

Sexual Harassment - What is a myth & what is reality?

| Myths³ | Realities |
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| <p>Sexual harassment is no big deal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is an invention of feminists • Women exaggerate the impacts • It's not like she was raped | <p>It is a violation of human rights.</p> <p>It is a violation of various federal, provincial/territorial and/or municipal legislations.</p> |
| <p>It is a "deviant" or rare event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men who harass must be perverse, ugly, sexually frustrated – not regular guys • It only happens to women in male-dominated fields | <p>Sexual harassment is a widespread problem.</p> <p>Anyone can be sexually harassed; however, subordinated groups (e.g. women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities) are targeted more often.</p> <p>Street harassment can be sexist, racist, transphobic, homophobic, ableist, sizeist and/or classist.</p> |
| <p>It is "normal" behaviour between sexes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's innocent flirtation/sexual attraction • Women are being hyper-sensitive | <p>It is not part of courtship; nor about unrequited love or romantic attraction.</p> <p>It is often used to express power over another person.</p> <p>It is discrimination.</p> |
| <p>He didn't mean to do it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was having fun/drinking and got carried away • He's a good guy/my friend/co-worker | <p>Sexual harassment is intentional behaviour.</p> <p>Often, it re-asserts gender, race, age or class hierarchies within environments (school, work, street) in harmful ways.</p> |

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| <p>Stopping/reporting sexual harassment is easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women file reports lightly • Women easily gain the upper hand by reporting • She can verbally protest • She can avoid harm if she wants to | <p>There are many barriers to reporting that silence women or lead them to minimize, ignore or “put up” with harassment.</p> <p>Sometimes reporting creates additional problems for victims: e.g. s/he may be ostracized by co-workers, not believed, or pay for being a “whistle-blower”.</p> |
| <p>“Reactions” to sexual harassment are the real problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results in political correctness • Ruins “normal relationships” • Stops people from having fun | <p>Sexual harassment causes negative consequences (e.g. poor health, loss of earning potential).</p> <p>Its repercussions should never be blamed on the person being harassed.</p> |
| <p>She asked for it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She chose to work in a male environment • She wears sexy clothes | <p>Everyone has the right to learn, work and be in settings free from discrimination.</p> |