape and the husband's admittance took care of that. It boils down to a belief system that refuses to die.

The husband and jury, along with a significant segment of America, still believe a wife can't be raped by her husband. This stems from several assumptions about the husband-wife relationship, the main one being that of ownership and the legal marriage bond itself.

In a state where men are men and women are wives, the traditional definition of marriage thrives, including the stigma that husbands somehow own their wives. Many outside the state buy into this definition as well, along with the perspective that the marital bond gives the couple permission to do as they please without outside intervention.

The contract in effect transforms the individuals into a "married couple," thereby exchanging personal rights for couple's rights, allowing for a new set of rules — usually dictated by the husband.

The definition of rape includes forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse without her consent. This can occur both in and out of marriage, since a woman can refuse to have sex in each situation. Some would say a wife is wrong to refuse to have sex. It is her duty; she owes her husband that pleasure. The woman's right to say no disappears in a marital situation.

This is out and out wrong. A woman's right to say no to sex, along with all her other individual rights, remains intact within the realm of marriage. A man does not become owner of his wife when married; her, and his, personal rights continue to exist, and this includes the right to not be raped.

Of course, for this argument to make sense, one must believe women have individual rights to begin with. For those with any doubts, the answer is they do.

As for Floyd's wondering if the wife was experiencing pleasure or pain, let him imagine what it would be like to be dragged by the throat, tied, slapped, gagged, blinded and raped, as the wife testified, to figure it out. The wife, now seeking divorce in addition to prosecution, did not do so simply for added spice.

This verdict proves there's still backward thoughts roaming this land. It's time to update these good folk.



LETTERS

Cleaning up

In regard to the article on the Hunger Cleanup (*ODE*, April 13), when the final numbers came in we were proud to have raised a total of \$1,400! Thanks to the University students who participated!

We also would like to extend our appreciation to the following businesses for their generous donations: Jo Federigo's, House of Chen, Happy Trails Records, Hungry Head Books, Humble Bagel Company, and Mazzi's Pizza Company.

Because of their donations, it made the Hunger Cleanup a success.

Cathy Fleury
OSPIRG

Ax 'em

I think it is in your best interest to fire both Don Peters and Craig Norris because they add nothing to your paper.

Darren Welsh
Law

Experience

I was very offended by the letter by Jon Wollander (*ODE*, April 14). He should write from personal experience, not speculation.

I am a homosexual and an alcoholic. I did not choose to be either — who would? I agree that they can both be very dysfunctional character traits, but they are not inherently dysfunctional.

Denial of who I am and active practice of my alcoholism almost killed me.

I am one of the lucky ones to have survived, and to have survived with a positive image of myself is nothing less than a miracle.

I had three friends back home with a similar combination of dysfunctionality. They died.

If you sign the OCA petition, you will be saying you support their death.

So Wollander, do society a favor and learn to love yourself instead of trying to pass "loving, responsible thing to do" laws about my life and my future.

Also, please read a history book about pre-WWII Germany before you call yourself "not mean-spirited" or "hateful."

Graham Huesmann
Biology

Fists

The recent *Emerald* piece about the OPS (which included a bust list that could be likened to the statistics on the back of a baseball card) is part of an ugly trend in this society to glorify the coercive element of the state.

The police should never be glorified; they are a necessary evil required in the rare instance in which there is a serious danger to the public.

Such treatment leads citizens to take less responsibility for their own communities, and leads police to become more intrusive and zealous. I hardly consider a 60-year-old professor on a bike a serious threat, or even a 60-year-old on a bike with an open container, yet this is what the OPS now deals with.

This type of behavior is what the community should deal with informally. If someone is being a jerk, take responsibility and tell them.

Recently I heard a student OPS member ask in a political science class, "Don't the police have a responsibility to enforce community standards?" Wrong. Community standards are to be enforced by the community.

Social order is not a spectator sport. The more we rely on and glorify the clinched fist of the state, the more a people-based social order erodes and the more we need police to order our lives.

Bjorn Chambless
Political science

The light

Not wanting to accept any false prophecies, I sought out the one true God for a personal audience. It was not easy — months of sacrifice and self-denial were necessary before he granted me audience.

However, my purity of purpose convinced Him to lay upon me His final wisdom. I have consulted Him directly

and He has spoken. He said that the true essence of His Self on earth is Love, pure and unconditional. This includes all forms and shapes.

He clarified to me in as many words that homosexuality is a viable form of this love, perfectly good and pure when sincere.

He said all his children should love one another and polish their own characters exclusively.

Somebody tell Jon Wollander he can shut up now.

Jeff Martin
Eugene

Lazy or boring?

The high sticker price on higher education today makes one wonder why so many students are cheating themselves by not going to class lectures. Is it that some students are just lazy and unmotivated, or is it that some lectures are just plain bad and not worth going to?

Many instructors would probably choose the former, however, there is a correlation between good lectures and high attendance, and bad lectures and low attendance.

Many instructors become experts in their fields, but unfortunately, not expert speakers or educators. This can leave students feeling frustrated and ripped off because these poor lecturers are unable to communicate clearly.

Lecture is a valuable tool when used properly, but useless if not properly used. Students become disenchanted with lectures when instructors seem to speak more to the overhead and the blackboard than to the students.

As a few instructors have demonstrated, interaction with students in lecture helps create a positive, valuable learning atmosphere. Lectures with no student interaction and instructors with bad communication skills create the "40 percent" attendance in some lectures. In the end, the students are the ones to suffer because they're getting a poor education.

Stephen Albrechtsen
General Science

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