

Why Rape Culture is a Dangerous Myth (Societas)

By Luke Gittos


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Today it is often said that we live in a 'rape culture'. Panicked headlines tell us that rape is on the increase and that the police are failing to deal with it. Our courts are said to be incapable of delivering justice in rape cases, with the rate of convictions remaining consistently low. Sexism and misogyny in wider society have created a culture in which rape is pervasive, under-reported and often ignored by an uncaring public. But these claims are built on myths and misunderstandings.

This book argues that the belief in a 'rape culture' is seriously distorting our discussion of sexual violence. It explains how the laws around rape have expanded significantly in recent decades, giving the state a far greater say in the most intimate areas of our lives. The drive to prosecute more and more people has damaging implications for our legal rights and basic freedoms - and our ability to live intimately with one another. If we are to have a serious discussion about rape, it's time to dispel the dangerous myth of rape culture.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Gittos is particularly strong on recent developments in the law relating to sexual violence, showing how it is intruding into our intimate lives in ways in which most people would not feel reasonable... The figures given are thoroughly examined and the arguments are compelling, if disheartening."

(Sue Magee *The Bookbag*)

"Luke Gittos has written the clearest, most incisive critique of the rape culture to date. His provocative observation, that rape culture is part and parcel of an official outlook which problematizes and seeks to regulate intimate relationships, challenges the premise for policing young people's sexuality and suggests the need for a robust defense of the integrity of intimacy and personal autonomy."

(Nancy McDermott, of Women for Tolerance and Freedom)

"Gittos has produced a useful and intelligent analysis that clarifies and makes sense of an issue that has become very muddled. Gittos's tightly written polemic argues against the accepted view that we live in a society in which misogyny and everyday sexism have created a so-called rape culture, in which rape is pervasive, underreported and ignored... And that's why Gittos's intervention is so vital. He is intent on protecting the sphere of intimacy from those who see rape everywhere."

(Ann Furedi *Spiked!*)

About the Author

Luke Gittos is a solicitor practising criminal law. He has extensive experience in defending allegations of rape and sexual violence. He is the legal editor for Spiked online, where he writes regularly about legal developments in this field and about defendant's rights generally. He regularly participates in debates on legal issues on television and radio.

Users Review

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Ernest Ainsworth:

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