



HANDOUTS

2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Breakout Session 2: Women’s Issues/Sexual Harrassment

Speakers: Alison Beall & Marni Pilafian

1. LWV-VA Women’s Study - PowerPoint
2. Statistics – Stop Street Harrassment Studies
3. Department of Planning & Budget, 2019 Fiscal Impact Statement
4. Senate Bill No. 1031, January 9, 2019
5. Note Objections & Rebuttals
6. The Unexpected Effects of a Sexual Harassment Educational Program (Abstract)
7. Measuring #MeToo: A National Study on Sexual Harrassment & Assault (Executive Summary)

Statistics – Stop Street Harassment Studies

Street harassment is an under-researched topic, but each existing study shows that street harassment is a significant and prevalent problem. Read the 2014 [SSH national report](#) on street harassment in the USA for the latest research.

The following statistics focus on prevalence.

Informal Online Studies by Stop Street Harassment:

To learn more about women's harassment experiences, the Stop Street Harassment founder conducted two informal, anonymous online surveys about street harassment: one in 2007 for her master's thesis at George Washington University and one in 2008 as preliminary research for a book. Between both surveys, there were 1,141 respondents. Similar to the other studies conducted on street harassment, nearly every female respondent had experienced street harassment at least once.

In the first online survey, conducted during the spring of 2007, she asked the 225 respondents: "Have you ever been harassed (such as verbal comments, honking, whistling, kissing noises, leering/staring, groping, stalking, attempted or achieved assault, etc) while in a public place like the street, on public transportation, or in a store?"

Ninety-nine percent of the respondents, which included some men, said they had been harassed at least a few times. Over 65 percent said they were harassed on at least a monthly basis.

For the second online survey, conducted across a month in fall 2008, there were 811 female respondents (916 total).

Over 99 percent of the female respondents said they had experienced some form of street harassment (only three women said they had not). In one question they could indicate the types of interactions they have had with strangers in public, here is a sampling of their responses.

- ***Leering***
Ninety-five percent of female respondents were the target of leering or excessive staring at least once, and more than 68 percent reported being a target 26 times or more in their life.
- ***Honking and whistling***
Nearly 95 percent of female respondents were honked at one or more times and 40 percent said they are honked at as frequently as monthly. Nearly 94 percent of female respondents were the target of whistling at least once and nearly 38 percent said it occurred at least monthly.
- ***Sexist comment***
Over 87 percent of women said they were the target of a sexist comment, and about 45 percent said they've been a target of a sexist comment in public at least 25 times in their life.
- ***Making vulgar gestures***
Nearly 82 percent of female respondents were the target of a vulgar gesture at least once. About twenty percent said they had been a target at least 51 times.

- ***Saying sexually explicit comments***
 Nearly 81 percent of female respondents were the target of sexually explicit comments from an unknown man at least once. More than 41 percent have been the target at least 26 times in their lives.
- ***Kissing noises***
 Just over 77 percent of women said they were the target of kissing noises from men and 48 percent said they've been the target at least 25 times in their life.
- ***Following***
 Seventy-five percent of female respondents have been followed by an unknown stranger in public. More than 27 percent have been followed at least six times.
- ***Blocking path***
 About 62 percent of women say a man has purposely blocked their path at least once and 23 percent said this has happened at least six times.
- ***Sexual touching or grabbing***
 Nearly 57 percent of women reported being touched or grabbed in a sexual way by a stranger in public. About 18 percent said they have been touched sexually at least six times.
- ***Masturbating***
 More than 37 percent of female respondents have had a stranger masturbate at or in front of them at least once in public.
- ***Assaulting***
 About 27 percent of women report being assaulted at least once in public by a stranger.

Department of Planning and Budget 2019 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB1031S1

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. Patron: Chase

3. Committee: House Committee for Courts of Justice

4. Title: False information and hoax criminal activities; penalty.

5. Summary: This bill establishes as a Class 1 misdemeanor to knowingly, with the intent to mislead a law-enforcement agency, cause another to give a false report to any law-enforcement official by publicly simulating a felony, as specified in existing law.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary (see Item 8 below).

8. Fiscal Implications: This bill expands an existing Class 1 misdemeanor to include knowingly, with the intent to mislead a law-enforcement agency, cause another to give a false report to any law-enforcement official by publicly simulating a felony, as specified in existing law. Anyone convicted of a Class 1 misdemeanor is subject to a sentence of up to 12 months in jail. Ultimately, the presiding judge will decide if there is to be any time served in jail; however, any increase in jail population will increase costs to the state. The Commonwealth presently pays the localities \$4.00 a day for each misdemeanant or otherwise local responsible prisoner held in a jail. It also funds a large portion of the jails' operating costs, e.g. correctional officers. The state's share of these costs varies from locality to locality. According to the Compensation Board's most recent Jail Cost Report (November 2018), the estimated total state support for local jails averaged \$33.83 per inmate, per day in FY 2017.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Local jails; Courts.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: None

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SENATE BILL NO. 1031

Offered January 9, 2019

Prefiled October 30, 2018

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 18.2-212.2, relating to false information and hoax criminal activities; penalty.

Patron—Chase

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 18.2-212.2 as follows:

§ 18.2-212.2. False information and hoax criminal activities; penalty.

A. Any person who knowingly engages in conduct with the intent to convey false or misleading information under circumstances where such information may reasonably be believed and where such information indicates that an activity has taken, is taking, or will take place that would constitute a felony violation of Chapter 4 (§ 18.2-30 et seq.) or Chapter 5 (§ 18.2-77 et seq.) is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. If such conduct results in death or serious bodily injury to another person, the person engaging in such conduct is guilty of a Class 4 felony. The court shall order restitution to compensate any law-enforcement or public safety agency that responded to such conduct for any costs reasonably associated with such response. The court may also order any other restitution that may be appropriate.

B. Violation of this section shall constitute a separate and distinct offense. If the acts or activities violating this section also violate another provision of law, a prosecution under this section shall not prohibit or bar any prosecution or proceeding under such other provision or the imposition of any penalties provided for thereby.

C. This section shall not apply to any person permitted, licensed, or otherwise authorized to produce or create artistic or cinematic productions while engaged in the performance of his duties.

2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 2 of the Acts of Assembly of 2018, Special Session I, requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

INTRODUCED

SB1031

Noted objections to the Study and rebuttals to those objections.

Lack of penalty- For each piece of legislation, there is a fiscal note which calculates the costs involved with enacting that bill. Legislators often refer to this note in determining whether they will support that bill. Too great a cost will place a burden on the State, and therefore, the taxpayers.

In the case of Sexual Harassment, women are primarily the victims and, according to the data, men are the perpetrators. According to that same data, men feel that sexual harassment is minor behavior and of little concern. To take that information a step further, should there be a penalty placed on the act of sexual harassment, it is highly likely that men will contest those charges.

If 81% of all women are victims of sexual harassment and formal charges are filed, there would be a spike in court hearings. Likely, it would need to go to trial with the challenge from the perpetrators, resulting in an increase of hearings. The question and unfortunately, the outfall, would there be support for incurring those costs.

That the position will be placed under Women's Issues.- The study was initiated when the League voted to review the positions under Women's Issues. After thorough research, it was determined that there was no Sexual Harassment position under any League, National or otherwise. The Virginia League voted to continue with the Study.

According to the data, women are primarily the victims of sexual harassment. This is not to say that men are not. Unfortunately, there have been few studies that sampled both men and women. In the cases, where men were included in the studies, men had very low reporting in comparison to women, and many of the men who responded "yes", also reported that they were non-hetero.

The language of the Study is written to cover all victims. The Position on Sexual Harassment may, in the future, be voted to be placed under human rights, but only after a vote from its members.

Why the position only covers institutions and businesses.- There is a chain of command in any institution or business. In the event of an incidence, there will be someone to report to. That is not to say that the perpetrator of the harassment will never be the person at the top, but in the larger establishments, such as a hospital or a government office building, there is high probability to address complaints which will increase the likelihood that the issue will be addressed.

The Unexpected Effects of a Sexual Harassment Educational Program

Shereen G. Bingham, Lisa L. Scherer

First Published June 1, 2001 Research Article

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886301372001>

[Article information](#)

Abstract

This study evaluated a sexual harassment program for staff and faculty employees at a metropolitan university. One hundred men and 97 women who participated in the program and 141 men and 178 women who did not participate responded to a self-report questionnaire through campus mail. Analysis of variance was used to test for effects of program participation and employee gender on five outcome variables. Results indicated that participants showed more knowledge about sexual harassment than did nonparticipants and had a stronger attitude that sexual behavior at work is inappropriate. Men had more favorable attitudes toward sexual behavior at work than did women. Moreover, program participation and employee gender interacted, indicating an adverse reaction to the program among male participants. Male participants were less likely than other groups to perceive coercive sexual harassment, less willing to report sexual harassment, and more likely to blame the victim. Implications of the findings are discussed.

Measuring #MeToo

A National Study on Sexual Harassment and Assault

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This nationally representative survey of 2,219 people was conducted between February and March 2019 by NORC at the University of Chicago, using the AmeriSpeak Panel.

Key Findings

Sexual harassment and assault pose a significant problem, especially for women.

81% of women and 43% of men reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment and/or assault in their lifetime.

More than three in four women (76%) and one in three men (35%) experienced verbal sexual harassment;

One in two women (49%) and nearly one in five men (18%) were sexually touched in an unwelcome way;

Four in 10 women (40%) and one in five men (21%) experienced cyber sexual harassment;

More than one in four women (27%) and one in 10 men (11%) were physically followed;

One in three women (30%) and around one in 10 men (12%) faced unwanted genital flashing;

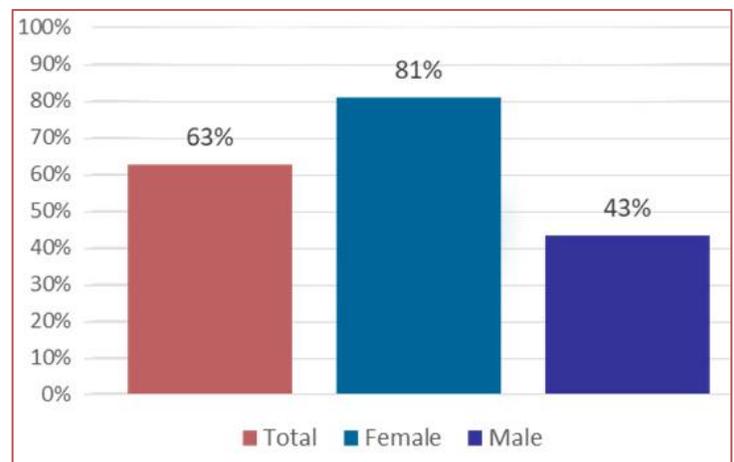
Nearly one in four women (23%) and one in 10 men (9%) survived sexual assault.

The most frequently listed location for sexual harassment is a public space.

Women most frequently reported experiencing sexual harassment in a public space like a street, park or store (68% of women), at their workplace or school (38% of women, respectively). Men's most frequently reported locations were a public space (23% of men), their school or own residence (15% of men, respectively).

Most sexual assault takes place in private homes or residences.

For sexual assault, both women and men listed someone else's residence (10% women, 3% men) and their own residence (7% women, 2% men) as the top locations for these acts.



At least one-third of women ages 18-24, Black women, and lesbian or bisexual women reported experiencing sexual harassment in the past six months.

Of those who experienced harassment or assault overall, 18% of women and 16% of men experienced it within the past six months. At least one-third of young women aged 18-24 (32%), Black women (35%), and lesbian or bisexual women (39%) reported sexual harassment in the past six months, the highest prevalence across demographics.

The study and report were produced by UC San Diego Center on Gender Equity and Health, Stop Street Harassment, CALCASA, Promundo and RALIANCE.

April 2019

Measuring #MeToo

A National Study on Sexual Harassment and Assault

Those who reported sexual harassment alone were most likely to report that a stranger committed it, while those reporting assault as well as harassment were most likely to say that someone close to them was involved in the abuse.

Among the respondents who reported experiencing sexual harassment alone, strangers were by far the most frequently listed type of person who committed the harassment against them (47% of women and 32% of men who reported only sexual harassment). Those with a history of both sexual assault and harassment were significantly more likely than those who experienced sexual harassment alone to report known people as those who committed the assault or harassment.

Sexual harassment and assault cause people, especially women, to feel anxiety or depression and prompt them to change their route or regular routine.

Among those who reported experiencing sexual harassment or assault, 30% of women and 18% of men said they felt anxiety or depression, while 23% of women and 12% of men changed their route or regular routine, and 22% of women and 16% of men ended a relationship (such as a friendship or romantic partnership) on account of these experiences.

Most people who said they committed sexual harassment also said they had experienced sexual harassment.

Among those who reported committing sexual harassment, 95% of women and 73% of men reported experiencing it too. In contrast, among those who reported never having committed sexual harassment, 74% of women and 31% of men reported experiencing it.

While experiences of sexual harassment and assault are highly prevalent, accusations of sexual harassment and assault are very rare.

Despite 81% of women and 43% of men reporting experiencing sexual harassment, only 2% of men and 1% of women said they had been told that they sexually harassed or assaulted someone. Only 1% of those who self-reported that they have never committed sexual harassment or assault said they were told by an individual that they had done so.

Very few people have ever been accused of sexual harassment or assault compared with those who have said they perpetrated it, and especially compared with the many people who said they have experienced it.

By and large, when people say they experienced sexual harassment or assault, they are telling the truth.

Beliefs related to high-profile allegations of sexual harassment and assault are comparable for women and men.

Almost half of women (43%) and men (40%) believed sexual harassment occurred in all or most of the recent high-profile allegations of sexual harassment and assault; only 8% of women and 11% of men believed in most or all cases nothing happened, and the accusers are purposely lying. Half of women and men felt it varied from case to case, with some true and some false.

Find the full report, survey instrument and press release at www.StopStreetHarassment.org.

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