

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT - WHAT IS A MYTH & WHAT IS REALITY?

Myths <sup>3</sup>	Realities
<p>Sexual harassment is no big deal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is an invention of feminists</li> <li>• Women exaggerate the impacts</li> <li>• It's not like she was raped</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• Men who harass must be perverse, ugly, sexually frustrated – not regular guys</li> <li>• It only happens to women in male-dominated fields</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• It's innocent flirtation/sexual attraction</li> <li>• Women are being hyper-sensitive</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• He was having fun/drinking and got carried away</li> <li>• He's a good guy/my friend/co-worker</li> </ul>	<p>Sexual harassment is intentional behaviour.</p> <p>Often, it <a href="#">re-asserts gender, race, age or class hierarchies within environments</a> (school, work, street) in harmful ways.</p>
<p>Stopping/reporting sexual harassment is easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women file reports lightly</li> <li>• Women easily gain the upper hand by reporting</li> <li>• She can verbally protest</li> <li>• She can avoid harm if she wants to</li> </ul>	<p>There are many <a href="#">barriers</a> 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"> <li>• Results in political correctness</li> <li>• Ruins "normal relationships"</li> <li>• Stops people from having fun</li> </ul>	<p>Sexual harassment causes negative consequences (e.g. poor health, loss of earning potential). Its repercussions should never be blamed on the person being harassed.</p>
<p>She asked for it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She chose to work in a male environment</li> <li>• She wears sexy clothes</li> </ul>	<p>Everyone has the right to learn, work and be in settings free from discrimination.</p>