# Sexual Harassment - What Is a Myth & What Is Reality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myths</th>
<th>Realities</th>
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| Sexual harassment is no big deal  
- It is an invention of feminists  
- Women exaggerate the impacts  
- It’s not like she was raped | It is a violation of human rights.  
It is a violation of various federal, provincial/territorial and/or municipal legislations. |
| It is a “deviant” or rare event  
- Men who harass must be perverse, ugly, sexually frustrated – not regular guys  
- It only happens to women in male-dominated fields | Sexual harassment is a widespread problem.  
Anyone can be sexually harassed; however, subordinated groups (e.g. women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities) are targeted more often.  
Street harassment can be sexist, racist, transphobic, homophobic, ableist, sizeist and/or classist. |
| It is “normal” behaviour between sexes  
- It’s innocent flirtation/sexual attraction  
- Women are being hyper-sensitive | It is not part of courtship; nor about unrequited love or romantic attraction.  
It is often used to express power over another person.  
It is discrimination. |
| He didn’t mean to do it  
- He was having fun/drinking and got carried away  
- He’s a good guy/my friend/co-worker | Sexual harassment is intentional behaviour.  
Often, it re-asserts gender, race, age and class hierarchies within environments (school, work, street) in harmful ways. |
| Stopping/reporting sexual harassment is easy  
- Women file reports lightly  
- Women easily gain the upper hand by reporting  
- She can verbally protest  
- She can avoid harm if she wants to | There are many barriers to reporting that silence women or lead them to minimize, ignore or “put up” with harassment.  
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”. |
| “Reactions” to sexual harassment are the real problem  
- Results in political correctness  
- Ruins “normal relationships”  
- Stops people from having fun | Sexual harassment causes negative consequences (e.g. poor health, loss of earning potential).  
Its repercussions should never be blamed on the person being harassed. |
| She asked for it  
- She chose to work in a male environment  
- She wears sexy clothes | Everyone has the right to learn, work and be in settings free from discrimination. |