THE IMPACT OF MALE WORK ENVIRONMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES ON WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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Women's experiences with sexual harassment were analyzed with three types of variables: occupational and workplace sex ratios, organizational policies and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment problems, and women's cultural status (age and marital status). Regression analyses revealed that extent of contact with men was a key predictor of incidence of harassment, number of different types of harassment, sexual comments, sexual categorical remarks, and sexual materials. Gender predominance was a significant predictor of physical threats and sexual materials. Informational methods were less successful than proactive methods in reducing incidents of sexual harassment. The analyses support two generalizations. The "contact hypothesis" tested and verified by Gutek and her colleagues provides a substantive understanding of our findings on workplace and occupational numerical predominance. Second, organizations that take a variety of steps to address sexual harassment are more apt to be successful in curtailing the problem than those relying mainly on "get out the word" techniques.

Since the first comprehensive analyses of sexual harassment over a decade and a half ago (Canadian Human Rights Commission [CHRC] 1983; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board [USMSPB] 1981), researchers have developed an increasingly sophisticated and nuanced understanding of the organizational dynamics that create problems of workplace harassment and hostility for women. The present analysis of a national sample of Canadian working women will attempt to add to the literature in two ways.

First, I will compare the relative predictive impact of three work-related factors to each other: occupational traditionalism, extent of routine contact at work with men, and the combined impact of both. The occupations women hold often place them in situations of power disadvantages and/or heightened visibility: They have

poor organizational power and status—low seniority, subordinate or low-status jobs (Gruber and Bjorn 1982; USMSPB 1981, 1987); their jobs are sex typed and create a great deal of sex-role spillover (Gutek and Morasch 1982); or they are perceived as usurping men's occupational roles. However, empirical support for the contact hypothesis reveals that extensive, routine contact with men predicts inappropriate sociosexual behaviors (Gutek, Cohen, and Konrad 1990; Hagman 1988) independently of the type of job a woman holds. That is, workplace context has unique functions in predicting sexual harassment apart from occupational location. Our task will be to clarify the individual and combined influences of each.

Second, this analysis will attempt to cast light on an issue that remains one of the most notable "glaring omissions" (Fitzgerald and Shullman 1993) in sexual harassment research: the impact of organizational policies and procedures for handling sexual harassment on reducing the incidence of the problem. Sexualized work climates (Gutek 1985) or those where organizational officials are perceived as tolerant of harassment (Hulin, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow 1996) have higher levels of sexual harassment than other work situations. This analysis assumes that sexual harassment policies and procedures affect organizational climate; and it is expected that among organizations with similar occupational or workplace gender ratios those without visible, proactive programs will have a higher incidence of harassment than those that have them.

GENDER DOMINANCE, GENDERED WORK

Numerical and normative dominance are distinct, but often interrelated, aspects of the degree of influence and control one gender has over the other. According to Acker, this "gendering" occurs as a product of at least five interacting processes: construction of divisions (e.g., labor, work space, power) along gender lines; constructions of symbols and images that articulate and reinforce these divisions; gender-based patterns and styles of interaction and communication; reflection of gender stereotypes in occupational or organizational identities (e.g., men are leaders; women are nurturers); and differential impact on women and men of the fundamental, ongoing processes "of creating and conceptualizing social structures" (1990, 146) such as rules of conduct, directives, or job evaluations. Normative male dominance occurs in a number of work contexts that vary widely in male numerical dominance from, for example, situations where a few men have superordinate status over a largely female work group (doctors/nurses, managers/secretaries) to the "male preserves" (Kimmel 1996) where women are virtually absent but highly visible.

Women in traditionally male occupations or workplaces report more experiences of sexual harassment than other women (Gutek 1985; LaFontaine and Tredeau 1986; Rubenstein 1992). Mansfield et al. (1991), for example, found that women in the trades had higher rates of harassment (60 percent) and sex discrimination (56 percent) than clerical workers (6 percent and 8 percent). While women in female-

traditional positions generally experience harassment due to a lack of power and/or sexualization of their work activities, women in male-traditional positions often are treated hostilely because they have infringed on male power and privilege and threaten the "production of masculinity" (Martin and Jurik 1996, 175). In a number of male-traditional positions, work identity is constructed on gendered behavior and cultural symbols of masculinity: aggression, sexual bravado, embracing dangerous or risky situations, and bonding through rituals that celebrate male superiority (Glick 1991; Martin and Jurik 1996; Stockdale 1993).

Work identities that have stereotypical images of masculinity as their basis are typically "doubly" male dominated: The male traditionality of an *occupation* creates a work culture that is an extension of male culture, and numerical dominance of the *workplace* by men heightens visibility of, and hostility toward, women workers who are perceived as violating male territory. Although women professionals in male-traditional fields face greater harassment than other white-collar women, they experience less severe and pervasive harassment than their blue-collar counterparts (LaFontaine and Tredeau 1986; Loy and Stewart 1984). The former appear to be better protected from harassment and hostility by virtue of norms of professionalism that stress respectful treatment of, and cooperation with, others (Gutek 1985).

THE MALE PRESERVES

While nearly half of North American women experience harassment within a two-year time period (Fitzgerald 1990; Gruber 1990), the rates are higher in the doubly male or "male culture" work environments. Sixty-four percent of women in a Department of Defense study of the total active military force (Martindale 1990) experienced one or more forms of sexual harassment. A survey of Navy personnel that used similar questionnaire items found an even higher rate of harassment (74 percent) in 1991 (Culbertson, Rosenfeld, and Newell 1993). A comprehensive study of federal employees in 1981 provided early evidence of the higher rates of harassment in the military. Women government employees had significantly lower overall rates of harassment than those in the military (42 percent versus 64 percent) as well as fewer occurrences of the more severe forms of harassment—notably, requests for sexual favors, sexual touching, and sexual assault (USMSPB 1981).

High rates and severe forms of sexual harassment have been documented in police and security occupations as well. A national comparison of policewomen and civilian women revealed that the former had a higher incidence of six types of harassment (Brown, Campbell, and Fife Schaw 1995). They also found what Balkin (1988) had noted earlier: that of all work-related factors, sexual harassment was the major predictor of psychological and job-related stress among policewomen. A statewide survey of women police officers in Florida found that 62 percent had been sexually harassed (Robinson 1994). Martin (1990) reported an almost identical

figure (63 percent) in her survey of five municipal police departments in different regions of the United States. Although experiences of harassment among women in the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) were lower (48 percent) than among other policewomen, their rates were significantly higher and their experiences more severe than those of other Los Angeles city employees (Los Angeles Commission on the Status of Women 1992). Women firefighters (Yoder and Aniakudo 1995) and correctional officers (Deitch and Fechner 1995; Martin and Jurik 1996) face similar problems of frequent and severe harassment.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE: TOLERANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND POLICIES

The extent of harassment in work organizations is influenced by several factors, including environmental tolerance of harassment, the perceived commitment of organizational officials to effectively handle harassment problems, and the implementation of policies or procedures to combat such problems.

Sexualization of the work environment is significantly influenced by organizational tolerance of sexually discriminatory or offensive behaviors or materials (Hulin, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow 1996; Pryor, Giedd, and Williams 1995). Such environments may cognitively "prime" some men to perceive women as sex objects and subsequently behave in a sexist or sexually inappropriate manner (McKenzie Mohr and Zanna 1990; Pryor and Stoller 1994; Rudman, Borgida, and Robertson 1995). Women's coping behavior is also affected in sexually tolerant environments: Their responses to harassment are influenced by their perceptions of the level of risk involved in complaining about harassment, the likelihood that such complaints will be taken seriously, and the likelihood that the perpetrators will be punished (Hulin, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow 1996).

Workplace climate is also notably affected by the behavior of organizational leaders. Organizations in which leaders are perceived as proactive in addressing the problem of sexual harassment—for example, have discouraged it or spoken out against it—have fewer harassment problems than organizations in which the leadership was seen either as indifferent toward or encouraging of sexually harassing behavior (Niebuhr 1997; Pryor, LaVite, and Stoller 1993). The leadership of an organization may also affect workplace climate by implementing sexual harassment policies and procedures. A recent study found that women who worked in organizations that used several methods to address sexual harassment problems (e.g., pamphlets, posters, training programs) were more apt to file a complaint or tell someone in a position of authority about these problems than those in work environments with few or no policies or procedures (Gruber and Smith 1995).

The potential benefits of a concerted, multifaceted, organization-wide approach in changing organizational climate can be seen by recent outcomes in two "male preserves" with troubled histories of sexual harassment and discrimination, the

military and the LAPD. The results of two surveys create a ray of hope amid a continuing storm of lawsuits and highly publicized incidents.

In the conclusion of the first comprehensive military-wide survey of sexual harassment in 1988, Martindale (1990) stated that military leaders were not adequately addressing the problem of sexual harassment either because some with strong stances against the problem were not publicizing their views sufficiently or because others were not making honest and reasonable efforts to stop harassment in the first place. The military's "zero tolerance" program was created in 1989 in response to these problems but was not given a high funding priority until after Tailhook and other highly publicized reports of harassment (Bacon 1996) increased public and political pressure for reform. Subsequent efforts to vigorously enforce the program appear to have had some impact across all branches of military service.

A 1995 Department of Defense (DOD) survey that used questionnaire items nearly identical to the 1988 study revealed a decline in sexual harassment from 64 percent to 55 percent. Each of eight types of harassment occurred less frequently in 1995 than in 1988, and each branch of the military showed a decline in overall levels of harassment. Also, informal reporting of harassment by targets increased fourfold (Seppa 1997).

The city of Los Angeles initiated a number of policy and training directives during the early 1980s to handle the problem of sexual harassment. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents to a 1992 survey indicated that they had received at least one form of sexual harassment training in the previous 12 months (Los Angeles Commission on the Status of Women 1992). The efforts by the city of Los Angeles may be a reason why the rate of harassment reported by LAPD women officers (48 percent) is significantly lower than that reported in other surveys of policewomen (Martin 1990; Robinson 1994).

RESEARCH ISSUES AND METHODS

This research focuses on the impact of two types of variables on women's sexual harassment experiences: the gendered aspects of women's work (normative and numerical male dominance) and the presence (or absence) of policies or procedures for dealing with problems of sexual harassment. Also, since various types of sexual harassment differ markedly in severity, we will compare the impact of gendered work activities and harassment policies and procedures on several individual and composite measures of harassment. Our work is guided by three research expectations.

Hypotheses

First, we predict that gender predominance, a composite measure of both the gender composition of women's workplace contacts and the national sex ratio of

occupations that the women in our sample hold, will be more strongly related to women's sexual harassment experience than each of the individual items. Early research in sexual harassment found that women "pioneers" who were among the first to enter male-dominated occupations reported pervasive and severe harassment and hostility (Gruber and Bjorn 1982; Martin 1980; O'Farrell and Harlan 1982). Research over the past 15 years has provided extensive evidence of the impact of both numerical and normative male dominance on women newcomers.

This analysis uses workplace numerical dominance or contact and occupational sex composition both separately and jointly. Although these are obviously interrelated—numerical dominance may lead to normative dominance, or the number of women in an occupation may be small because of long-term normative dominance—the "contact hypothesis" of Gutek, Cohen, and Konrad (1990) provides us with a basis for separating the two. According to their argument, sheer routine contact with members of the other sex increases sociosexual behavior and workplace sexualization, especially in male-majority workplaces, since men tend to sexualize interactions, irrespective of specific occupational or situational norms. On the other hand, women's visibility may be heightened in nontraditional occupations because their presence undermines both gender-based stereotypes about job competence and the routine processes men use to bond with each other (see Martin and Jurik 1996), irrespective of their numbers. The joint relationship between workplace contact and occupational sex ratios (gender predominance), which is similar to Fitzgerald's "masculine job gender context" (Hulin, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow 1996), helps focus our analysis on a variety of doubly male environments that include "male preserve" work situations.

Second, we predict that methods of addressing sexual harassment problems that reveal commitment by organizational leaders and attempts to actively change the work environment will yield greater success in reducing harassment than merely informing employees of the existence of organizational policies. Since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Vinson v. Meritor Savings Bank* (1986), legal opinion over the past decade has argued that merely distributing or posting a generic sexual harassment policy is not sufficient to address the problem. The courts have recommended that substantial preventive efforts be made by employers in handling sexual harassment problems, including a detailed policy that gives specific examples of harassment, describes an explicit complaint procedure, and offers protection from retaliation; an organizational mechanism for conducting investigations; and training or sensitization programs (Grant 1992). A very similar emphasis in Canada has paralleled U.S. policy developments since the mid-1980s (CHRC 1990). A body similar to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the CHRC, defines sexual harassment as a form of legal discrimination that affects the terms or conditions of employment that a "reasonable person" would find objectionable. Also, "hostile environment" forms of harassment were added to the law during the same time period in both countries (EEOC 1990; CHRC 1990).

On the basis of these arguments, I will compare the experiences of three groups of women: those in work environments with no policies, procedures, or training in

sexual harassment; those in workplaces with only informational methods or "getting out the word" approaches such as posting a policy in the workplace or placing it in an employee handbook; and those in environments with proactive or change-oriented methods (explicit complaint procedures and training programs).

Employees without the protection of policies and procedures are predicted to have higher rates of sexual harassment than those in workplaces that have some. I predict that reductions in the percentages of women experiencing harassment will be especially noteworthy in organizations with proactive methods because they require action by organizational leaders (e.g., requiring employees to attend training sessions; creating or enlarging existing positions within the organization to handle harassment complaints), which may, in accordance with findings of Pryor, Giedd, and Williams (1995), heighten the visibility of an organization's commitment to dealing with sexual harassment. Also, proactive methods are likely to lower the perceived risks of complaining about or reporting harassment (Rudman, Borgida, and Robertson 1995) and at the same time increase the perceived costs of behaving in a sexually harassing manner.

Third, I predict that gender predominance will have greater impact than the other two work-related variables considered in my analyses on a wider range of harassment, specifically severe forms of personal harassment as well as more pervasive, environmental forms. While there is ample evidence that both pervasive and severe forms of harassment are a problem for women in male-predominant work situations, there is no research that addresses the effects of specific types of sexual harassment policies or procedures in controlling these. In this regard, we expect proactive methods of addressing sexual harassment problems to have a greater impact than informational methods on the incidence of a wider range (i.e., personal as well as environmental forms) of sexual harassment. Personal forms generally have significantly higher mean severity ratings than the more frequently occurring or pervasive environmental forms (Gruber, Smith, and Kauppinen 1996).

Sample

Telephone interviews of Canadian women who were employed or had been employed during the previous year were conducted in 1992 by researchers at a university in a large metropolitan area in eastern Ontario. A two-stage probability sampling procedure was used to develop a representative sample of women throughout Canada. Sixty-five percent of the sample completed the interviews ($n = 1,990$). The median age of the sample was 34. Nearly 70 percent were married. Most had some education beyond high school.

Measures: Dependent Variables

Sexual harassment. The interviewees were asked if they had experienced 1 or more of 11 types of "uninvited and unwanted sexual attention" in the past 12

months, based on the 1989 Inventory of Sexual Harassment (ISH): sexual assault, bribery, touching, invasions of personal space, "rumoring" or spreading sexual gossip behind the respondent's back, questioning a woman about her sex life, sexual gestures, repeated date requests, sexual categorical remarks about other women, staring, sexual jokes directed at the respondent, and sexual materials (see Gruber, Kauppinen, and Smith 1996 for a recent discussion of the ISH). Respondents who stated that they had experienced a specific form of harassment were asked two contingent questions: How many times did this (specific form) occur in the past 12 months? and How upset were you by these experiences?

The likelihood that targets will label their experiences as sexual harassment is increased by both the gravity or severity of an act as well as by its frequency or pervasiveness (Stockdale, Vaux, and Cashin 1995). Personal forms have lower thresholds or require fewer repeated occurrences than environmental forms to become defined as sexual harassment. EEOC guidelines (1990) state that there must be sufficient evidence that the latter forms were substantially pervasive and endur-ing in the workplace to satisfy a legal definition of harassment.

An accurate assessment of whether sexual harassment policies and procedures really work can best be made by examining experiences that men and women are likely to define as sexual harassment. Presumably, prohibitions against sexual harassment will not be very effective in curtailing behaviors that laypersons do not ordinarily define as such. A null finding (e.g., women in organizations with sexual harassment policies experience harassment at the same rate as those in organiza-tions without policies) could result either because the experiences are ambiguously or questionably sexual harassment or because the methods used to control harass-ment are ineffective. I have reduced the likelihood of the former as a rival explanation by selecting experiences that laypersons (and by logical extension, the members of my sample) would be apt to define as sexual harassment. Also, gender differences in perceptions of sexual harassment, especially of hostile environment forms, are apt to be minimal when contextual factors such as frequency or perva-siveness and severity are taken into consideration (Gutek and O'Connor 1995).

The variable experienced/last year was created on the basis of three items of information: The respondent had experienced in the last 12 months at least 1 of 11 types of uninvited and unwanted sexual attention, the frequency of each experience was at or above the median frequency of all targets of that particular type of harassment, and the respondent stated that these experiences had upset her. This strategy is consistent with recent suggestions that researchers more accurately determine the impact and outcomes of specific types of harassment by including separate indicators or subscales of frequency or duration and offensiveness for each (e.g., Fitzgerald and Shullman 1993). Based on these criteria, 43 percent of the sample had experienced sexual harassment.

Four harassment variables that meet the same criteria were analyzed individually because they capture differences in type and severity (Gruber 1992): physical threat and sexual comments (personal, high severity), and sexual categorical remarks and sexual materials (environmental, low severity). Physical threat was a composite of

three ISH items that queried the respondents about actual sexual contact as well as sexual approaches (invasions of personal space). The variable sexual comments is a composite of two ISH items, sexual jokes and remarks or questions about a woman's sex life. Sexual categorical remarks are comments made about women without direct reference to the woman who hears these remarks (e.g., sexual jokes or comments about other women in the workplace). This type is subsumed under "bystander harassment" in federal guidelines (CHRC 1990; EEOC 1990). Sexual materials include offensive posters, pinups, pictures, or objects of a sexual nature that appeared in the workplace.

Since most women experience multiple forms of sexual harassment at their workplaces (Martindale 1990; USMSPB 1981), an indicator of the overall level of harassment they have faced is a summation of all such experiences. Fitzgerald and her colleagues (Schneider, Swan, and Fitzgerald 1997) have found that women who experience multiple forms of harassment, even at moderately low levels of frequency, have poorer psychological and job-related outcomes (e.g., work satisfaction, post-traumatic stress) than others. The variable number of types experienced was created by totaling the different ISH types of harassment each respondent had experienced (0-11).

Measures: Independent Variables

Sexual harassment policies and procedures. The respondents were asked a series of questions about their direct knowledge of workplace policies or procedures on sexual harassment at their place of employment: official procedures for complaining about sexual harassment problems, company or union posters on harassment, company or union pamphlets, or presentations on the topic by company or union representatives. The items were combined to create variables that indicated the number and nature of such procedures/policies in the workplace. Proactive methods indicated whether the organization used approaches that modified the work environment by creating official complaint procedures for sexual harassment problems or conducting training sessions on the issue. Informational methods described whether the organization had at least alerted its employees to the issue of sexual harassment through pamphlets or posters.

Occupational sex composition. Blishen, Carroll, and Moore (1987) created a socioeconomic index of 514 occupations from the 1981 Canadian census. Each occupation was given a socioeconomic status (SES) score based on a weighted composite of the median income and average educational level of all jobholders. In addition to an SES score, the authors presented the gender composition (percentage female) of each occupation. Gender composition percentages were subsequently recoded into four categories (20 percent or less, 21-50 percent, 51-80 percent, and 81-100 percent); the subsequent variable was used as an ordinal variable in the descriptive and regression analyses. The male-dominated category

cutoff was set at a relatively high figure of 20 percent so as to capture changes in the gender composition of such jobs between the census (1981) and our data collection a decade later.

Workplace contact. The respondents were asked to describe both the gender composition of their immediate place of work and with whom they had the most daily contact. The second item (daily contact) accounts for situations where respondents are routinely exposed to persons who are not formally workplace members—employees from other workplaces or locations in an organization (e.g., as a woman in a shipping or mailing department might be), as well as customers or clients. Responses to these two items were combined to create a three-category ordinal variable: mostly men, men and women about equally, and mostly women. The development of this variable was based on the "contact hypothesis" empirically supported by Gutek, Cohen, and Konrad (1990).

Gender predominance. Workplace contact and occupational sex composition were combined resulting in a new variable with 12 (3 × 4) categories (see Table 2 for a distribution of sample on both variables). The categories were subsequently collapsed to five: high male predominance, mostly male, gender balanced, mostly female, and high female predominance. Gender predominance is used as a five-category ordinal variable in regression analyses to test whether the combination of occupation and workplace contact adds new information to our predictions.

Sociocultural power. Two variables that are indicators of social status and that have been shown by previous research to predict vulnerability to sexual harassment were used: age and marital status. Each has been found to be a consistent correlate of sexual harassment experiences from the inception of research on the topic (e.g., Gutek 1985; USMSPB 1981).

A recent cross-national study found that the impact of age and marital status varies considerably depending on the context of women's occupations and the organizations in which they work (Kauppinen and Gruber 1993). For example, younger women generally have lower levels of seniority than their older peers and subsequently may be the targets of harassment more because of their newcomer status than their age.

STATISTICAL AND DATA ANALYSES

Descriptive analyses were used to display the general differences in sexual harassment experiences between the categories of each independent variable. Regression techniques were selected to provide estimates of the impact of each variable on sexual harassment. Multiple regression was used in analyses involving number of types experienced, a continuous variable. Logistic regression analysis,

which is well suited for dichotomous dependent variables (Hosmer and Lemeshow 1989), was used in equations that included experienced/last year, physical threats, sexual comments, sexual categorical remarks, and sexual materials. Each predictor variable was standardized to facilitate comparisons of beta coefficients across regression equations, and resulting standardized beta coefficients were tested for significance using the Wald test. The Wald test is similar to a t test of the statistical significance of each individual beta coefficient in a particular model (Hosmer and Lemeshow 1989).

Methods of addressing harassment problems were introduced into the regression analyses in two steps in a way that parallels actual legal and policy development. In the first step, the effect of informational methods vis-à-vis the other variables (excluding proactive methods) was analyzed. In the second step, the variable proactive methods was entered into the analyses to determine whether it adds new information to the model or has an impact on sexual harassment beyond the effect of informational methods.[1] Sexual harassment policies in the United States and Canada have been developed on the premise that proactive measures are superior to informational measures in remedying sexual harassment problems. To date no research has directly tested this assumption.

Bivariate analyses of the predictor variables revealed that each was significantly related to whether a woman had been sexually harassed in the past 12 months. My figures reveal statistical significance for each of the predictors. Specifically, women under 25 years of age (56.4 percent), unmarried women (52.2 percent), those in male-dominated occupations (53.8 percent) or workplaces (55.4 percent), and where sexual harassment policies or procedures are nonexistent (51.5 percent) experienced proportionately more harassment than women in the other respective categories.

A bivariate analysis of gender predominance and women's experiences with sexual harassment indicates that women report less harassment when they have both infrequent contact with men in their workplaces and traditionally female jobs (31 percent). On the other hand, women are most apt to be targets of harassment when their visibility in the work environment centers on gender-based status differences, that is, they have a nontraditional job in a male-dominated work environment (55 percent), or their traditionally female job is located in a work environment that involves a high degree of contact with men (54 percent). Women whose workplace contacts are balanced between men and women experience similar rates of harassment for the occupational sex ratio categories.

Regression analyses were used to determine whether predictors were significantly related either to having been sexually harassed in the last 12 months or to the total number of different types of harassment experiences during that time period. The results in Table 3 revealed that in steps 1 and 2 respectively, age and workplace sex contact were the strongest predictors of experienced/last year. Age and workplace contact had the highest coefficients in steps 1 and 2 for number of types experienced as well. Occupation sex composition was significantly related to

TABLE 1:   Percentages of Women Who Have Experienced Sexual Harassment by
            Predictors

	% (n)
Age	
Under 25	56.4 (445)**
25-39	46.2 (823)
40+	31.2 (673)
Marital status	
Not married	52.2 (605)**
Married	39.1 (1,375)
Occupational sex ratio	
Male dominated	53.8 (188)**
Majority male	46.4 (269)
Majority female	40.7 (447)
Female dominated	40.2 (1,080)
Workplace sex ratio (contact)	
Mostly men	55.4 (411)**
Equal contact	46.7 (643)
Mostly women	34.2 (905)
Sexual harassment policies/procedures	
None	51.5 (887)**
Informational	43.4 (663)
Proactive	39.6 (403)

**$p < .01$ based on chi-square values.

experienced/last year and number of types experienced, although the effects were weaker than those of workplace contact. Gender predominance was not significantly related to either dependent variable. Marital status was a significant predictor of both dependent variables but weaker than age. In step 1, informational methods was a significant predictor of both experienced/last year and number of types experienced, but its strength diminished considerably when proactive methods was introduced into the analysis of both dependent variables. Proactive methods was a significant predictor of both experienced/last year and number of types experienced.[2]

In contrast to our expectations, gender predominance was not a significant factor in predicting either dependent variable. Workplace contact was a stronger predictor of both measures of harassment than the gender composition of a woman's occupation. This suggests that sexual harassment is more generally a function of workplace dynamics than of stereotypes about occupational membership. Age was more strongly related to the dependent variables than any of the other variables, most likely because it captures not only the impact of youth per se but also of low seniority or poor job status (see Kauppinen and Gruber 1993, for a path model in this regard). Also, providing workers with information about sexual harassment does have a modest effect on reducing its occurrence, although proactive methods are much more effective.

TABLE 2: Percentages of Women Experiencing Sexual Harassment by Workplace Contact and Occupational Sex Ratio

Workplace Contact	Occupational Sex Ratio			
	Male Dominated	Majority Male	Majority Female	Female Dominated
Mostly men (%)	55	52	48	54**
(n)	(78)	(67)	(71)	(194)
Equal (%)	45	48	46	45
(n)	(49)	(94)	(149)	(351)
Mostly women (%)	43	45	33	31
(n)	(63)	(103)	(225)	(514)

**$p < .01$ based on chi-square values.

TABLE 3: Predictors of Experienced Sexual Harassment in Last Year and Number of Types of Harassment Experienced

	Experienced/Last Year[a]				Number of Types Experienced[c]			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Age[b]	-.369**	.054	-.391**	.053	-.231**	.051	-.236**	.052
Marital status	.145**	.058	.137**	.057	.129**	.055	.127**	.053
Occupation sex ratio	.134**	.041	.125**	.048	.059*	.049	.056*	.047
Workplace sex contact	.263**	.091	.261**	.093	.150**	.073	.149**	.072
Gender predominance	.112	.091	.106	.094	.053	.091	.051	.091
Informational methods	-.109*	.049	-.097	.052	-.082*	.049	-.050*	.048
Proactive methods			-.175**	.050			-.104**	.046

a. Logistic analyses results are expressed as standardized regression coefficients. Standard errors are notated by SE. Significance is based on the Wald test.
b. High numerical values are associated with having ever experienced sexual harassment, higher number of harassment experiences, being older, nonmarried, higher number of men in occupation or workplace, and presence of proactive or informational policy.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Logistic regression analysis was used to predict the impact of the same independent variables on four types of sexual harassment: physical threat, sexual remarks, sexual categorical remarks, and sexual materials. The results in Table 4 reveal several outcomes that are similar to the previous analysis in Table 3 and at the same time highlight a number of noteworthy differences. Workplace contact has the largest coefficient for both sexual categorical remarks and sexual materials; age is the strongest predictor of physical threat and sexual comments. While

occupational sex composition does not reach statistical significance in the analyses of physical threat or sexual materials, it is the third strongest predictor of both sexual comments and sexual categorical remarks. In contrast to the analyses presented in Table 3, gender predominance is a significant predictor of two forms of harassment: physical threat and sexual materials. Physical threat is the only dependent variable in either Table 3 or Table 4 where gender predominance is stronger than the corresponding effect of workplace sex contact.

Informational methods is not a predictor of either form of personal sexual harassment (i.e., physical threat or sexual comments). However, in step 1 analyses, it does affect the occurrence of both environmental forms, sexual categorical remarks and sexual materials. Although proactive methods predicts the occurrence of all four forms of harassment, the effects are larger for environmental as opposed to personal sexual harassment. Specifically, the coefficient for sexual materials ($b = -.311$, $p < .01$) is the strongest of the four, while the one for physical threat ($b = -.119$, $p < .05$) just reaches statistical significance. Although proactive policy is a significant predictor of all the variables presented in Tables 3 and 4, its strength relative to the other predictors is greatest for the two environmental forms of harassment. In these equations, it ranks second to workplace sex contact.

DISCUSSION

The analyses present further evidence for the strength and stability of workplace sex contact or the "contact hypothesis" described and verified empirically by Gutek, Cohen, and Konrad (1990). The analyses revealed that workplace contact is not only useful in predicting whether harassment is likely to occur but also for determining which types are likely to be found. Our findings suggest strongly that *what* a woman does for a living is less important than *where* she does her job. Research studies that do not separate the what and the where are most likely concealing the substantial impact of the immediate work environment and, at the same time, overestimating the effect of gendered occupational roles. My own analyses (not shown) demonstrated this point: When gender predominance was regressed without workplace contact or occupational sex ratio, it was a strong, significant predictor of every dependent variable; when these variables were included, gender predominance reached significance twice.[3] Gender predominance is an important predictor of both physical threat and sexual materials. These relationships seem to capture several important aspects of women's experiences in male culture environments. First, predominantly male environments are more physically hostile and intimidating than other work environments. Women are more apt to be touched, grabbed, or stalked. Second, men are more apt to physically mark their work environments with sexually objectifying material. A descriptive analysis of these data found that in the entire sample sexual materials occurred infrequently (11 percent) compared with sexual categorical remarks (46 percent) or sexual jokes and comments (21 percent). The results in this article (Table 4) reveal that sexual

TABLE 4: Predictors of Four Forms of Sexual Harassment

	Physical Threat				Sexual Comments				Sexual Categorical Remarks				Sexual Materials			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Age[b]	-.371**	.07	-.389**	.07	-.396**	.06	-.409**	.06	-.186**	.06	-.216**	.06	-.078	.09	-.112	.10
Marital status	.188**	.06	.181**	.06	.142*	.06	.138*	.06	.086	.05	.058	.06	.051	.07	.059	.07
Occupational sex ratio	.026	.06	.015	.06	.188**	.05	.182**	.05	.125*	.04	.121*	.04	.085	.08	.062	.08
Workplace contact	.156**	.06	.151**	.06	.236**	.08	.234**	.06	.291**	.09	.299**	.09	.443**	.13	.511*	.14
Gender predominance	.305**	.10	.310**	.09	.081	.10	.079	.10	.161	.09	.141	.10	.212**	.09	.203**	.09
Informational methods	-.068	.07	-.028	.07	-.057	.06	-.043	.06	-.106*	.04	-.077	.06	-.141*	.06	-.101	.07
Proactive methods			-.119*	.05			-.188*	.06			-.229**	.05			-.311**	.06

a. Logistic analyses results are expressed as standardized regression coefficients. Standard errors are notated by *SE*. Significance is based on the Wald test.
b. Higher numerical values are associated with having experienced sexual harassment, being older, nonmarried, higher number of men in occupation or workplace, and presence of proactive or informational policies.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

materials occur in a smaller range of work situations, specifically those where there is a high degree of male predominance.

Do sexual harassment policies and procedures work? Our answer is emphatically yes! Gruber and Smith (1995) found that women responded more assertively to unwanted sexual attention when the workplace implemented several means (e.g., policy, complaint procedure, training) for dealing with harassment problems. The present analysis revealed that men's behavior is also affected by policies and procedures. Moreover, the type of sexually harassing behavior that was affected depended on the types of strategies adopted by the workplace. The results of our analyses suggest that both informational and proactive methods are useful in curtailing harassment generally (Table 3) and, in particular, environmental forms of sexual harassment such as denigrating sexual categorical comments about women or pornographic posters and pinups. However, merely providing employees with information about sexual harassment is not effective in deterring more serious, personal forms of harassment. In this regard, proactive strategies for dealing with harassment are effective. According to our analysis, women in workplaces with proactive strategies were less likely to be physically threatened or to be the targets of offensive sexual comments or questions.

Previous research suggests that sexual harassment is curtailed only when an organization makes a concerted and, we would argue, highly visible effort to deal with the problem. Pryor, LaVite, and Stoller (1993) argued that visible, proactive stances by organizational leaders change employee perceptions and create "local norms" that disapprove of sexist or harassing behavior. It seems from our analyses that proactive methods have a similar impact. The fact that in each pair of equations the effect of informational methods was reduced substantially, often to the level of statistical insignificance, when proactive methods was added to the equation (step 2 of Tables 3 and 4) suggests that proactive policies are more visible, demonstrate a greater commitment by the organization, and involve more effort and energy than informational policies.

This interpretation is supported by the fact that our analyses used women's awareness of sexual harassment policies and procedures rather than official statements about policies and procedures from the organizational hierarchy. Current theory and research suggests that employee perceptions of organizational tolerance of sexual harassment (Hulin, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow 1996), their beliefs about leaders' stances on the problem (Pryor, Giedd, and Williams 1995), or their concerns about procedural justice (Rudman, Borgida, and Robertson 1995) rather than the mere objective existence of formal rules and regulations strongly and routinely influence their attitudes and behaviors on matters of sex discrimination and harassment.

What has not yet been established through research are the processes through which an organization's methods of addressing sexual harassment become sufficiently visible *and* credible. Even with the proliferation of policies, workshops, and

training programs, it seems that some organizations achieve greater success in dealing with sexual harassment than other organizations who use similar methods. The recently reported incidents at Texaco where tape recordings of higher level managers who had participated in diversity training programs revealed that they made racist jokes and comments during a business meeting (France and Smart 1996) should alert us to both the potential and limitations of state-of-the-art training programs.

As researchers we should seek detailed information about the content and duration of various methods used to address sexual harassment. With regard to workshops or training sessions, we should ask, among other things, Who did the training? How long did it last? Was there follow-up training? Was attitudinal or behavioral change assessed? Were harassers sanctioned? From a cynical viewpoint, many organizations may attempt to reduce liability from harassment suits in the 1990s through training programs in much the same way that organizations rushed to develop a sexual harassment policy in the 1980s.

Anecdotal reports by researchers and expert witnesses reveal that workshops and training programs often have high nonattendance or low participant engagement levels. Given the present level of research knowledge, it seems that the *message* of sexual harassment policies and procedures may be as important as the *content*: What an organization does in terms of creating and implementing policies and procedures may change the climate of the organization if these efforts are perceived to be credible.

NOTES

1. The number of workplaces with no harassment policies or procedures was larger than the number of those who used either informational or proactive methods of addressing sexual harassment issues. Also, there were significantly more organizations that used the former but not the latter (see Table 1 for a distribution). To prevent missing values from creating a problem when comparing one equation with another, missing values for informational methods and proactive methods were assigned the mean value for each variable.

2. The possibility that women's reporting of their experiences of unwanted sexual attention was related to their attitudes toward sexual harassment was tested by correlating the four types of experiences (see Table 4) with several attitudinal items: Women who get unwanted sexual attention from a man at work bring it on themselves; men who sexually harass women at work are basically trying to keep women in their place; in general, women are too sensitive about unwanted sexual attention in the workplace; and unwanted sexual attention from men is a serious problem for working women. The correlations were small, ranging from .0007 to .10. It does not appear that women report their experiences differently because of their attitudes.

3. When gender predominance was regressed without either occupation sex ratio or workplace sex contact, the standardized coefficients (in step 2) for the dependent variables were as follows: experienced/ last year (.277), number of types experienced (.218), physical threat (.375), sexual comments (.173), sexual categorical remarks (.268), and sexual materials (.429). All coefficients were statistically significant. In contrast, gender predominance was significant for only two sexual harassment variables

when the occupation and workplace variables were part of the equation: physical threat and sexual materials (Table 4).

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