UF wants women to keep quiet

The UF/SFCC Campus National Organization for Women will protest the University Police Department today because UPD officers arrested a woman TWO DAYS after she reported being raped. We will not stand by while rape is blatantly ignored again by UPD. We will not remain silent while women who report rape are punished at the whim of UPD officers.

We support Lisa Gier King for coming forward to report being raped. This is what we believe happened:

1. Friday, Feb. 26 at a Delta Chi party on campus, an anonymous call was made from inside the fraternity house warning the police of a woman who was going to be raped. Lisa claims they left without fully investigating the call.
2. After her alleged attack, Lisa runs to a nearby fraternity house and calls her mother and the police.
3. Lisa files a report of rape. She tells UPD in her report about a videotape of the incident and all the details she remembers. She seeks medical care at the hospital and has a "rape kit" done, the results of which take longer than a weekend to analyze.
4. Monday, March 1, UPD officers arrest Lisa Gier King and take her to jail for "falsifying a report" because they claim the tape (made by Delta Chi narrators) clearly demonstrates her rape. Lisa says "I told officers I wasn't [kicking and screaming and yelling] because Mike Yahraus said he would break my neck."

UPD sent a message to all women by arresting a woman after a TWO-DAY "investigation" of her report of rape. The police claim they want women to report rape and sexual harassment, yet their history of victim-blaming and the handling of rape cases like this one discourage all women from coming forward.

By arresting Lisa, they reminded us that not only will we not be believed, but our character will be in question. We will be scrutinized for how much we drank, what we wore and our sexual history when we come forward to report rapes, but we also might be arrested and put in jail at a time when we need privacy and support.

UPD was protecting the right ofprivileged fraternity men and arrested a woman for daring to report such men to the police, police she thought would actually investigate her report, not just try to shut her up. Why didn't this stop the police from arresting Lisa? Because the State Attorney and UPD have a male supremacist view of the tape, they may actually believe she wanted it or that she is lying. They might think any woman who hangs out with drunk and high college men must have wanted it. We believe any woman can be raped and that Lisa came forward for no other reason than to seek justice.

Rape is a huge problem that has not been taken seriously by our university since the early '90s. UF administrators spent a considerable amount of time dismantling nationally recognized rape prevention services in the early '90s. UF continues to hold sexist men-only rape forums despite the documented abuses of this forum.

Candi Churchill, Nicole Hardin and Stephanie Seguin

Speaking Out

At a 1991 rape forum, Officer David Andrews said, "Women use false reports of rape as a way to get back at men." Lt. Tony Dunn has publicly stated that, "Being female makes it hard to understand whether or not it was rape." We know, and so do men, exactly what rape is. It is when a woman does not want it. Men in our classes, work places and homes rape us and then get away with it. The problem is not over-reporting or lying women. It is sexist officers and men who rape.

Campus NOW and our hundreds of supporters refuse to look the other way while we are slapped in the face with this gross injustice. It is in all of our interest, women and men, to support and believe the women who come forward against rape. The men who we believe planned, videotaped and got off on the rape of a woman should be the ones having to prove themselves. UPD needs to spend less time punishing women and more time punishing rapists.

Campus NOW demands: 1. State Attorney Rod Smith investigates UPD's handling of the reported rape and the arrest of Lisa. 2. All criminal charges against Lisa be dropped and she receive a formal, public apology for arresting her without a proper investigation. 3. UF earmark more money for rape prevention and victim services.

Sign our petition and come out to protest to show your support for women who report rape at 4:30 p.m. at UPD. Show UPD we are not afraid to stand in solidarity against this campus' blatant attempts to intimidate women into silence. For more information call 377-9935 or e-mail ufscfcmnow@juno.com.

This was a collaborative effort by Campus NOW board members.

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of the Alligator.
Justice For Women NOW
UF/SFCC Campus National Organization For Women

Campus National Organization for Women, Gainesville Women's Liberation members, and family of Lisa Gier King confront State Attorney Rod Smith (l) April 22. The groups want Smith to seriously investigate King's rape report.

RALLY
For Prosecution of Crimes Against Women

Saturday, Oct. 9, 1999
City Hall (corner of Main/NE 1st)
12-2

To get involved: 377-9935 or ufsfccnow@juno.com
P.O. Box 2235 Gainesville, FL 32602
The UF/SFCC Campus National Organization for Women protests the University of Florida Police Department for protecting the men of Delta Chi and arresting a woman for reporting rape.

Press statement for 4/01/99 protest outside of UPD.
We support Lisa Gier King for coming forward to report being raped. This is what we believe happened:
1. Saturday 2/27/99 at a Delta Chi party on campus, an anonymous call was made from inside the house warning the police of an impending rape—a “woman in distress” call. UPD officers who responded to the call left the house without fully investigating.
2. After her reported attack, Lisa runs naked, crying to a fraternity house nearby, Theta Chi, and calls family and the University Police Department.
3. Lisa tells UPD officers in her rape report about a video tape of the incident and all the details she remembers. She seeks medical care at the hospital and gets a “rape kit” (a forensic medical examination), the results of which take longer than a weekend to analyze.
4. Monday 3/1/99, less than TWO-DAYS after the report was filed, UPD officers arrest Lisa Gier King and take her to jail for “falsifying a report” because they claim a video tape (made by Delta Chi members) demonstrates her consent. Lisa says “I told officers I wasn’t [kicking and screaming and yelling] because he said he would break my neck.”

Two Campus NOW officers have viewed the video tape with Lisa’s permission. Lisa’s arrest is even more outrageous now that we know what is said on it. There is nothing “clearly consensual” about this tape. NOTHING. I want you all to know what some of the things that were said on this tape are. I want people to filter through the misinformation we have been hearing from Delta Chi brothers, their attorney and the press and hear what they said themselves.

One man in the room says “This is what you call _______.”
And another finishes it for him and says “RAPE.” And then they repeat it many times. “Rape. Rape. Rape. RAPE—white trash. Rape—white trash.”

Then the narrator says to the camera, quote “Unbelievable This is a ... night in Delta Chi history...maybe nationally, the night we rape a white trash crackhead bitch.”

Later one man says “...it’s RAPE thirty in the morning...”

At one point two Delta Chi brothers act as commentators at a sporting event and say, quote “I think this is what Yahraus wanted...He’s this power-controlling guy.”

Then, quote “notice the struggle of the hands.”

Delta Chi seemed able to identify what was going on between Mike Yahraus and Lisa Gier King at the time for what it was—RAPE. What does the word RAPE mean to UPD officers? Is it a joke? Is it “out of context”? Is it funny? We don’t think it is funny at all.

We ask UPD, again, why did you arrest Lisa? Why does the whole town know Lisa’s name, but we do not know these men’s names? Why have these men not been arrested? Why did you not thoroughly investigate this woman’s claim? We ask you all here today to think about how much time UPD officers spent investigating the men of Delta Chi and how much time was spent investigating Lisa.
On Monday March 1st, 1999 the University Police Department sent a message to all women by arresting a woman after less than a two-day "investigation" of her report of rape. The police claim they want women to report rape and sexual harassment, yet their history of victim blaming and handling of rape cases like this one discourage women from coming forward. They go into rape cases with a male supremacist interpretation; they go into rape cases convinced that the woman is a liar and clearly wanted to have sex and the men are just "boys being boys." By arresting Lisa, UPD reminded us that when we come forward to report rape, not only will we not be believed, our character will be in question, we will be scrutinized for our sexual past, how much we drank, and what we wore, but also that we may actually be arrested and treated like a criminal. In Lisa's case, she was treated in all these ways but also had her name blasted all over the papers, TV, and radio and she has to spend energy, time and money on her defense, at a time when she needs privacy and support.

First UPD decided these men were victims of a false report. Now the University of Florida, the Gainesville Sun and the Alligator imply they are victims of hazing. These grown men knew what they were doing to Lisa and had complete control over themselves; they heard her say "I do not want this" and they saw and even commented on her resistance on being penetrated. Lisa is the victim here; Lisa is the one who was not in control. Lisa is the one who is not getting justice. Lisa employed defense mechanisms that every rape victim and experts on sexual battery are familiar with to get out of that situation alive and to see her children again. Perhaps they do not know what rape looks like; perhaps UPD officers think a dancer could not have possibly been raped. Perhaps they think any woman who hangs out with intoxicated college-aged men must want it. Well they are very wrong. Rape is when a woman does not want it. Mike Yahraus and his buddies knew it was rape, they said it themselves.

The three to four men, including Mike Yahraus, who were in that room that night should have been arrested, not Lisa. That tape does not prove she wanted to be penetrated by Mike Yahraus and it does not prove she lied about being raped. We stand by what we have said from the beginning—arresting her was wrong.

The Campus National Organization for Women and the thousands of Lisa's supporters demand:
1. The State Attorney's Office led by Rod Smith investigate UPD's handling of the reported rape by Delta Chi fraternity member Mike Yahraus and the arrest of Lisa Gier King, the woman who filed the rape report.
2. All criminal charges against Lisa be dropped and she receive a formal, public apology for arresting her without a proper investigation of the crime.
3. The University of Florida hire more rape victim advocates and earmark more money for rape prevention and victim services.

Press Contact:
Barra Cohen, UF/SFCC Campus National Organization for Women member will be reading the press statement 846-8543.
Candi Churchill, UF/SFCC Campus National Organization for Women President 377-9935
WHY DOES UF CARE MORE ABOUT ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE & "HAZING" THAN AN ALLEGED RAPE? ARE WOMEN'S LIVES AND HEALTH LESS IMPORTANT TO UF?

Why will UF charge Delta Chi with "furnishing false information" to UPD officers when members allegedly stated that there were no females in the house when in fact there were, yet not investigate WHY these men lied? Why is Delta Chi being charged with UF party violations with no mention of a reported rape? What does UF care more about: the lives of women or unregistered parties? Despite UPD's attempts to shut up a woman who reported rape by arresting her—CAMPUS NOW SUPPORTS LISA AND ALL WOMEN WHO REPORT RAPE. We stand behind women who come forward and we will continue to push authorities to investigate any & all allegations of rape, and demand that they stop trying to cover them up.

According to testimony from Campus NOW's Rape/Sexual Assault and Harassment Database (developed independently and confidentially to record more accurate statistics), UF has lost victim's files, dragged out the judicial process, made hearing schedules according to the offenders' wishes and continues to keep rapists on campus—even when he confesses to the rape and women send letters to President Lombardi begging him to keep their rapists off campus. Many women do report rape, but when we do, UF and the police fail to do their jobs and continue look the other way.

Members of the University of Florida/Santa Fe Community College Campus National Organization for Women and our thousands of supporters demand that UF, UPD and the State Attorney's office take rapes more seriously. Policies mean nothing without ACTION. No more lip service!

We demand that UF and President Lombardi take a stand against rape on campus and call for a real investigation of Lisa Gier King's report of rape.

Delta Chi's Alleged Rape Update: As of Wednesday, 4-7-99

1. The State Attorney had NOT questioned Theta Chi fraternity members that Lisa ran to naked and crying after her reported rape.
2. The State Attorney had NOT questioned Lisa Gier King.
3. Assistant State Attorney Bill Cervone subpoenaed the four Delta Chi members who were in the room on Saturday February 27th and questioned them all together at the same time.

The following press statement was presented at UF/SFCC Campus NOW's 4th protest outside UPD on 4/1/99 for their handling of the case.

UF/SFCC NOW members handed this out with our press statement.
Over 70 people in support of Lisa King came out, but could not get into the 40 seat room.
Women rally for equal treatment by the law

Gainesville Iguana November/December 1999

Police, prosecutors, school administrators, and other authorities aren't punishing men for crimes against women, said Campus National Organization for Women members at a rally here on October 9. Woman after woman came up and testified how the harassment or crime against them was not punished and frequently they, the victims, ended up getting punished for reporting.

Women reported harassment ranging from getting their crotches or breasts grabbed in middle school, to crimes such as rape. Most often, women said, when they reported these incidents to the authorities, their rights were not taken seriously and the men didn't face any negative consequences. And in each case, from small to large, speakers pointed out, men learn that they can get away with treating women as second-class citizens.

The rally was called by Campus NOW after Rod Smith, the State Attorney, refused to prosecute the men who videotaped themselves sexually assaulting Lisa Gier King in February. The Delta Chi fraternity brothers who she says raped her, Mike Yahraus, and the others who were present, Anthony Marzullo and Leo Yuque have faced no charges against them for the assault.

Campus NOW members have picketed Smith's office for several months, and women kept coming up to them with their own stories of how their rights to equal protection before the law were ignored.

"We heard about battery, stalking, sexual harassment at jobs and in classrooms," Campus NOW president Candi Churchill said. "We started to understand that it wasn't just Lisa whose rape was covered up, it wasn't just Lisa who was blamed for her attack, but the majority of women's reports are ignored and many women are punished for coming forward."

Lisa Gier King spoke of her experiences with the University Police Department and later the State Attorney's office. King not only has not seen justice in her case, only hours after she reported that she was raped, she was arrested for filing a false report. On the videotape, the Delta Chi members even say it's rape, but University Police Department arrested King and took her to jail.

What follows are portions of King's speech at the October 9th rally:

"My name is Lisa Gier King

"On the night of February 26th of this year I was raped at the Delta Chi Fraternity house on the University of Florida campus. I was there that night because I was hired by fraternity member Mike Yarhaus to perform as an exotic dancer. After the party, I was raped. What happened to me that night was bad enough but the events that followed almost ruined my life.
"By this I mean that although the rape itself was devastating, I knew that because I am a strong person, I could survive it. However, within hours of reporting my rape, my mother was informed that I would be arrested by the University Police Department. That changed my status from victim to criminal and made my name part of the public record. This began a series of events that nearly cost me my life. Had it not been for the support of my family, Candi Churchill and the other members of NOW I probably would not be here today.

"This is the story of what happened to me and how I was treated by law enforcement after reporting my rape.

"I was informed by lead detective Alice Hendon, that the rapist had been questioned and released, and that he would not be charged. After viewing only minutes of a 4-hour video, Alice Hendon decided it clearly showed willing and consensual sexual intercourse and I would be arrested for filing a false police report.

"No photos were taken of the rapist or his obvious injuries. No other men present in the room that night were questioned. Not even Anthony Marzullo, the one shown on the video calling it rape and saying how it was rape 30 in the morning. None of the men were asked to take a drug test even though I reported rampant and excessive cocaine use, and men are heard on the video snorting cocaine.

"Alice Hendon called my mother down to the police station later in the day while I was in the hospital recovering from my injuries. She made it obvious that she took the rapist's word from the beginning.

"He said I slept with many fraternity members that night, so that's exactly what Alice Hendon repeated to my mother. He said I was high on cocaine, so I was drug tested at the hospital, even though he was not. Why is that? He said I took drugs, therefore I was forced to take a drug test. I reported his drug use, and it was ignored. Of course, no cocaine was found in my system.

"Alice Hendon also screamed and berated my mother: "Do you know what your daughter does for a living Mrs. Gier? Do you know that she dances nude in front of men for money? Do you know there's nothing on that videotape to substantiate anything that she said? She apparently made the whole thing up, Mrs. Gier. Would you like to see it? Would you like to see the video?" she said.

"At that point other investigators came outside and screamed and yelled at my mother about how I wasted their time. They took their job seriously.

"Then the media assault began on me. The Independent Alligator fought for their rights to publicly view the video and Judge Chester Chance agreed. He said there was nothing on the tape that would have deemed me a victim, and released the tape to the public. Not just public in that you could go to the courthouse and view it, but public in that anyone who requested the video could go to the State Attorneys office, get their own private copy, and
view it in their home. There were so many requests at the State Attorney’s office that they complained they could not keep up with the demand. And requests came from all over the world, as far as Germany, South Africa, and Switzerland.

"For the first couple of months we hoped Rod Smith would do the right thing and correct the gross mistakes made by the University Police Department. After 5 months of failed negotiations, it was clear this would never happen. Rod Smith's only goal was for him to reach a politically easy way out.

"He wanted me to go on the record and state publicly that my actions that night that made it impossible to prosecute this as a sexual battery. If I didn't, he would charge me with prostitution.

"The other dancer shown on the video that night, who wasn't licensed either, and was never charged. In fact, she was used to testify against me.

"He threatened to release private medical records of mine if I did not comply with his demand, and suggested that I might find the next day's Gainesville Sun reporting that I have prescription medication.

"I was NEVER questioned by the State Attorney's office, nor was I ever asked to view the videotape with them. However, the four accused rapists in the room with me that night were questioned in the same room at the same time, so as to give them the opportunity to corroborate their stories as they went along.

"I reported a rape, the Delta Chi members called it rape themselves, yet Rod Smith claims it's impossible to prosecute this crime Why? Because then Rod Smith would have to admit that the University Police Department had made a terrible mistake by not fully investigating my claim, by not collecting evidence that day, and then by arresting me. Because then the University would get bad publicity. Heaven knows what's important is to continue to show low percentages of reported crimes on campus.

"So, I took the fall because they thought I was an easy target. If they said that no rape had occurred, then UPD. wouldn't be held responsible for turning a blind eye to under-age drinking, shoplifting [also shown on the video], and not investigating the woman-in-distress call, not to mention my sexual assault.

"The University Police Department's lack of training and education on how to handle serious crimes was evident not only in my case but many others. Even today I read in the paper of how they botched yet another serious crime investigation by losing track of 911 call.

"Law enforcement and the judicial system failed me and failed to do what was right and just. Instead they just did what was easy. They thought I was an easy target because I was a dancer. They thought I would go home with my head hung low in shame. I am here to tell you that I am not ashamed. I was raped. The shame associated with this lies squarely
on the shoulders of the man who did this to me, the law enforcement agencies who ignored my claims. They decided to blame me for the assault, and the judicial system looked the other way because it was the easy thing to do.

"I was treated differently because number one, I'm a woman, and number two I was a dancer. If nothing else comes out of this, I hope and pray that at least this will never happen to another woman again. I hope that law enforcement takes a long look at how they handled my case and admits privately (if not publicly) that it was a mistake and that it was handled poorly. I hope that the attention that was brought to this case by Campus NOW will help ensure that this will never happen to another woman again. Together, we are strong. Keep fighting!"

To contact the University of Florida/Santa Fe Community College Campus National Organization for Women, call 352 377-9935, write P.O. Box 2235, Gainesville, FL 32602 or email ufsfccNOW@juno.com.