

**The Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Repercussions  
of Workplace Social-Sexual Behavior**

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1992

Submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science

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April 1992



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ISBN 0-315-74449-9

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### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank many people for their support and encouragement. First, a special thanks to Dr. Grace Pretty as supervisor and mentor, and to Drs. Heather Chipuer, Ross Summers, and Toni Laidlaw for serving on my committee. Thanks also to Dr. Eric Lee for his statistical expertise and patience. An especially warm thank you to Marilyn Montgomery for serving as research assistant to this project and for offering the friendly support that only a recent fellow graduate student can provide. I want to also acknowledge the participants who so willing gave of their time to support this project. Thanks to my friends and colleagues at school, whom I knew I could call on for support and encouragement. Lastly, I want to thank my husband, Andrew Samoluk -- my friend, partner, and personal "maintainer" -- whose conviction in my abilities has never faltered.

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## **Abstract**

### **The Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Repercussions of Workplace Social-Sexual Behavior**

**Sarah Samoluk**

**April, 1992**

The cognitive, affective, and behavioral repercussions of workplace social-sexual behavior were investigated in a multivariate, repeated measures design. This research provided a test of the Natural-Biological, Sociocultural, and Organizational Models of sexual harassment. Forty-two professional women received an audio simulation of direct sexual harassment (DSH); and forty-two received an audio simulation of sexualization of the workplace (SWP). Counterbalanced to control for order effects, participants listened to the simulation twice, once imagining the initiator of the harassment was their boss/supervisor and once imagining the initiator was their coworker. The Multiple Affect Adjective Check List-Revised (MAACL-R) was utilized in a before-after design, and revealed a significant increase in dysphoria subsequent to the simulations. Cognitive measures included attribution of responsibility and the use of the Thought-Listing Technique. A behavioral measure assessed amount of assertiveness. The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) measured instrumentality and expressivity.

Participants also completed an extensive Interview Schedule and indicated whether their interpretation of the simulation was sexual harassment. Fewer participants agreed that SWP was sexual harassment as compared to DSH. The results indicated that DSH resulted in significantly more dysphoria, other-person blame, and assertion as compared to SWP. A significant interaction revealed that DSH by a boss or coworker resulted in relatively greater dysphoria than SWP by a boss or coworker; and self-blame was relatively greater for SWP by a boss as compared to DSH, which effect reversed when the initiator was a coworker. The Thought-Listing Technique revealed no differences in the number of negative thoughts elicited by a boss as compared to a coworker, but a significant increase was found in the number of negative versus positive thoughts elicited. Significant interactions with order allowed for analysis of the consequences of repeated harassment; no matter what sequence, boss before coworker or coworker before boss, the second occurrence of sexual harassment increased dysphoria and assertiveness and lessened self-blame. Instrumentality was positively associated with other-person blame and assertiveness, and negatively associated with self-blame. The Biological Model was unequivocally discredited and support was found for the Sociocultural Model and the role of goal-oriented, masculine attributes as a buffer against the ill effects of sexual harassment.

## **Introduction**

This research project focuses on social-sexual behavior as it affects women in the workplace. Several questions are being addressed. Are female workers differentially affected by social-sexual behavior initiated by a supervisor versus a co-worker? Do repercussions of social-sexual behavior vary as a function of the type of sexual harassment? Do traditional gender role attributes mediate the consequences of social-sexual behavior? The following introduction reviews definitions, theories, and consequences of workplace social-sexual behavior as well as extant research that has implications for this project.

### **Definitions of Social-Sexual Behavior**

Sexuality in the workplace can take many forms--sexual jokes, comments and innuendos, a required and revealing uniform, the display of sexually explicit pictures, nonsexual touching, sexual touching and assault. Sexuality of the workplace also includes "extra-organizational rules" (Clegg, 1981, cited in Mills, 1989, p. 33). These rules are manifested as attitudes which relegate women to relatively low pay/low status work with limited upward mobility, restrict the recruitment of women into traditional skilled labour, and reserve jobs for women which emphasize domestic, culturally-dictated feminine

characteristics, such as clerical worker, teacher, nurse and librarian (see, for example, Nivea & Gutek, 1981; Gutek, 1985; and Mills, 1989). Many of these behaviors may not always be considered sexual harassment, but all of them fall within the realm of gender inequalities and discrimination. Instead of the more troublesome label of sexual harassment, this broad range of behaviors has been classified as examples of social-sexual behavior at work (Gutek) and sexuality of the organization (Burrell & Hearn, 1989). The term "social-sexual behavior" will be utilized in this research to refer to the social and sexual aspect of behaviors which are generally believed to be non-work-related.

Social-sexual behavior has been differentiated into three subtypes: direct sexual harassment, nonharassing sexual behavior and sexualization of the workplace (Gutek, Cohen & Konrad, 1990). Respondents' perceptions have been used to distinguish direct sexual harassment from nonharassing sexual behavior (see Gutek, Cohen & Konrad). If a respondent had experienced any of a list of eight social-sexual behaviors and defined that experience as sexual harassment, then the respondent was considered to have been sexual harassed. The eight social-sexual behaviors consisted of: making complimentary sexual comments, making insulting sexual comments, giving complimentary looks or making complimentary gestures, giving insulting looks or making insulting gestures,

touching sexually, touching nonsexually, socializing with members of the other gender as part of the job, and having sexual relations with members of the other gender as part of the job. Alternatively, if the respondent had ever experienced any of the same eight social-sexual behaviors but did not define the experience as sexual harassment, then the respondent was considered to have experienced nonharassing sexual behavior. This broad rubric of social-sexual behavior thus affords appreciation of the role of perception in labelling behavior as sexual harassment.

More precise definitions of the subtypes of social-sexual behavior have been identified (Gutek, Cohen & Konrad, 1990). Nonharassing sexual behavior refers to behaviors generally considered to be more benign social-sexual behaviors (e.g., wolf whistling and complimentary sexual comments). In comparison, direct sexual harassment is considerably less benign (e.g., sexual touching and proposition with implied or explicit job threat). Sexualization of the workplace refers to the climate of the work environment (e.g., social pressure to flirt, seductive appearance, and offensive remarks or jokes). Direct sexual harassment and sexualization of the workplace are more fully defined below. These two subtypes of sexual harassment are the focus of this research.

### ***Sexualization of the Workplace***

Sexualization of the workplace is legally considered sexual harassment. The Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC: 1983) accepts complaints of unacceptable joking and pornography as sexual harassment. Similarly, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC: 1980) includes any behaviors which create an offensive or polluted environment as sexual harassment. Inasmuch as the presence of sexual joking, graffiti and sexually explicit pictures within the workplace create an offensive environment, they may interfere with an employee's work. Hence such behaviors are legally defined as sexual harassment.

Sexual joking or graffiti differ from sexual touching, propositioning or even assault. The former behaviors can be largely nondirective while the latter are always directed at an individual employee. The nondirective nature of sexualization of the workplace can thus serve as a distinguishing feature of this subtype of sexual harassment. The term "direct sexual harassment," in comparison, can be used to refer to directed, unsolicited sexual attention.

Note that the following literature review of sexual harassment does not make this important distinction. Direct sexual harassment has received most attention, perhaps because most

people are aware of its legal liability (Gutek, Cohen & Konrad, 1990). This same awareness may not exist for a sexualized work environment.

### *Sexual Harassment*

Many definitions of sexual harassment are available. For clarity, these definitions are classified below as behavioral, psychological and legal.

#### *Behavioral Definitions*

Sexual harassment has been conceptualized as a spectrum of gender-based abuse which encompasses physical and sexual violence against women--rape, incest and battering--as well as the more insidious psychological gender-based abuse of unequal and devalued social roles and employment discrimination (Hamilton, Alagna, King & Lloyd, 1987). Sexual harassment can take physical, verbal and environmental forms, and ranges in severity from simple annoyance to physical and emotional harm.

Examples of sexual harassment include explicit or suggestive gestures, deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, and pinching. Verbal harassment includes pressure for dates, sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, questions, and retaliation. Sexually explicit pictures, graffiti or other materials of a



sexual nature also constitute sexual harassment. The most severe form of sexual harassment is actual or attempted rape or assault.

### *Psychological Definitions*

The victim may employ subjective judgment in the labelling of a behavior as sexual harassment. Terpstra and Baker (1987) developed a hierarchy of harassment on the basis of the perceptions of 143 male and 100 female undergraduates and 48 working women. These researchers found that sexual harassment was identified as propositions related to either job threat or enhancement, physical contact of an obvious sexual nature (fingers straying to the breast) and rape by over 95% of the participants. Seventy to 86% of the participants considered gestures, sexual propositions not linked to employment, unwanted physical contact of a potentially sexual nature (arm around), remarks, and graffiti of a sexual nature directed toward an individual to be sexual harassment. Whistles, dates, staring and shoulder squeeze were considered sexual harassment by 34% to 43%. Relatively few individuals considered coarse language, jokes, and nondirected graffiti and gestures to be sexual harassment (from 9% to 19%).

### *Legal Definitions*

The Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC: 1983) places sexual harassment on the same continuum as any other prohibited form of discrimination such as by age, marital status, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, physical disability or pardoned offence. Several conditions warrant the labelling of an incident as harassment. The unwanted sexual behavior must:

[B]e reasonably perceived as a term or condition of employment or of the provision of goods, services, facilities or accommodation customarily available to the general public; or influence decisions on such matters; or interfere with job performance or access to or enjoyment of goods, services, facilities or accommodation; or humiliate, insult or intimidate any individual. Harassment is considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that such behavior was unwelcome. (CHRC, p. 4)

Hence, a woman whose bank loan is made conditional upon the acceptance of a sexual relationship may complain to the CHRC. Similarly, workers may report a work environment polluted by sexual graffiti or off-color joking to the CHRC.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC: 1980) defines sexual harassment as any offensive form of

sexualization that creates a hostile or offensive working environment, including both interpersonal behavior and the workplace climate:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

(EEOC, p. 74677, as cited in Popovich & Licata, 1987)

Inasmuch as harassment on the basis of sex can have severe adverse effects on one's employment and/or educational opportunities, it is legally defined as sex discrimination.

### *Operational Definitions*

In the present study, a broader definition of social-sexual behavior was utilized to refer to the expression of sexuality at work. The terms "social-sexual behavior" and "sexual harassment" were used interchangeably to refer to the occurrence of any type of workplace social-sexual behavior. Direct sexual harassment and sexualization of the workplace

were considered subsets of this broader category of sexual harassment. Direct sexual harassment was operationalized as sexual touching and a proposition with promises of job enhancement from a male to an individual female worker. Sexualization of the workplace was operationalized as sexual gestures, coarse language, and sex-oriented jokes among males in the presence of, but not directed towards, an individual female worker.

### **Theories of Social-Sexual Behavior**

Definitions of harassment have been categorized as either descriptive or causal (Popovich & Licata, 1987). The above definitions are descriptive and provide guidelines as to what behavior constitutes sexual harassment. However, these descriptive definitions do not provide insight into what causes sexual harassment. Causal definitions postulate not only the causes of sexual harassment but how to predict and prevent its occurrence. Causal definitions may be described more accurately as models for sexual harassment. These models fall into three major categories: (A) the Natural-Biological Model; (B) the Organizational Model; and (C) the Sociocultural Model.

### **The Natural-Biological Model**

The Natural-Biological Model posits that social-sexual behavior is the natural expression of sexual attraction rather than an attempt to harass, dominate or discriminate. Three versions of this model have been suggested: (1) A natural stronger sex drive in men motivates men to sexually harass; (2) Sexual harassment is merely the expression of sexual attraction between the sexes; (3) Sexual harassment is an idiosyncratic behavior of a minority of men (Tangri, Burt & Johnson, 1982). The Natural-Biological Model argues that social-sexual behavior is harmless and the result of natural sexual attraction occurring in the workplace. Because sexual harassment does not have the intention or effect of discriminating against women, there will not be harmful consequences to the recipient.

Several predictions can be suggested from the first two versions of this model (see Gutek, 1985; Tangri et al., 1982). If sexual harassment is an expression of romantic interest, the harassment would follow patterns of liking, attraction and courtship, with the recipient and initiator being similar in age, race, and occupational status. The expected recipient would be perceived as a romantically available partner--unmarried or otherwise eligible as a romantic or sexual partner. The initiator's profile would be predictable as

well; harassment would be delivered by harassers in the age groups with the highest biological sex drive. The behavior itself would resemble any other attempt to initiate a sexual or romantic relationship, as opposed to coercion or intimidation. Sexual harassment would occur equally across hierarchical positions of power and status within an organization. The third version asserts that sexual harassment is the deviant behavior of a few sick men. Therefore, sexual harassment should not be a widespread phenomenon.

According to the Natural-Biological Model, incidents of sexual harassment should involve only one harasser, since multiple harassers would be indicative of an attempt to harass, not an attempt to develop a romantic liaison. Additionally, if the behavior is actually the expression of mutual attraction, then both sexes should be comfortable with workplace social-sexual behavior. If this model is correct, when a behavior occurs which is labelled sexual harassment, neither person should be unduly distressed by it, other than perhaps the discomfort of refusing natural sexual advances.

#### *The Organizational Model*

The Organizational Model postulates that certain opportunity structures inherent within organizations facilitate the

occurrence of social-sexual behavior. Facilitating factors include:

- (a) differential power between superordinates and subordinates within the organizational hierarchy, whereby legitimate power and status may be used to extort sexual gratification;
- (b) visibility and contact between males and females, (e.g., the greater visibility of a minority or newcomer may facilitate sexual harassment);
- (c) occupational norms (e.g., cocktail waitress expected to be sexy);
- (d) job requirements (e.g., business trips allowing for a more casual atmosphere than the office); and
- (e) lack of grievance procedures and job alternatives.

Tangri and her colleagues (1982) identified other characteristics considered to be conducive to sexual harassment. Larger work groups and the availability of private or semi-private work space could increase the likelihood of sexual harassment. The ratio of males to females could also be significant. If the ratio is highly skewed in either direction (unequal numbers of men and women), sexual harassment is considered to be more likely. When there are more men than women within a job, women are highly vulnerable to the occurrence of social-sexual behavior. When there are more women than men within a job, the job itself will take on characteristics of the female sex-role thereby

creating a highly sexualized work environment. These assumptions have been described by Gutek and Morasch (1982) as sex-role spillover and will be described more fully below.

The Organizational Model predicts the profile of victims and harassers, expected acts and expected outcomes (see Gutek, 1985, and Tangri et al., 1982.) The vertical stratification of power and status allows those higher in hierarchy, whether male or female, to use their power and status to demand sexual gratification from subordinates. Hence, individuals lower in status, especially those located within subordinate positions, should be more likely to be victims of sexual harassment than individuals higher in status. These positions are usually occupied by women, visible minorities, trainees, temporary employees or part time workers. However, there are situations where one's sex alone determines status and power regardless of where one is located within the organization's hierarchy. High status women who are nontraditionally employed are likely to be perceived as tokens and therefore highly visible and vulnerable to harassment.

According to the Organizational Model, both sexes are equally capable of harassment, but men, because they are more frequently employed in higher status and power positions within organizations, are more likely to be harassers than women. Female minorities should be least likely to be



harassers, as they are even less likely than non-minority women to occupy the higher positions within organizations.

If sexual harassment is the exploitation of legitimate power afforded by one's superordinancy, then the more secure the harasser by virtue of his status and power within the organization, the more severe and frequent the acts of sexual harassment (Tangri et al., 1982). This model suggests several possible solutions for the victim--quit, file a complaint, tolerate, request a transfer, acquiesce--depending on the climate of tolerance for social-sexual behavior within the organization (Farley, 1978, and MacKinnon, 1979, as cited in Tangri et al.). Low status individuals who are dependent on their jobs will have a more negative outcome than individuals who have alternative recourses, such as grievance or transfer procedures. For example, a single mother working as a secretary for a powerful supervisor may find acquiescence the only solution.

#### **The Sociocultural Model**

The Sociocultural Model focuses more on power differentials than facilitating characteristics. It proposes that workplace social-sexual behavior is facilitated by the socialized power differential between the sexes (Tangri et al., 1982) and is not dependent upon the organizational structure of a

workplace. Sexual harassment then is a manifestation of the culturally dictated power and status differential between males and females which gets "spilled over" into the workplace or university setting (Gutek & Morasch, 1982). As such, this theory focuses on power as one of the motivational and psychological processes that perpetuate sexual harassment. Males may consciously or unconsciously set out to harass, dominate or discriminate against females in their efforts to retain their economic and political superordinancy.

Women, as well, play a role in the power differential between the sexes. Because women are socialized to be sexually attractive, to be social facilitators, to not trust their own judgment, to avoid confrontation or conflict, and to feel responsible for their own victimization (Tangri et al., 1982), women are more vulnerable than men to sexual harassment. The Sociocultural Model posits that the causes and remedies of sexual harassment are complicated, requiring not only changes in the organizational hierarchy and climate, but also changes to the patriarchal structure of our society. This model implies interventions in a society which largely accepts and perpetuates inequality between the sexes and where sexual harassment is just one manifestation of this inequality.

The Sociocultural Model asserts that sexual harassment will occur in all status and power positions, although for

different reasons. For example, women in nontraditional jobs, where the sex ratio is skewed in favor of men (i.e., males numerically dominate), will be harassed because of their high visibility as women, who are still perceived to be less powerful despite their professional or work status. Women in traditional low status and lower power jobs will be working in a generally sexualized climate where sexual harassment is a frequent, but perhaps unrecognized, occurrence (Gutek & Morasch, 1982). Hence, changes made in the organization must include all status and power positions.

The Organizational and Sociocultural Models are similar inasmuch as the Organizational Model considers the differential distribution of males and females within the authority structure of the organization. The Sociocultural Model's predictions regarding the profile of the victims and harassers, expected acts, and expected outcomes varies from those of the Organizational Model. The Sociocultural Model argues that women are more likely to be harassed than men because gender is a better predictor of harassment than is organizational structure (Tangri et al., 1982). Hence, a woman in a nontraditional organization would be doubly vulnerable to sexual harassment, due to gender and the need for men to maintain superordinancy over women who are breaking into male occupational domains. There seems to be a parallel process whereby gender is a better predictor of who will

harass than organizational structural: men who seek to maintain superordinancy over women are more likely to harass (Tangri et al., 1982).

Regarding the expected victim response, the Sociocultural Model assumes women who have been socialized to accept their lower status in society will not have the personal sense of power necessary to take assertive steps to remedy the occurrence of sexual harassment. Even if victims did have the personal power necessary to seek redress, this model predicts that management, still largely a male domain, would not be responsive. Victims may be less likely to feel powerful as a result of sexual harassment, leading to an emotionally downward spiral of damaged self-esteem and self-blame. Victims are also likely to suffer economically (Hamilton et al., 1987; Salisbury, Stringer, Ginorio, & Remick, 1986).

#### *A Comparison of the Models of Sexual Harassment*

Comparisons of some aspects of the models have already been described above. Additional aspects will now be compared.

The Natural-Biological Model suggests that social-sexual behavior will not vary as a result of work characteristics. Men with their more powerful sex drives are simply more likely to initiate sexual overtures on the job or in any other

setting (i.e., "boys will be boys"). Alternatively, both the Organizational and the Sociocultural Models propose that workplace characteristics, including the extent to which those characteristics reflect society, may facilitate the occurrence of social-sexual behavior. In other words, the Organizational and Sociocultural Models suggest that "boys will more likely be boys" within particular organizational and social contexts.

Perhaps the Natural-Biological Model is best described as a model of motivation, whereas the Organizational and Sociocultural Models are models of facilitation, an idea introduced earlier by Tangri and her colleagues (1982). The Organizational Model suggests opportunity structures (e.g., legitimate power and status afforded by the organizational hierarchy) facilitate sexual harassment. The Sociocultural Model argues that facilitating factors within the organization are merely a reflection of society's economic and political discrimination of women.

To the extent that an organization mirrors the social structure in a community, the Organizational and Sociocultural Models are difficult to differentiate. Both models emphasize the power differentials of men and women, whether within the organization or society. The Organizational Model, however, implies a remedy easier than changing society. If certain organizational characteristics facilitate the occurrence of

social-sexual behavior, then the intervention should be apparent--changes to the infrastructure of the organization. A test of these assumptions follows.

#### *A Test of the Models of Sexual Harassment*

One of the first papers to assess the validity and adequacy of the above models was based on a study conducted by the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (Tangri et al., 1982). Approximately twenty thousand workers participated (10,644 women and 9,439 men), representing a random sample of federal employees stratified by sex, minority status, salary, and organization. "Victims" of sexual harassment were defined as those persons who indicated they had experienced sexual harassment on the job during the previous 24 months. The researchers found that sexual harassment was not a unitary phenomenon explained solely by either the Natural-Biological, Organizational or Sociocultural Models. For example, women were more likely to experience sexual harassment than men (42% vs. 15%, respectively), and more women than men experienced actual or attempted sexual assault (3.1% vs. 1.7%). For both sexes, less serious forms of sexual harassment occurred more frequently than more serious forms of sexual harassment. The Natural-Biological Model predicts that harassment is directed solely at one person as a display of sexual attraction, yet 43% and 31% of sexually harassed women and men, respectively,

reported there were other victims. Single and divorced women were more likely to be victims (53% and 49%, respectively) than married women (37%). The researchers suggest that this finding provides limited support for the Natural-Biological Model with respect to the availability of the victim as a romantic partner.

The Organizational Model predicts that token employees/visible minorities would be more likely to be victims. Women trainees reported more sexual harassment (51%) than other workers, and both women and men pioneers were more likely to be harassed than nonpioneers (53 vs. 41% for women and 20 vs. 14% for men). A negative relationship between organization level and incidence of sexual harassment was found for men. This finding was not as strong for women. A decrease in the incidence of sexual harassment was found for women only in the highest organizational levels compared to women in an upgraded or "other" slot (36% vs. 41-43%). These findings did not clearly support either the Organizational or Sociocultural Models.

The investigators also described that male harassers follow a pattern of intimidation suggestive of exploitation of power, while female harassers follow a pattern of sexual attraction suggestive of the Natural-Biological Model. Women were more likely to be harassed by older married men, and men were more

likely to be harassed by younger, single women. While co-workers were the most common harassers for both sexes, women were more likely to be harassed by a supervisor than men were. Women were least likely to be harassed by a subordinate, but men were somewhat more likely to be harassed by a subordinate than by a supervisor (16% vs. 14%).

With regard to the victim's behavioral response, the investigators found that less than five percent of both sexes took any formal action against the harasser, and most did not see any need to report the incident (61% females, 71% males). However, only eight percent of the female victims reported "going along" with the harasser compared to one-fourth of male victims. That most women did not "go along" with the harasser insinuates that sexual attention by men is, in the least, unwelcome workplace social-sexual behavior. Many victims either avoided the harasser or did nothing. This may have indicated either women's sense of powerlessness (suggested by the Sociocultural Model) or a mild rebuff of sexual attraction (suggested by the Natural-Biological Model).

Regarding the victim's emotional response, the Natural-Biological Model predicts that sexual harassment is harmless. Yet many victims reported the sexual harassment worsened their physical or emotional condition (33% of female victims and 21% of male victims), their ability to work with others, their



feelings about work, their time and attendance at work, and their quantity or quality of their work. Hence, these findings do not support the Natural-Biological Model.

In sum, Tangri and colleagues (1982) found the least support for the Natural-Biological Model. However, neither the Sociocultural nor Organizational Model received unequivocal support. The Organizational Model could not explain why women in upgraded slots experienced slightly more sexual harassment than lower level women. The Sociocultural Model could not explain why most victims, men and women, did not perceive reporting the incident as an appropriate response. Therefore, none of the models on their own provides an adequate explanation of social-sexual behavior in the workplace. The sex-role spillover perspective addresses this deficiency.

### *The Sex-Role Spillover Perspective*

Gutek and Morasch (1982) summarily dismiss the Natural-Biological Model, in favor of a mechanism of power afforded by organizational variables (as in the Organizational Model) and/or gender (as in the Sociocultural Model). As such, their sex-role spillover perspective provides an integration of the Organizational and Sociocultural Models. To dismiss the Natural-Biological Model, Gutek and Morasch suggest that sexual harassment is no more an expression of sexual

attraction than rape is a form of sexual behavior. Rather, they argue, both sexual harassment and rape are similar in that they are an expression of power by one person over another. While rape is unwanted sexual intercourse acquired through men's greater physical strength, sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention acquired through men's exploitation of their superior organizational status.

In describing the sex-role spillover perspective, it is first necessary to recognize the underlying assumption of the Organizational Model--men are more likely than women to have the organizational clout necessary to extort sexual favors. This could explain why more women than men are harassed. In a sample of 827 women and 405 men, men were in higher prestige jobs than women (40% vs. 33%) and were more likely to supervise others (61% vs. 41%) (Gutek & Morasch, 1982). Conversely, women were more likely than men to have a supervisor (86% vs. 76%) and more likely to have an opposite sex supervisor (43% vs. 7%). Nevertheless, a minority, only 45% of the more serious forms of sexual harassment were initiated by a supervisor as reported by women. By logical deduction then, mechanisms other than organizational power may be operating.

In addition to citing the similarities between rape and sexual harassment to exclude the Natural-Biological Model, Gutek and

Morasch (1982) use this same reasoning to suggest there must be other mechanisms--specifically, work-roles, sex-roles, and sex-ratios--that perpetuate workplace social-sexual behavior. These mechanisms lie within the work environment, which is characterized by hierarchical relationships, including, for example, differential prestige, salaries, fringe benefits, and upward mobility, as well as the specific norms and rules of conduct. These characteristics interact with workers' dependency on their jobs to result in different work contexts for women and men (Nieva & Gutek, 1981). Of particular importance here is the interaction of the work- and sex-roles.

The specific norms and rules for appropriate office conduct constitute work-roles. Work-roles are defined as "a set of expectations associated with the tasks to be accomplished in a job" (Gutek & Morasch, 1982, p.58). Sex-role then is defined as a set of expectations associated with the behavior between men and women. To the extent that sexuality is expressed at work (e.g., sexual teasing, jokes, and remarks, suggestive looks and dating), an aspect of the self considered to be inappropriate to the work-role, the sex-role, is being "spilled over" into the workplace.

Sex-role spillover is defined as "the carryover of the sexual aspects of sex--roles into the work-role" (Gutek & Morasch, 1982, p. 59). When a woman is expected to project sexuality

through her appearance, dress, and demeanor (such as a female airline ticket agent being required to wear makeup as part of her professional responsibilities), this is an indication of sex-role being carried over into the work-role. Gutek (1985) asserts:

Sex role spillover occurs when women are expected to serve as helpers (as in laboratory helper), assistants (as in administrative assistant), or associates (as in research associate) without ever advancing to head of the laboratory, manager of the office, or principal member of the research staff. (p.16)

As well, a person who behaves seductively or aggressively pursues a sexual encounter is carrying over aspects of sexuality into the workplace.

Several reasons exist for the occurrence of sex-role spillover (see Gutek & Morasch, 1982). One reason is gender identity, the perception of one's maleness or femaleness. Gender identity is a cognitive category more basic than work-role, making this characteristic more salient than job category. The qualifications of male nurse and female police officer illustrate. Additionally, women may feel more comfortable behaving in stereotypically female roles, and men may be more comfortable interacting with women in their more familiar gender-roles. Yet as more and more woman enter the workplace and come to occupy the traditionally male bastions of power

and status, men will be forced to become more familiar with women as workers relative to men's expectations of women as complying with traditional gender roles. The same logic can work to the advantage of men who choose occupations typically "female" such as secretary, nurse or cashier. The question then becomes will a change in the sex-ratio of the workplace result in less sex-role spillover or a different type of spillover?

Sex-ratios can be ordered in terms of "immediacy of impact" on day-to-day work experiences (Gutek & Morasch, 1982). Most remote to an individual's experience is sex-ratio of the occupation. For example, the percentage of women within the food service industry. The sex-ratio of the job in a particular work site may be in the opposite direction of the sex-ratio of the occupation. For example, a restaurant may choose to hire only waiters, although there are more waitresses than waiters in the food service industry. The most immediate impact on everyday experiences is sex-ratio of the work-role set. This constitutes the amount of time one spends with the opposite sex in the workplace, whether supervisors, colleagues or subordinates.

The work-role of the numerically dominate sex is imbued with the gender-role expectations of that sex, to the extent that gender-role expectations of the numerically dominate sex are

considered a part of the job (Guttek and Morasch, 1982). For example, cocktail waitresses are expected and expect themselves to appear sexy whereas nurses are considered nurturant. A male nurse then, is a role deviant, as his work-role is incongruent with the expectations of the male gender-role.

The sex-role spillover experienced by the numerically dominate sex differs from that experienced by role deviants, namely, men or women who are nontraditionally employed (Guttek & Morasch, 1982). Women employed in traditional "male" jobs are role deviants. As men are numerically dominant, the sex-role expectations for men are spilled over into the work-role. That is, men employed in traditional male occupations are expected to behave in accordance with their gender-roles. When a male engineer encounters a female coworker, he is expected to behave first as a man encountering a woman, and second as a man encountering a coworker. Thus, the female engineer is qualified as a woman coworker, not just a coworker. Guttek and Morasch predict that as a result of the spillover, a nontraditionally employed woman will receive and be aware of differential treatment. Consequently, such women are likely to report a high frequency of unwelcome social-sexual behavior in the workplace.

A different type of spillover exists for women and men employed in traditional jobs numerically dominated by their own sex. Again, because the job is dominated by one sex, the work-role becomes imbued with characteristics of the numerically dominant sex and the sex-role spills over into the work-role. Female workers are expected to behave as women first and job occupants second, and male workers are expected to behave as men. Substantively, the work-role and sex-role overlap (Gutek & Morasch, 1982).

While women who occupy nontraditional and traditional jobs are viewed as women first and workers second, women in traditional jobs are not likely to be aware of differential treatment. Consequently, women employed in traditional jobs are likely to describe their work settings as sexualized but are not likely to complain of sexual harassment. Sexuality is an accepted part of the work-role. Aspects of sexuality in the job, rather than behaviors directed at individual women, were found to be higher among traditionally employed women than nontraditionally employed women (Gutek & Morasch, 1982).

Gutek and Morasch's (1982) findings, while based solely on descriptive statistics, do support the usefulness of the sex-role spillover perspective to describe experiences of female workers. They predicted that nontraditionally employed women in male-dominated occupations, jobs, and work-role sets would

be more aware of differential treatment. Results showed women so employed reported more experiences of social-sexual behavior (ranging from a complimentary comment to required sex) than either working women in general or women in sex-integrated work. Additionally, more nontraditionally employed women than the total sample of working women reported that sexual harassment was a major problem (9%,  $n = 89$ , vs. 2.8%,  $N = 827$ , respectively); and more nontraditionally employed women had suffered one or more negative consequences as a result of sexual harassment compared to the total sample of women (42.7% vs. 30.3%). Considering that nontraditionally-employed women comprise 10.8% of the women in the total sample of 827, thereby increasing the percentage of experienced harm for the general sample, these results are quite dramatic. Unfortunately, no tests of significance were reported.

Gutek and Morasch (1982) predicted that traditionally employed women who frequently interact with men (a male-dominated work-role set) would report that their jobs contained elements of sexuality but that sexual harassment was not a problem. Their sexuality was an accepted and expected part of their jobs. For example, traditionally employed women were more likely (35.4%) than the total sample (24.2%) or nontraditionally employed women (28.4%) to report that sexual comments and jokes were common, but they were less likely to report that they were personally the recipients of complimentary sexual



comments or of insulting sexual comments. Traditionally employed women were more likely to report that physical attractiveness was an important part of their jobs and that an attractive woman was likely to be hired in their job. Thus, the workplace was perceived as sexualized but not as sexually harassing. Women simply perceived themselves as being treated similarly to their fellow women coworkers. This suggests that sexual harassment is either infrequent or underreported for traditionally employed women.

In summary, Gutek and Morasch (1982) found that a skewed sex ratio was associated with sex-role spillover. However, it is the awareness of differential treatment as a result of the spillover that apparently leads to the perception of sexual harassment as a problem.

The sex-role spillover perspective integrates some of the aspects of the Sociocultural and Organizational Models. The Sociocultural Model suggests that men will seek to dominate women, and this domination of women is carried over into the workplace. The sex-role spillover perspective provides an explanation for why sexual harassment may go underreported: traditionally employed women do not recognize differential treatment and thereby come to accept and expect a sexualized workplace. The Organizational Model and sex-role spillover perspective suggest that a possible remedy for the phenomenon

of workplace social-sexual behavior lies in the desegregation of the workplace. Desegregation can be achieved through the integration of equal numbers of men and women at each level of the hierarchy and across occupations and jobs within each level of the hierarchy. Perhaps then prevention of a sexualized workplace is not impalpable; as Gutek suggests, "The workplace may be a more manageable arena for change than society at large" (1985, p. 18).

#### *A New Test of the Three Primary Models*

The seminal work of Tangri, Burt and Johnson (1982) and Gutek (1985) provide a basis from which to begin a re-exploration of the utility of the Natural-Biological, Organizational and Sociocultural Models of workplace social-sexual behavior. One goal of the present study, as described in this paper, was to extend the evaluations of theory while addressing some of the methodological problems of previous research. Most of the extant research on sexual harassment has used survey methodology or correlational techniques (Brewer, 1982). Now that the incidence and prevalence of sexual harassment are widely acknowledged, research can move beyond descriptive statistics.

Other deficiencies are noteworthy. While Tangri and her colleagues (1982) used a large non-self-selected sample, their

sample may be more representative of U.S. federal employees than women workers in general. Gutek's (1985) large sample may be more representative of workers in general. Yet in both studies the respondents were identified as victims of sexual harassment if they perceived themselves as having experienced one or more forms of social-sexual behavior prior to the research. Hence, these findings rely heavily upon the interpretations and memories of the individual respondents. It is not inconceivable that men and women within these samples were sexually harassed but failed to define their experience as such. That is to say, while the Canadian Human Rights Commission (1980) includes sexual joking as a potential form of harassment, a woman may be tolerant and accepting of such behavior as just a part of her job. Thus the role of perception is problematic.

The present study addressed the methodological deficiencies of previous research on the basic tenants of the Natural-Biological, Organizational and Sociocultural Models. As noted above, the three models predict different consequences as a function of power and status level of the initiator of social-sexual behavior. The Natural-Biological Model predicts little to no distress subsequent to sexual harassment, as sexual harassment is not discrimination, but rather a misinterpreted display of sexual attraction. The Organizational Model predicts that negative victim reactions are greater for those

lower in status and power than the harasser. The Sociocultural Model predicts that, since workplace social-sexual behavior is the perpetuation of patriarchy, all women are equally disadvantaged and similarly affected by this exploitation of power.

Audio simulations were employed in this study to compare the affective, cognitive and behavioral consequences of sexual harassment in a test of the utility of the three models. This method avoided reliance upon the memory of the participants. Additionally, by the use of flagrant incidents of sexual harassment, it was anticipated that most participants would clearly identify the simulations as examples of inappropriate workplace behavior. This allowed for at least potential control over differential perceptions.

Having explored the definitions and models of social-sexual behavior, the consequences for victims of harassment will now be reviewed.

#### **The Consequences of Sexual Harassment**

The consequences of sexual harassment have been compared to a victims' reactions to the often more violent crimes against women--rape, incest and battering (Hamilton et al., 1987; Renick, 1980; Salisbury et al. 1986). Including workplace

social-sexual behavior on the same spectrum as these violent crimes may seem extreme. However, upon examination of the cognitive, behavioral and emotional consequences of sexual harassment, it will be argued that placement of this phenomenon on such a spectrum is both appropriate and essential. Furthermore, any remaining myths of workplace social-sexual behavior as a harmless, insignificant life event will be dismissed.

### *The Cognitive Consequences of Sexual Harassment*

Few researchers have empirically studied the impact of individual differences in beliefs and attitudes (cognitive differences) on the consequences of sexual harassment. Recently, Malovich and Stake (1990) have attempted to address this deficiency in their study of the "psychology of harassment." Attitudes are important to the extent that they impact upon (a) attributions of responsibility, (b) perceptions and interpretations of harassment, and (c) the amount of support or blame directed to the victim, all of which may influence the emotional state of the victim. Each of these areas of impact will be discussed below.

Malovich and Stake (1990) tested the relationship between attitudes toward two sexual harassment scenarios and two individual variables, performance self-esteem and sex-role

attitudes. They assessed students' attitudes about: (1) responsibility for the harassment behavior (victim-blame, perpetrator-blame, no-blame); (2) actions the victim could take (confrontive, complaint, ignoring); and (3) educational and emotional effects.

These researchers found that nontraditional attitudes toward women, as measured by the Attitudes toward Women Scale (Spence & Helmreich, 1978), were associated with lower victim blame, higher perpetrator blame and lower endorsement of no blame. Traditional women with high performance self-esteem were most likely to blame the victim, least likely to blame the perpetrator, and most likely to endorse no blame as compared to other female groups. Contrary to the findings of Jenson and Gutek (1982), there was no significant relationship between previous experience of sexual harassment and attribution of blame.

Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with confrontive, compliant and ignoring actions in response to sexual harassment. Compliance was measured by endorsement of items considered by the researchers to measure compliance. For example, endorsement of "'See the professor [after he has made an inappropriate sexual advance] on a social basis if he asks as it may help your grade'" indicated compliance (Malovich & Stake, 1990, p. 68). Confrontive action was

measured by endorsement of items such as "'Go to the department head and tell him or her about the professor's actions'" (p. 68). One of the ignoring action alternatives was "'Change the subject and try to forget about the conversation'" (p. 68).

The researchers found that participants with traditional attitudes toward women, especially women with low self-esteem, were significantly more likely to endorse a comply response than subjects with nontraditional attitudes. Victim blame and no blame were positively correlated with endorsement of compliance and negatively correlated with endorsement of confrontive action. Perpetrator blame was positively correlated with confrontive action and negatively correlated with compliance. No significant correlations were found between blame and ignoring.

Mynatt and Allgeier (1990) surveyed college women about their experiences with sexual coercion. Inasmuch as most sexual assaults purportedly do not involve strangers or weapons, but rather the use of less obvious force, such as "evaluative force" (e.g., threat of a lowered evaluation, denied promotion or firing), this survey of sexual coercion is generalizable to self-attributions and adjustment problems following sexual harassment.

Mynatt and Allgeier (1990) predicted that victims of sexual coercion (sexual assault) may make similar attributions as outside observers. Namely, when the victim and perpetrator have a preexisting relationship, they have engaged in some type of voluntary social contact, and when no physical force is involved, causality and/or responsibility and/or blame may be attributed to the victim (an internal attribution). Sexual harassment in the workplace, of which assault is a subtype, has similarities. Presumably sexual harassment most often occurs between acquaintances. Social contact may be likely, such as an after hours business meeting. And the type of force used is predominantly not physical--few victims report assault compared to other forms of sexual harassment. Does this suggest then that sexual harassment victims are likely to make internal attributions? A closer look at the survey results of these researchers was warranted.

Multiple regression analysis revealed that situational and attitudinal variables predicted 52% of the variance in the attributions of sexual coercion victims (Mynatt & Allgeier, 1990). Specifically, women who were less assertive (as measured by an assertiveness scale), who had been coerced by an acquaintance using psychological or evaluative force, and women who reported less physical injury, made relatively more internal attributions. Assertiveness accounted for most of the criterion variance (10%) compared to type of force (8%),



acquaintance (5%) and physical injury (4%), with all other variance removed. Additionally, participants with internal attribution scores rated themselves as more responsible than the other person for the sexual coercion incident.

Passively responding to sexual coercion appears to be related to an internal attribution of self-responsibility. Similarly, cognitive dissonance theory would suggest that assertively responding to sexual coercion would be related to an external attribution of responsibility (e.g., blaming the other person involved). Employment-related assault is a form of sexual harassment. Hence, it can be hypothesized by inference that victims of sexual harassment may benefit from a nontraditional sex-role orientation and a less tolerant attitude, so as to be more likely to make a confrontive or assertive response and an external attribution.

Professional women workers potentially have different codes of sexual conduct than university students. Hence, student research, while heuristic, may lack generalizability to professional women workers. The effect of harassment on students is not to be diminished however, and comparisons of students' experiences with that of working women are not only enlightening but not altogether inappropriate. First, students are often employed. Secondly, there are parallels in power structure between corporations and universities, which

facilitate the occurrence of harassment, for example, the perception of students as subordinates and relatively few female faculty (Dziech & Weiner, 1984, as cited in Kenig & Ryan, 1986).

Malovich and Stake (1990) used the more convenient sample of students. Two scenarios were employed to indirectly test students' attitudes towards harassment. Both scenarios were designed to reflect inappropriate sexual advances by a male professor directed at the participant or a close woman friend of the participant. These researchers found that students with traditional attitudes endorsed a comply response to two scenarios more than students with nontraditional attitudes. Baker, Terpstra and Larntz (1990) also found that male and female students with more conservative attitudes towards women responded more passively to a proposition game than those with liberal attitudes.

If there are different codes of sexual conduct between students and workers, these findings must be interpreted with caution. Workers and students similarly ordered 18 scenarios of sexual harassment, yet workers perceived a slightly higher proportion of incidents to be sexual harassment (Baker, Terpstra & Cutler, 1990; Terpstra & Baker, 1987). Female undergraduates were more likely than male undergraduates, and male and female faculty, staff, and graduate students to

accept as appropriate relationships with professors without direct authority and with teaching assistants (Kenig & Ryan, 1986). It may be concluded then that extant research on the beliefs and attitudes may not be appropriately generalized to professional women, thereby calling forth the need to explore this issue among women workers.

Other deficiencies are noteworthy. The Attitudes toward Women Scale (Spence & Helmreich, 1978) was used to measure sex-role attitudes. A close examination of this scale reveals a measure that is more appropriately used to review orientation towards women's rights, roles and privileges, rather than a measure of conformity to traditional gender role attributes (or traits). The gender role self-concept is multidimensional and includes attitudes, behaviors and attributes which may or may not be orthogonal. Hence measures of the attitudes' dimension of the gender role self-concept cannot be substituted for measures of the attributes' dimension. As an example, possession of liberal attitudes cannot be used as an index of nontraditional attributes, until the interrelationship is more fully understood (McCreary, 1990a).

The present research addressed these deficiencies. The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ: Spence & Helmreich, 1978) possesses both conceptual and psychometric validity (McCreary, 1990a). The PAQ illustrates a bidimensional gender

role concept (an instrumentality-expressivity dichotomy) in terms of its item selection and consistent research evidence of a two-factor structure. Therefore, the PAQ was utilized as a more appropriate measure of conformity to traditional gender role attributes than the Attitudes towards Women Scale as utilized by Malovich and Stake (1990). Additionally, instead of relying on survey or scenario-based research, laboratory simulations were used. Simulations, while still scenarios, provide an added dimension beyond written words on a page. It was therefore anticipated that the simulations would provide a more direct assessment of the relationship between cognition and traditional gender role attributes.

#### *Behavioral Consequences*

Only recently have researchers begun to empirically examine the behavioral responses to sexual harassment as a function of individual and situational characteristics. Baker, Terpstra and Larntz (1990) suggest that despite perceptual similarities in the severity of a sexual harassment situation, individual differences (what they call "individual level factors") may combine with characteristics of the situation to influence the reaction to sexual harassment. Potentially two people may perceive a situation similarly, but react differently as a result of individual differences. If so, what personal factors determine the behavioral reaction to sexual harassment?

The research by Baker, Terpstra and Larntz (1990) represents the most recent attempt to understand the contribution of personal factors and severity of sexual harassment to reactions. The individual level (or personal) factors explored were gender, religiosity, attitudes toward women, self-esteem and locus of control. Reactions to 18 scenarios, ranked according to the percentage of subjects perceiving the situation as sexual harassment, were studied. Using student participants, open-ended behavioral reactions were coded into ten reaction categories. The researchers found that reactions vary more as a function of the severity of sexual harassment than personal factors. The more severe the sexual harassment (e.g., fingers straying to breast), the more assertive the response (reporting the incident, either internally or externally). Similarly, the more innocuous the situation, (e.g., coarse language) the relatively more passive the response (ignore or do nothing) regardless of individual differences.

Of the personal factors, sex had the strongest effect (Baker, Terpstra & Larntz, 1990). For example, a higher proportion of women than men responded that they would react more assertively to severe sexual harassment, such as breast fondling, and more passively to the relatively less severe situations, such as directed gestures and wolf-whistle. Alternatively, men reported that they would more likely

respond physically or verbally to directed gestures and wolf-whistle than women. Religiosity (frequency of religious service attendance), attitudes toward women (Attitudes Toward Women Scale), and locus of control (Rotter's, 1966, scale) had very limited effects on reaction types. The researchers found that participants with more liberal attitudes towards women as compared to those with more conservative attitudes were more likely to select assertive responses (report and/or physically or verbally react) to a proposition game.

Women were likely to respond assertively to fingers straying to breast, proposition with job enhancement, rape and proposition with no strings, and passively to directed gesture and wolf-whistle. Ranking by perceived severity of harassment may be inadequate to explain the discontinuous nature of sex effect across the ranked situations, and the continuum of severity combined with that of level of threat may be more informative (Baker, Terpstra & Larntz, 1990). Fingers straying to breast, proposition with job enhancement and/or with no strings attached and rape may be perceived by women as both more threatening and more severe than directed gesture and wolf-whistle, thereby necessitating the more active, assertive response of reporting.

Personal factors were associated with reactions to 8 of the 18 scenarios. These eight scenarios were within the top two-

thirds of the severity continuum. Additionally, personal factors, other than sex, had a limited effect on reaction, thereby contributing relatively little new knowledge regarding reactions as a function of, for example, traditional sex-role orientation.

Examination of the 18 scenarios used is helpful in understanding these limited results. Consider, for example, the following scenario of off-color joking:

As the supervisor and crew sat down for coffee during the break, Mr. Y led off with his usual off-color, sex-oriented joke. Ms. X knew that more would follow as the male members roared their approval. She considered the jokes to be offensive. (Baker, Terpstra & Larntz, 1990, p. 325).

This incident was ranked 16 out of 18 on the severity continuum of sexual harassment, and only 15% of 243 men and women considered this incident to be harassment. The first and second ranked reaction types for this scenario were avoid and verbally react, respectively. The level of threat here is minimal compared to the scenario of a proposition with job enhancement:

Although Ms. X had indicated that she was not interested, Mr. Y persisted in propositioning her. Mr. Y had indicated that her job status might be enhanced if she would have an affair with him. (p. 324).

This incident was rated third on the severity continuum and perceived by 98% of men and women to be sexual harassment. The first and second ranked reaction types for this scenario were report internally or externally, and leave field, respectively.

The researchers' results suggest that the more the incidents were perceived by the participants to be harassment, the more assertive the reactions. The above off-color joking scenario may simply have not been severe enough to be perceived as sexual harassment. Perhaps a simulation of off-color, sex-oriented joking, utilizing imagery of participants to place themselves in the situation, would provide sufficient contextual information to affect reactions types among women. It was anticipated that the use of audio simulations in the present study would better contribute to an understanding of the relationship between reaction type and situational and individual variables.

### **Emotional Costs**

Sexual harassment has been defined as a stressor, and as such, a woman's response to the stressor will vary according to her ability to cope with the stressor as well as the frequency and intensity of the stressor itself (Gosselin, 1984). Discussion of the affective consequences of sexual harassment, factors



affecting coping ability and empirical research will attest to this definition.

Several studies support a definition of sexual harassment as a stressor. Among the women who are sexually harassed, 75% will experience symptoms of emotional or physical distress due to their harassment (Crull, 1981; Loy & Stewart, 1984, as cited by Salisbury et al., 1986). The 1975 Working Women's Institute study (cited in Hamilton et al., 1987), asserts that some form of emotional distress is reported by 96% of sexual harassment victims. It has further been suggested that sexual harassment may explain the excess of depression in women compared to men (see Hamilton et al.).

Deterioration of working conditions subsequent to sexual harassment serves to intensify the distress of sexual harassment. Tangri and her colleagues (1982) found in their survey of U.S. federal employees that 36% of female victims reported that their "feelings about work became worse;" 33% reported that their "emotional or physical condition became worse;" and a smaller percentage reported a deterioration in their ability to work with others, and in their attendance, quantity and quality of work (p.48). The Canadian Human Rights Commission (1983) similarly found that, of the women who considered themselves to have been sexually harassed (82 of 210 women who reported they had experienced unwanted sexual

attention in a work- or service-related context,  $n=1034$ ), 14% reported they were transferred or found another job and 17% said they quit their jobs without having another one to go to. Furthermore, of the 210 women subjected to unwanted sexual attention, 35% stated that their "ability to work with the harasser" became worse, 24% reported their "feelings about work" became worse, and 20% reported that their "emotional or physical condition" became worse (p.12).

Researchers have also pointed to existing measures of stress to concretize the role of sexual harassment as a stressor. The Holmes' 43-item Social Readjustment Scale reveals that women suffering sexual harassment would receive a total of 161 life change units, which is defined as a mild life crisis (Hamilton et al., 1987). Hamilton and colleagues assert that this amount of change has been associated with adverse health affects in 37% of subjects. They conclude that sexual harassment can be as stressful as a divorce, major illness or other life crisis.

#### *Sexual Harassment Sequelae*

A plethora of literature attests to a variety of psychological consequences in response to sexual harassment and often the second injury of victim-blaming (see, for example, Benson & Thomson, 1982; Fuehrer & Schilling, 1985; Gosselin, 1984;

Hamilton, et al., 1987; Renick, 1980; Salisbury et al., 1986; Schneider, 1987). Reactions range from simple annoyance to more profound symptoms. Victims of sexual harassment may experience anger, fear, depression, anxiety, irritability, loss of self-esteem, feelings of humiliation and alienation, and a sense of helplessness and vulnerability. Somatic concomitants of sexual harassment may include crying spells, loss of interest in usual activities or pastimes, poor appetite or weight loss, chronic fatigue, loss of interest or pleasure or decreased sexual drive, insomnia, and assorted pains. Gastrointestinal disorders, jaw tightness, teeth grinding, anxiety attacks and binge-eating have also been identified (Salisbury et al., 1986).

Salisbury and colleagues (1986), based on their clinical observations of 7 women in group therapy and 10 women in individual therapy, assert that symptoms seem to progress in stages; the length of time within a stage may vary, but the order of stages remains constant. The first stage is one of confusion and self-blame. Many of the women were surprised by the harasser's behavior, and felt guilty for somehow causing or encouraging the behavior. Feelings of self-blame, embarrassment, and humiliation are likely to continue until the victim perceives herself as sexually harassed and not personally responsible. Hamilton and colleagues (1987) assert that the initial denial or minimization, confusion, isolation,

and lack of validation interfere with the victim's taking action. This was supported by Salisbury and colleagues who found that few victims sought therapy during this stage of symptoms.

The next stage of symptoms in response to sexual harassment is fear and anxiety. The women felt helpless, trapped and even "paralyzed" as their efforts to stop the harassment failed (Salisbury et al., 1986). They began to fear retaliation, fearing for their career and economic stability. Some experienced fears of early morning phone calls, having their homes watched, or being followed in a car. Nightmares sometimes resulted from their fears. These researches suggest that the sense of helplessness and vulnerability could last for months or years if the harassment continues or a complaint is not yet resolved.

Flashbacks and nightmares are not uncommon especially for women who experience actual or attempted rape or assault (Hamilton et al., 1987). One woman in their Complainant's Support Group who was sexually assaulted at work experienced flashbacks. Another woman whose employer screamed at her abusively and threatened to hit her had recurrent nightmares. Hence, extant symptoms are suggestive of a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder for some women (The American Psychiatric Association, 1987).

Anxiety may continue into the next stage of depression and anger. This stage often begins upon termination of employment. During this stage women began to doubt their abilities with a consequent erosion of self-esteem and self-confidence (Salisbury et al., 1986). One university student questioned the credibility of the feedback she was getting. Drugs or alcohol may be used for self-medication "in order to forget, to compensate, or just to make the situation bearable" (Gosselin, 1984, p. 23). Many women in the Salisbury et al. study were also taking medication to relieve anxiety and depression, a side effect of which may have been a decreased motivation to act upon the harassment. Anger results when the victim realizes she is not personally responsible for her harassment. This was the turning point, as many women proceeded to complain formally or left their organizations. Complaining, however, may exacerbate the stress.

The complaint process is double edged. If women complain formally within their organizations, they can become empowered through a greater sense of control and integrity. Many of the original members of the group in the Salisbury et al. (1986) study remained as core organizers of a self-directed support group even though their complaints or suits had been resolved. They identified themselves as growing more politically radical and assertive. They also gained a sense of power and control as they assisted other victims to cope, which Salisbury and

colleagues suggest parallels the empowerment of rape victims serving as rape relief counsellors or battered women operating shelters.

The problem with complaining, however, is the potential for retaliation and further emotional costs. The formal complaint process forces women to relive and rethink their experiences, which has the effect of lengthening the harassment and often occurs under the added stress of public scrutiny (Salisbury et al., 1986). Additionally, victim-blaming is not uncommon leading to further isolation (Gosselin, 1984; Hamilton et al., 1987). In what Hamilton and colleagues call a "Catch-22," the victim's reactions to her abuse may appear to justify the abuse as her job performance deteriorates under the stress of unfair treatment.

The victim may be blamed for being prudish, provocative, and nonprofessional. A woman, socialized to find her identity through relations with others, may then begin to doubt herself as she accepts these judgments, thereby creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. Further retaliatory harassment, "a second injury," may also result including isolation, unfair work assignments and standards, sabotage, withholding job-related information, character assassination, and gossip (Gosselin, 1984; Hamilton et al., 1987). Family and friends may similarly contribute to this second injury if they harbor

the same victim-blaming attitudes or fail to offer sympathy and support (Gosselin, 1984; Salisbury et al., 1986).

During the final stage of symptoms, disillusionment, victims expressed their somber insight that most systems are inadequate to help them. They continued to experience doubt about their safety in a work environment and they lose trust in others, especially men. Disillusionment may give way to renewed efforts at denial and suppression in an inability to fully realize the cumulative effects of working in a discriminatory environment (Hamilton et al., 1987). As an explanation of how hurtful and disappointing the organizational reaction can be, Gornick (1983, as cited by Hamilton et al.) provides the example of a woman in science: "[She] may discover the extent to which scientists are prejudiced, and when confronted, both lie and falsify the data, shaking the foundations of the woman's belief and trust in scientific objectivity" (p. 171).

Gruber and Bjorn (1982) offer empirical support for the consequences of sexual harassment to women working on an assembly line in an auto industry. These researchers found that frequency of sexual harassment is most strongly related to attitudes towards coworkers and supervisors as well as life satisfaction and perceived uselessness when race, marital status, seniority, work area sex composition and job status

are held constant. These findings lend further support that harassed women experience diminished self-worth and life satisfaction, thereby in effect carrying the psychological trauma with them beyond the workplace, even when factors such as age, race and marital status are controlled.

In summary, the above literature confirms that women experiencing sexual harassment are likely to experience some form of emotional distress. To predict the emotional distress of victims of sexual harassment, several questions need to be answered. Will the affective response to sexual harassment vary as a function of severity and level of threat of the sexually harassing incident? Will the power and status level of the initiator of the incident influence the affective response of the victim? Will traditional or nontraditional women be more distressed by an incident of sexual harassment? These questions have been addressed experimentally as discussed in the following literature.

#### *Predicting Affective Responses*

Malovich and Stake (1990) assessed student's attitudes and beliefs about how students react emotionally to harassment. Beliefs were assessed indirectly by asking participants to indicate the extent to which the women in the scenarios would feel various emotions (e.g., insulted/flattered, intimidated/



powerful) on a 7-point scale. Collapsed across a measure of self-esteem (as measured by the Performance Self-Esteem Scale, PSES), nontraditional students versus traditional students (as measured by the Attitudes towards Woman Scale, AWS) endorsed higher ratings on all six emotional effect variables, indicating nontraditional students' greater awareness of the potential harm to victims of sexual harassment. Across both high and low self-esteem and high and low AWS groups, traditional students, with high performance self-esteem, endorsed the least adverse effects on all six emotional effect variables. Hence, traditional students may be more likely to minimize the seriousness of harassment. Moreover, these results imply that traditional students, socialized to accept the sexual initiative and aggressivity in men, may be more complacent about and therefore less adversely affected by sexual harassment. In the least, this study indicates traditional students are not aware of the potential harm.

Mynatt and Allgeier (1990) found that women who had been coerced by evaluative or psychological force, women who had been more physically injured, and women who accepted the use of interpersonal violence (as a measure of traditionality) reported more severe adjustment problems than their counterparts. Together these predictor variables accounted for 34% of the variance in the extent to which the respondents

reported adjustment problems following an actual sexual coercive incident.

Some research suggests that workers in low status positions are more likely to perceive sexual harassment by supervisors as a serious problem and hence respond more negatively (Brewer, 1982, cites the MSPB survey by Livingston, 1982; Tangri et al., 1982). Similar findings have been achieved in samples using a student population. Using hypothetical vignettes, the same behavior from an older, married professor compared to a lower status teaching assistant generated higher ratings on judgments of the incident as sexual harassment (Reilly, Carpenter, Dull & Bartlett, 1982). In a replication and extension of the Reilly et al. study, more blatant actions by the male professor in the hypothetical vignettes increased judgments of seriousness (Weber-Burdin & Rossi, 1982). Together these findings suggest that sexual behavior initiated by low status instructors appears to be regarded as less problematic than sexual behavior initiated by high-status faculty members.

All of the above cited research findings suggest that affective reaction varies as a function of the power and status level of the initiator of the social-sexual behavior. Based on these findings, one would expect a more negative response to a supervisor than a coworker or subordinate.

Alternatively, Littler-Bishop, Seidler-Feller and Opaluch (1982), using scenario-based attributions, studied airline personnel and found the opposite effect. Flight attendants were perceived as more embarrassed, insulted and nervous with lower-status (airplane cleaners) than with equal- (ticket agents) or higher-status (pilots) personnel for the more imposing social-sexual behaviors (invitation to a party and sexual touching).

Littler-Bishop et al. (1982) suggest that women's socialization to achieve upward mobility through men may have influenced the reactions to sexual harassment by pilots. If this reasoning is accurate, male supervisors may also reward women with upward mobility, yet sexual harassment by supervisors has been shown to have serious repercussions. The difference, they posit, lies in the forms of retaliation available. A supervisor who has both power and status has the ability to terminate an employee's job unlike the airline pilot, who has more status than power over the flight attendants. Hence, the pilots may have been perceived not only as less threatening, but as potential social partners, thereby offsetting the negative effects associated with the social-sexual behaviors initiated by the pilots. For sexual comment (a less imposing behavior) initiator status did not make a difference. In sum, this research suggests the importance of controlling for contextual interpretations,

including that of initiator power and status, when studying sexual harassment.

This research addressed the questions raised by contextual interpretations and power and status. Audio simulations in which harassment was initiated by a newly-hired boss or supervisor, implying both higher power and status, as compared to that initiated by a coworker were utilized. The coworker was qualified as a coworker who does the same job you do, thereby implying equal status and power.

"Newly-hired" was included at both levels of initiator to control for the context in which participants' interpreted the behavior. A social-sexual behavior described as "repeated" or "habitual" may be interpreted with less tolerance than the same behavior displayed by a "newly-hired" worker. Or perhaps educational efforts have increased public awareness of the inappropriateness of social-sexual behaviors from any worker. Thus, the inclusion of "newly-hired" allowed for differential perceptions among women, while controlling the context of interpretation for the harassment.

Additionally, the use of audio simulations was designed to more directly assess the emotional reaction of the participant, rather than asking the subject to respond to how a hypothetical women would react to an incident of sexual

harassment. None of the previously cited research has employed a standardized assessment of affect. This research utilized the Multiple Affect Adjective Check List, Revised (MAACL-R), both preceding and following the simulated sexual harassment. This standardized measure provided an overall dysphoria score composed of anxiety, hostility and depression subscale scores. Moreover, the audio simulations were intentionally designed to meet the Canadian Human Rights Commission's definition of harassment. It was anticipated that these legally clear-cut and emotionally provocative incidents of harassment, which relied upon the participant's imagination to place herself in the situation, would provide a more accurate generalization to the participant's own reaction to an actual incident.

### Summary

Since the importance of sexual harassment has only recently been recognized, much of the research has been descriptive in nature. The experimental research which has been done suffers from the use of one-dimensional, often skeletal vignettes or alternatively assesses retrospective data from the memory of participants. At the same time it has often failed to control or assess the power and status level of initiator. Previous research has highlighted the importance of traditional gender-role orientation, but has failed to measure it appropriately.

Affective, cognitive and behavioral responses have similarly been studied generally, but not through methodologies that enable clear identification of the relationship between these three consequences. This research was designed to move a step beyond, by combining distinct measures of affective, cognitive and behavioral responses in an analogue study of two types of social-sexual behavior initiated from two sources.

### Hypotheses

The hypotheses were as follows:

(1) Type of social-sexual behavior (direct sexual harassment and sexualization of the workplace) would yield a main effect over all three measures (affective, cognitive and behavioral). Based on the literature, it was expected that participants exposed to direct sexual harassment, as compared to sexualization of the workplace, would experience the following:

- (a) greater negative affect, as measured by the Multiple Affect Adjective Check List-Revised (MAACL-R);
- (b) less blame for themselves, as reflected by positive attribution scores on a index of internal versus external attribution of responsibility; and

- (c) assertiveness, as reflected by relatively high behavioral response scores on an index of passive versus assertive behavioral responses.

(2) Initiator of social-sexual behavior (boss/supervisor and coworker) would yield a main effect over all three measures (affective, cognitive and behavioral). Because this area of research is exploratory, no specific predictions were made as to the direction of effect.

(3) The interaction between type of social-sexual behavior and initiator would be explored, although no a priori hypotheses were made. It was conceivably possible that an individual would react with different affective, cognitive and behavioral responses to direct sexual harassment and sexualization of the workplace, depending upon the initiator of the harassment. The literature suggests that the more imposing the behavior, the greater the negative affect; and the Organizational Model suggests that individuals lower in status and power within an organization are more vulnerable to sexual harassment. Direct sexual harassment by a supervisor or boss as compared to a coworker may be considered more imposing because the boss has power over the employee. Hence, the employee may respond with greater anxiety.

Alternatively, the Sociocultural Model posits that all women are equally vulnerable when the power differentials inherent in society are reflected as sexual harassment. Perhaps an employee would feel safer to react with greater anger, disgust and irritation to a coworker who makes sexual jokes as compared to a boss. It is possible then that sexualization of the workplace initiated by a coworker as compared to a boss may result in greater negative affect.

(4) A significant relationship between gender-role attributes and the behavioral and cognitive measures was predicted. Women who conform more to traditional gender-role attributes, would be more passive and blame themselves more in response to sexual harassment than participants who are less traditional in gender-role attributes. That is, a significant negative correlation is expected between scores on a measure of expressivity (the Personal Attributes Questionnaire "F" or feminine scale), and the summary attribution and behavior response scores.

(5) A cognitive measure or thought-listing technique provides an additional test of the theories of sexual harassment. The Organizational Model suggests that sexual harassment by a boss would elicit a greater number of negative cognitions than sexual harassment by a coworker. The Sociocultural Model suggests that sexual harassment by a boss or coworker would



elicit a similar number of negative cognitions. The Natural-Biological Model would suggest that there would be more positive than negative cognitions elicited by sexual harassment. As this research is exploratory, the direction of effect was not predicted.

### **Method**

#### ***Participants***

One hundred and twenty-two members of a professional women's network were invited to participate. Of the 84 women who participated voluntarily in the study, 42 received the direct sexual harassment simulation, and 42 received the sexualization of the workplace simulation. The participants met all of the following criteria: (1) 18 years of age or older; (2) employed at any time in the past year in a professional or managerial level job; and (3) must have or has regularly come into contact with men at work, either as coworkers, supervisors, customers or clients. (Gutek, 1985, used a similar sampling strategy without this project's exclusion of nonprofessional women.)

Participants ranged in age from 25 to 67 years. The majority of women had achieved some college, business or technical school training. The demographic data for the entire sample

as well as for women receiving the direct sexual harassment simulation and sexualization of the workplace simulation are summarized in Appendix A.

Participants were queried regarding their particular workplace experiences with behavior similar to that included in the simulations. Regarding sexual joking at work, a higher percentage responded that sexual joking occurs sometimes as compared to frequently or not at all--46.3% for the direct sexual harassment (DSH) group and 64.3% for the sexualization of the workplace (SWP) group. A majority in both groups responded that workers sometimes swear or use rough language (51.2% for DSH and 64.3% for SWP). A higher percentage of participants responded affirmatively rather than negatively when asked if they had ever been touched by a man in a sexual way on the job (54.8% for DSH and 57.1% for SWP). The majority responded negatively when asked if they had ever been asked by a man to engage in sexual relations as part of their job (88.1% for DSH compared to 81.0% for SWP). Appendix B summarizes the participants' experiences.

### *Stimuli*

Two simulations of workplace social-sexual behavior were tape recorded and played to the participants. Participants serving in the direct sexual harassment condition received the

following verbal instructions before they listened to the simulated sexual harassment recording:

Imagine that you are having an extremely busy day at work when quite unexpectedly [your newly-hired boss or supervisor/ a newly-hired coworker who does the same job as you do] approaches. He puts his arm around your shoulders, letting his fingers stray to your breast and says:

The following communication, recorded by a male, is then played:

Hey Babe, you look as if you could use some help. I'll tell you what, you make it worth my while tonight in bed, and I'll help you out.

Participants serving in the sexualization of the workplace condition received the following verbal instructions before they listened to the simulated sexualization of the workplace:

Imagine that you are seated at your desk when quite unexpectedly you overhear the following conversation between two of [your bosses or supervisors/ coworkers who do the same job as you do] who were just recently hired. As you look up, you see the two men making obscene, sexually oriented gestures as they talk to each other.

The following communication, recorded by two males, is then played:

MALE NO. 1: I went out hogging last night. Picked up this real pig. Before I knew it, we were banging, sucking, doing things I wouldn't do to a farm animal. Then this babe turned on me. She got real upset; she said she was feeling guilty because she has a boyfriend.

MALE NO. 2: So what did you do?

MALE NO. 1: I told her, "Hey, babe, what's the worry. We're through here anyway."

MALE NO. 2: (laughter)

The above sexualization of the workplace simulation is an edited version of material from Andrew Dice Clay Live: The Diceman Cometh (Lynch & Dubin, Producer and Director respectively, 1988).

## **Measures**

### **Affective Measure**

The Multiple Affect Adjective Check List Revised (MAACL-R; Zuckerman & Lubin, 1985) was used to measure participants' affect both preceding and proceeding presentation of the simulations (see Appendix C). The MAACL-R produces five subscale scores, anxiety (A), depression (D), hostility (H), positive affect (PA) and sensation seeking (SS). The raw scores on the anxiety, depression and hostility scales can be summed to provide a composite dysphoria (Dys) score (or

negative affect score). The raw scores on positive affect and sensation seeking can be summed to provide a positive affect and sensation seeking (PASS) composite score (or positive affect score). The individual scale scores are obtained by summing the number of adjectives checked on each scale, with the exception of the sensation seeking scale where four items are scored positively if not checked. The higher the scores, the greater the negative affect (for the A, D and H scales) and positive affect (for the PA and SS scales). Split half reliabilities were reported to be .80 (anxiety), .82 (depression), .82 (hostility), .93 (positive affect), .74 (sensation seeking), .90 (dysphoria), and .92 (positive affect and sensation seeking) for a college sample size of 536, for a period ranging from 2 to 5 days (Zuckerman & Lubin, 1985).

### *Cognitive Measures*

The cognitive measure consisted of three parts. An overview of each part is presented first, followed by a more in-depth description.

In Part One a written thought-listing technique (Cacioppo & Petty, 1981; see Appendix D) provided both quantitative and qualitative data on the cognitions of each participant. Women may be better able to express their thinking with open-ended responses as compared to more objective measures (Belenky,

1986). Hence, this part was designed to capture women's cognitions in perhaps a more accurate assessment.

Part Two was designed to assess internal versus external attribution of responsibility. This measure was largely based on research by Mynatt and Allgeier (1990) who assessed subject attribution subsequent to an experience of sexual coercion (forced or attempted intercourse). The first three 7-point scale items were borrowed directly from their research and the later 8 yes-no check items were redesigned to reflect workplace social-sexual behavior as compared to sexual coercion.

Part Three was used to determine whether each participant considers the simulation of social-sexual behavior to be sexual harassment. Research suggests that perceptions of sexual harassment may vary depending on variables such as lack of a commonly accepted definition, sex-ratio of the job, contact with opposite sex and familiarity with sexual harassment (see, for example, Fitzgerald, 1988; Gutek, 1985; Gutek, Cohen & Konrad, 1990; Gutek & Morasch, 1982; Terpstra & Baker, 1987). Hence, it was possible that not all participants would consider the simulations to be examples of sexual harassment.

Part One. Participants' responses to the thought-listing measure were coded by the participants themselves. A pretest revealed that sparse comments, because of their telegraphic nature, are uncodable by external judges. Only the participants can know the intent of their own thoughts. The nature of the research and the pretest results were discussed with J. T. Cacioppo, the principal author of the thought-listing technique (personal communication, December 2, 1991), who suggested subject-scoring as a solution.

Each thought was coded on a target and valence dimension. The target dimension reflects the participant's focus of attention during the thought. The valence of the cognitive responses indicates the favorableness of the thoughts elicited by the simulations. The participants were instructed how to self-code along the target and valence dimensions. These instructions, "Coding the Thought Listing Measure," are included in Appendix D.

The sparse comment "How awful" was used as an explanation to the participants as to the necessity of subject-scoring. While this may seem to be a negatively-valenced thought, the target of the thought is not easily recognized by an outside, objective scorer. Would the participant be referring to how awful the harasser is (a source-related target) or how awful for herself that she has to endure the harassment (a self-

related target)? An objective scorer could not be sure such a thought was accurately coded to reflect the participant's intent.

The thought-listing technique has been shown to obtain reliable information from participants. Split-half reliability was reported to be .78 and test-retest reliability was reported to be .64 (Cullen, 1968, as cited Cacioppo & Petty, 1981). This procedure was originally designed to assess thoughts elicited by a persuasive message in the study of attitude change. However, this technique is also applicable to monitor thoughts that occur while attending to any personally significant stimulus or situation (Cacioppo & Petty). Thought-listing has demonstrated sensitivity to individual differences and interventions. (See Cacioppo & Petty for a review of relevant studies.)

For more details on the coding of thought-listing see Cacioppo and Petty (1981) and Hunsley, Silver and Lee (1991).

Part Two. Participant attributions of responsibility were measured on three 7-point scales (self-blame, other-person blame, and situation-blame, respectively) and on 8 yes-no check items. The scale items ranged from *Not at all responsible* (1) to *A little of both* (3) to *Completely responsible* (7) as follows:



- (1) To what extent do you think you are responsible for this incident?
- (2) To what extent do you think the other person is responsible for this incident?
- (3) To what extent do you think the situation is responsible for this incident?

(Mynatt & Allgeier, 1990)

On the first 7-point question, any response above the midpoint was assigned a score of -1 and all other responses were assigned a score of 0. On the other two 7-point scales, any response above the midpoint was assigned a score of +1 and any other responses were assigned a score of 0.

For the check items, participants were instructed to check those items with which they agree. The wording was adjusted to reflect the type of social-sexual behavior. Because sexualization of the workplace occurs between two males, the wording was plural. For brevity, only the singular version is provided as Appendix E.

For check item numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4, any item checked was assigned a score of -1 and any item not checked was assigned a score of 0. For item numbers 5, 6, 7 and 8, any item checked was assigned a score of +1 and any item not checked was assigned a score of 0.

The assigned scores for both the scale and check items were summed across all 11 items. Negative summary scores indicate an internal attribution (assignment of responsibility for the incident to themselves) and positive summary scores indicate an external attribution (assignment of responsibility to the initiator or some aspect of the situation).

Part Three. Participants were asked, "Do you consider this incident to be sexual harassment?" following a written description of the simulation they received. Part Three is included as Appendix F.

Participants circled one of three possible answers:

- (1) Yes, this is sexual harassment;
- (2) No, this is not sexual harassment; or
- (3) I do not know or I am not sure.

(Gutek, 1985)

#### *Behavioral Measure*

The behavioral measure was designed to assess the participants' behavioral reaction to the harassment. This measure is included as Appendix G. A classification of reaction types which varies along a continuum of assertiveness to passivity was used (see Terpstra & Baker, 1985, 1989, as cited by Baker, Terpstra and Larntz, 1990). The participants were asked to respond to each of 10 reaction types on a 7-

point scale. The scale items ranged from *Definitely unlikely* (1) to *Neither likely nor unlikely* (3) to *Definitely likely* (7).

For items 1 through 5 (assertive items), scores of 1 through 7 were recoded as scores of 0 to 6, respectively. For items 6 through 10 (passive items), scores of 1 to 7 were recoded as scores of 6 to 0, respectively. Scores were summed to provide an overall index of assertiveness versus passivity. The lowest possible score of 0 indicates passivity across all 10 items; the highest possible score of 60 indicates assertiveness across all 10 items. Hence, the higher the behavioral score, the more assertive the participant in response to harassment.

#### *Personal Attributes Questionnaire - (PAQ)*

The short form of the PAQ developed by Spence, Helmreich and Stapp (1974, 1975; Spence & Helmreich, 1978) was used to measure gender role attributes. The short form consists of three 8-item scales measuring masculinity (M), femininity (F) and masculinity-femininity (M-F). Only the 16 items forming the M and F scales were included (see Appendix H). Each item consists of a pair of bipolar traits on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The participants were instructed to choose the point where they fall between the extremes. The items are scored

from 0 to 4, with a score of 4 indicating the extreme response for the scale on which the item is placed. The total scores on the M and F scales can be obtained by summing the participants scores on the eight items for that scale. High scores on the M scale items indicate an extreme masculine response and high scores on the F scale items indicate an extreme feminine response.

The masculine scale was designed to assess instrumentality (Spence, 1984; Spence & Helreich, 1978) which is conceptually defined by Cook (1985; as cited in McCreary, 1990a) as "attributes linked to a general goal orientation and the ability to maintain the self in the outside world" (p.266). The feminine scale was designed to assess expressivity which is conceptually defined by Cook as "attributes linked to other-centredness and a concern with interpersonal relationships" (p.266)

The M and F scales contain items that were selected on the basis of two criteria: (1) characteristics considered to be socially desirable for both sexes; but (2) perceived as stereotypic in either the typical male or female. Items on the M scale, for example, are socially desirable for both sexes but males are perceived to possess the characteristic in greater abundance than females (e.g., independence). Alternatively, the social desirability of the M-F scale items

is sex specific; that is, the bipolar items reflect what is desirable in a female (e.g., submissiveness) versus what is considered desirable in a male (e.g., dominance). As this research is designed to assess how stereotypic the participant perceives herself, not amount of socialization as reflected in the M-F scale, only the M and F scales were used in this study. (McCreary, 1990b, similarly cites the correspondence between biological sex and M-F socialization as explanation of his exclusion of these items.)

#### *Interview Schedule*

The participants were also asked to respond to an abridged version of the Interview Schedule developed by Gutek (1985). The Interview Schedule consists of three major sections. First, the demographic characteristics of age, marital status, racial origins and educational level are obtained. Section Two ascertains information about the job, such as contact with the opposite sex, job title, level of job satisfaction, supervision, and organizational contingencies. Section Three assesses participants' definitions of sexual harassment, the frequency of social-sexual behavior on the current job or any previous job, and any negative consequences experienced as a result of harassment. Relevant questions from the Interview Schedule are included as Appendix I.

### *Procedure*

A professional women's organization was contacted and provided with a proposal. Subsequent to their willingness, a representative was asked to provide a list of addresses and telephone numbers for women within their organization. All women living within Nova Scotia were contacted by mail. A copy of the letter is attached hereto in Appendix J. Subsequent to the letter, the women were contacted by telephone to seek participation and to schedule a convenient meeting time. Ninety-one women (74.6%) agreed to participate in the study. Of this sample, four women could not schedule an appointment due to unforeseen circumstances and three women did not complete the testing. The 84 remaining participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental treatment groups (type of sexual harassment by order of initiator of the harassment).

An analogue technique was used to assess participants' immediate cognitive, affective and behavioral responses to workplace social-sexual behavior. The participants were randomly assigned to listen to a tape recording of a direct sexual harassment simulation or a sexualization of the workplace simulation. Counterbalanced to control for order effects, participants were instructed that the communication was being made by either their boss/supervisor or a coworker.

The participants then listened to the tape a second time, imagining that the message was being conveyed from the other source.

Participants were interviewed individually, and each interview took approximately one hour. Participants completed the MAACL-R preceding the simulation presentations as a control measure of affect. Following each trial, the participants completed Part One of the Cognitive Measure (the thought-listing technique), the Affective Measure (MAACL-R), Parts Two and Three of the Cognitive Measure (attribution of responsibility and definition of harassment, respectively) and finally the Behavioral Measure, in this order. Between the two conditions, participants completed the PAQ. Subsequent to all other data collection, participants were asked to code their thoughts and to respond to the Interview Schedule.

### *Debriefing*

Debriefing was provided for each participant in both oral and written form. Participants were provided the opportunity to discuss the research and their personal experiences. A copy of the written debriefing is included as Appendix K.

### *Study Design and Analytic Techniques*

A multivariate, 2 x 2 mixed factorial design was employed. Type of social-sexual behavior was the between-subjects variable with two levels (direct sexual harassment and sexualization of the workplace). The within-subjects variable, initiator of social-sexual behavior, had two levels (boss/supervisor and coworker). The presentation of initiator was completely counterbalanced to control for order effects.

Using the general rule of 10 subjects per every dependent variable per cell (Olson, 1974 and 1976), the total number of participants needed for the multivariate design was at least 80 (40 per type of social-sexual behavior). This criteria was achieved with 84 participants.

Before testing the hypotheses, data obtained under affective, cognitive (attribution of responsibility measure) and behavioral measures were subjected to preliminary and general analyses. The MAACL-R provides three subscale scores for a measure of negative affect (anxiety, depression and hostility). These subscale scores were intercorrelated to determine the appropriateness of utilizing a broader dysphoria score. The three 7-point scale items for Part Two of the attribution of responsibility measure were coded dichotomously in order to combine them with the eight yes-no check items.



Kuder-Richardson-20 reliabilities were then obtained to check the internal consistency of these summary attribution scores. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the behavior measure was also calculated. Lastly, general analyses consisted of calculation of correlation coefficients for the major variables in the study.

Several hypotheses were analyzed. The first three hypotheses explored for mean differences on a linear combination of dysphoria, self-blame, other-person blame and assertiveness. This was tested by computing multivariate, and subsequent univariate, analysis of variance with the between-subjects factor of type of social-sexual behavior and the within-subjects factor of initiator of harassment. A second multivariate analysis of variance was conducted in which the order of administration was included as an additional between-groups factor. When order was significant in interactions with the other factors, a completely randomized factorial (CRF) design was calculated in which only participants' first set of scores were included as dependent variables.

The fourth hypothesis tested for significant relationships between gender role attributes and attribution of responsibility and assertiveness. This was tested by Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients.

The final hypothesis predicted mean differences on the number of negative cognitions elicited by sexual harassment initiated by a boss as compared to a coworker, and secondly, a mean difference in the overall number of positive versus negative thoughts. Initial data reduction required the summing of the number of statements classified as self-related, source-related, task-related, and irrelevant for each target by valence (positive, negative, and neutral) dimension.

Preliminary analyses of the thought-listing measure included three multivariate analyses of variance, one for each valence by the four target dimensions. When singularity resulted for the negative valence MANOVA, analysis of variance was utilized to explore for mean differences in the total number of negative cognitions using a CRF design. Analysis of variance was also used to explore for differences in the number of negative cognitions. And finally, a t-test was used to test for mean differences between the number of positive versus negative thoughts, collapsed across all cells of the design.

All analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Release 4.1 for VAX/VMS.

## Results

Participants' responses consisted of an affect score, several cognitive scores, a behavioral score, an instrumentality and expressivity score (the M and F scales of the PAQ), and interview responses, only some of which were relevant to this particular thesis. Preliminary analyses assessed the reliability and utility of the dependent measures for subsequent tests of the hypotheses.

### *Preliminary Analyses of Dependent Measures*

The MAACL-R provides three negative affect and two positive affect subscales. Only the negative affect subscales of anxiety (A), depression (D), and hostility (H) were relevant to the hypotheses. The three negative affect scales were intercorrelated. To reduce the large number of correlations, A, D and H were correlated when collapsed across type of social-sexual behavior. Table 1 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, which were all significant and ranged from .284 to .710,  $p < .01$ .

Table 1

Intercorrelations Between MAACL-R Negative Affect Subscales  
Collapsed Across Type of Social-Sexual Behavior

MAACL-R	Boss/Supervisor (n=84)			Coworker (n=84)		
	A	D	H	A	D	H
A	--			--		
D	.710**	--		.710**	--	
H	.384**	.307**	--	.335**	.284**	--

\*\*p<.01, two-tailed.

Note. A = anxiety; D = depression; H = hostility.

Zuckerman and Lubin (1985) report similar findings among the three negative affect scales, with most correlations between .4 and .6. Consequently, they recommend a broader dysphoria score obtained by adding the raw scores on the three negative affect scales (A+D+H). In view of the replicated results in this study, the broader dysphoria score was utilized in subsequent analyses.

Each participant completed several cognitive measures, including attribution of responsibility and elicited thoughts. The attribution of responsibility measure consisted of three 7-point scales items (self-, other-person, and situation-blame, consecutively) and 8 dichotomous items which were

checked only if the participant agreed with the statement. Based on the research by Mynatt and Allgeier (1990), the three scale items and eight yes-no check items were combined, such that a negative summary attribution score indicated internal attribution and a positive summary attribution score indicated external attribution, with a possible range of -5 to +6. Internal attribution items were recoded -1, and external attribution items were recoded +1.

The Kuder-Richardson-20 reliabilities were obtained for the boss/supervisor and coworker conditions. The reliability coefficients revealed low interitem consistency across all items of this measure (.052 for boss, and .264 for coworker). When only the five items measuring self-responsibility (internal attribution) were included, the reliability coefficient rose to .360 for the boss conditions and to .554 for the coworker conditions. When Check Item No. 2 ("I haven't earned his respect") was removed, the coefficient rose to .401 for boss conditions. The next highest reliabilities were found for the three other-person responsibility items, .259 for boss (up to .365 if Scale Item No. 2 was removed) and .237 for coworker (up to .303 if Scale Item No. 2 was removed). The remaining reliability coefficients were extremely low or negative for situation responsibility and all items assessing external attribution (inclusion of both other-person and situation-blame items).

These low reliabilities suggest that the measure of attribution is heterogeneous in content. Moreover, dichotomization of the scale items with the check items resulted in a lower reliability coefficient for other-person blame. Consequently, subsequent analyses testing the attribution hypotheses employed only the original score on the 7-point scale items of self-blame (Scale Item No. 1) and other-person blame (Scale Item No. 2). Situation blame was excluded from subsequent analyses due to the low and negative reliability coefficients obtained for items measuring this attribution.

The thought-listing technique for Hypothesis 5 was coded by the participants along both valence (positive, negative, or neutral thoughts) and target (self, source, task, or irrelevant) dimensions. This measure provided several difficulties. The thought-listing measure clearly has nominal properties. Hence, the chi square seemed appropriate until the assumption of independence of observations was considered. Each participant provided several thoughts; a chi square of just the negative thoughts alone (within each target dimension) had an overall sample size of 566, based on 84 participants.

Other researchers have analyzed thought-listing data with parametric techniques (see Hunsley et al., 1991). These

researchers must have assumed at least interval properties. While the thought-listing data clearly has manifest nominal properties, an argument can be made for latent interval properties. Once within the categories of valence and target dimensions, the amount of positive, negative, and neutral thoughts within each target dimension is of interest. The nature of participants' responses (the manifest data) was nominal, but the assumed property of the constructed scale, it can be argued, is interval. With incongruence between nature of the response and the assumed properties of the psychological scale, the thought-listing technique is based to some extent on its latent properties (Garner & Creelman, 1970), allowing for analysis via parametric techniques.

Preliminary analysis of the behavioral measure included a test of its reliability for the boss and coworker conditions. Cronbach's alpha was computed across all items (.503 for boss and .418 for coworker conditions), across the items measuring assertive behavior (.716 and .701, respectively), and across the items measuring passive behavior (.453 and .467, respectively). The reliability coefficient across all behavioral items rose when Item 9 ("avoid man or men involved") was excluded, .654 for boss and .585 for coworker conditions.

Lastly, preliminary analyses included assessment of the intercorrelations between the variables to be included in a multivariate analysis, namely, dysphoria (DYS), self-blame, other-person blame, and behavior (assertiveness). Table 2 shows these intercorrelations for the boss and coworker conditions (collapsed across type of social-sexual behavior). A positive relationship was found under the boss condition between other-blame and behavior ( $r = .262$ ,  $p < .05$ ). A significant inverse relationship was found between self-blame and assertiveness for both the boss and coworker conditions ( $r = -.349$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $-.251$ ,  $p < .05$ , respectively). An additional inverse relationship was found between self-blame and other-blame for the coworker condition,  $r = -.226$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Table 2

Intercorrelations Between Major Variables in the Study

	Boss/Supervisor (n=84)			Coworker (n=84)		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
1 DYS	--			--		
2 Self-blame	.004	--		.201	--	
3 Other-blame	.124	-.206	--	.000	-.226*	--
4 Behavior	.176	-.349**	.262*	.193	-.251*	.212

\* $p < .05$ , two-tailed. \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

Note. DYS = dysphoria; behavior = assertiveness.



### *Manipulation Checks*

The MAACL-R was administered to the participants in a before-after design. In this manner, the difference between the one preresponse (control) and two postresponse MAACL-R dysphoria scores provides an indication of the effectiveness of the treatment conditions. Table 3 illustrates the mean dysphoria scores for all experimental conditions. The difference between the pre- and posttest responses was analyzed in a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance. The between-subjects factor of type of social-sexual behavior was nonsignificant,  $F(1,82) = 3.61$ , n.s. The interaction between the between-subjects effect and the within-subjects effect of treatment condition was also nonsignificant, Pillais  $V=.04$ ,  $F(2,81) = 1.56$ , n.s. The within-subjects effect of treatment conditions was highly significant, Pillais  $V=.65$ ,  $F(2,81) = 76.33$ ,  $p<.001$ . Univariate analysis revealed that this within-subjects effect was attributable to both mutually orthogonal a priori contrasts: (1) a comparison between the control mean dysphoria scores and the average of the two experimental groups (boss and coworker),  $F(1,82) = 153.14$ ,  $p<.001$ ; and (2) and a comparison between the two experimental groups,  $F(1,82)=19.08$ ,  $p<.001$ . The significance of the contrast between the control dysphoria scores and the average of the treatment conditions dysphoria scores provides evidence of the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations.

Table 3

Mean Dysphoria Scores for all Experimental Conditions (N=84)

Social-Sexual Behavior	Control		Boss		Coworker	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
DSH	1.86	(3.48)	11.29	(6.55)	9.12	(5.64)
SWP	1.50	(3.09)	8.60	(5.93)	6.90	(5.58)

Note. DSH refers to direct sexual harassment.

SWP refers to sexualization of the workplace.

An additional manipulation check was provided by the cognitive measure which queried the participants' perception of the simulations as sexual harassment. The majority within the direct sexual harassment (DSH) condition felt that the simulation was an example of sexual harassment: 100% and 95.2% for direct sexual harassment by a boss and coworker, respectively, compared to 47.6% and 42.9% for sexualization of the workplace (SWP) by a boss and coworker, respectively. Overall, participants were less convinced that the sexualization of the workplace stimulation represented sexual harassment: 28.6% for boss compared to 40.5% for coworker responded negatively; 23.8% for boss and 16.7% for coworker responded, "I do not know or I am not sure."

Evidence for experimental control was checked through the use of t-tests between the direct sexual harassment (DSH) versus sexualization of the workplace (SWP) groups on the potential covariates of the M or masculinity scale (MPAQ) and F or femininity scale (FPAQ) of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire, and on the control dysphoria scores. None of the t-tests reached significance. There was no significant difference between: (1) DSH ( $M = 23.19$ ) and SWP ( $M = 23.71$ ) on MPAQ,  $t(82) = -0.61$ , n.s.; (2) DSH ( $M = 24.36$ ) and SWP ( $M = 24.71$ ) on FPAQ,  $t(82) = -0.44$ , n.s.; and (3) DSH ( $M = 1.86$ ) and SWP ( $M = 1.50$ ) on the control dysphoria scores,  $t(82) = 0.50$ , n.s. These results indicate that experimental control was obtained through random assignment of the sample to treatment conditions; hence, statistical control through analysis of covariance was unnecessary.

While randomization controlled for the bias of extraneous variables, confounding was still possible through a major disadvantage of repeated measures designs -- carryover effects. Complete counterbalancing was used to control for practice or sequence effects; half of all subjects within each experimental group (DSH and SWP) were randomly assigned to each of two possible sequences, boss before coworker and coworker before boss. Counterbalancing, however, cannot control for differential carryover effects. Order can be built into the design to check for the presence of such an

effect. The significance of order indicates that some or all of the dependent variables were influenced by the particular sequence in which the treatment levels were administered (Kirk, 1968). If such significance occurs, a between-groups analysis of the data in which every subjects' first set of scores is utilized can eliminate the confounding by order.

To check for the influence of carryover effects, order was entered as an additional between-groups factor into multivariate analyses of dysphoria, attribution of responsibility, behavior, and thought-listing. Results are reported with and without order as an additional between-groups factor. When order was significant, a completely randomized factorial design (CRF) provided a between-groups analysis of the repeated measures data to eliminate the order bias and clarify the findings.

### *Demographics*

The demographic variables of age and education were correlated with the dependent variables of dysphoria, attribution of responsibility (self-blame and other-person blame), and behavior (assertiveness). Pearson product-moment correlations between age and these dependent variables (collapsed across type of social-sexual behavior) were all nonsignificant. Education was coded into ordinal categories of highest level

achieved (i.e., 9 to 11 years of high school through graduate degree or more). Spearman rho correlation coefficients revealed that education level was significantly related to assertiveness under the boss conditions ( $r_s = .244$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and dysphoria under the coworker conditions ( $r_s = -.214$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but accounting for less than 6% of variability in these dependent variables.

### *Hypotheses 1 through 3*

The Pillai-Bartlett V (Pillais V) is the most robust and one of the most powerful multivariate test statistics. That is, the Pillais is likely to detect group differences when they exist and the significance level is reasonably correct even when the assumptions of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) are violated (Olson, 1974 and 1976). Hence, the Pillais V is reported in the MANOVA analyses. Additionally, multivariate effect size is indicated by Mahalanobis distance ( $D^2$ ), and univariate effect size is indicated by the proportion of variance accounted for ( $\eta^2$ ) (Stevens, 1986).

### *Multivariate Analysis of Variance without Order*

Effect of Social-Sexual Behavior. The MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate effect of type of social-sexual behavior, Pillais V=.18,  $F(4,79) = 4.46$ ,  $p < .003$ . Univariate

analyses of the between-subjects factor of type of social-sexual behavior indicated significant differences between the two groups (direct sexual harassment, DSH, versus sexualization of the workplace, SWP) on assertion,  $F(1,82) = 11.77$ ,  $p < .001$ , other-person blame,  $F(1,82) = 7.02$ ,  $p < .01$ , and dysphoria,  $F(1,82) = 4.06$ ,  $p < .05$ . Specifically, direct sexual harassment resulted in relatively more assertion, other-person blame and dysphoria than sexualization of the workplace.

Effect of Initiator of Harassment. In examining the within-subjects effect and interaction between the within- and between-subjects effects, the interaction was not significant, Pillais  $V = .06$ ,  $F(4,79) = 1.27$ , n.s. The within-subjects effect of harasser (boss versus coworker as initiator of sexual harassment), was highly significant, Pillais  $V = .23$ ,  $F(4,79) = 5.88$ ,  $p < .001$ . Univariate analyses revealed that this within-subjects effect was attributable solely to dysphoria,  $F(1,82) = 19.08$ ,  $p < .001$ . Specifically, the boss/supervisor as initiator of harassment resulted in significantly greater dysphoria relative to coworker as initiator.

#### *Multivariate Analysis of Variance with Order*

Interaction Between Social-Sexual Behavior and Order. When the multivariate analysis of variance included the effect of

order as an additional between-subjects factor, a carryover effect was revealed. The interaction between the two between-subjects factors (type of social-sexual behavior and order in which the harasser was administered) was significant, Pillais  $V=.15$ ,  $F(4,77) = 3.40$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $D^2=.15$ . Univariate analyses revealed that this interaction was attributable to self-blame,  $F(1,80) = 6.16$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.07$ , and dysphoria,  $F(1,80) = 4.00$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.05$ .

Interaction Between Initiator of Harassment and Order. The interaction of order and initiator of harassment was significant, Pillais  $V=.24$ ,  $F(4,77) = 6.11$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $D^2=.24$ . Univariate analyses revealed that this interaction was attributable to dysphoria,  $F(1,80) = 15.41$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=.16$ , behavior,  $F(1,80) = 6.54$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.08$ , and self-blame,  $F(1,80) = 4.02$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.05$ .

Nonsignificant interactions. The three-way interaction of type of social-sexual behavior, order and initiator of harassment was nonsignificant, Pillais  $V=.05$ ,  $F(4,77) = 1.05$ , n.s. The interaction of type of social-sexual behavior and initiator of harassment remained nonsignificant when order was entered into the analysis, Pillais  $V=.06$ ,  $F(4,77) = 1.27$ , n.s.

Main Effects Analysis. The main effect of order was nonsignificant, Pillais  $V=.01$ ,  $F(4,77) = 0.21$ , n.s. The main

effect of type of social-sexual behavior (DSH or SWP) was significant, Pillais  $V=.20$ ,  $F(4,77) = 4.68$ ,  $p<.002$ ,  $D^2=.20$ . Univariate analyses of the between-subjects effect of type of social-sexual behavior indicated significant differences between the two groups (DSH and SWP) on behavior,  $F(1,80) = 12.08$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=.13$ , other-person blame,  $F(1,80) = 6.85$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.08$ , and dysphoria,  $F(1,80) = 4.16$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.05$ . The main effect for initiator of harassment was significant, Pillais  $V=.25$ ,  $F(4,77) = 6.56$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $D^2=.25$ , which was attributable solely to dysphoria,  $F(1,80) = 22.52$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=.22$ .

Significant Multivariate Effects' Interpretation. Mahalanobis distance ( $D^2$ ) provides a measure of the importance of the significant multivariate effects. As indicated above,  $D^2$ 's, in descending order of effect size, were .25 for the main effect of initiator of harassment, .24 for the interaction of order and initiator of harassment, .20 for the main effect of type of social-sexual behavior, .15 for the interaction of order and type of social-sexual behavior. The interaction between order and type of social-sexual behavior was obtained by collapsing scores across level of initiator, and the effect size is smallest among the significant multivariate effects. These factors render this interaction relatively unimportant and less meaningful than the other significant multivariate effects. The significance of the interaction of order and



initiator of harassment qualifies the interpretation of the significant main effects. Hence, this interaction will be examined in detail. A table of means (Table 4) illustrates the interaction of order and initiator of harassment.

Table 4

Table of Means for the Interaction Between Order  
and Initiator of Harassment

Order of Administration	Boss Scores			Coworker Scores		
	DYS	BHV	Self- Blame	DYS	BHV	Self- Blame
Boss then Coworker	9.40	37.84	1.74	9.07	38.86	1.45
Coworker then Boss	10.48	38.62	1.48	6.95	36.14	1.57

Note. DSH=direct sexual harassment

SWP=sexualization of the workplace

DYS=dysphoria

BHV=behavior (assertiveness)

The interaction of order and initiator was attributable to dysphoria, behavior (assertiveness), and self-blame, in descending order of effect size. For dysphoria, when boss preceded the administration of coworker, dysphoria scores were similar for boss and coworker conditions. When coworker preceded the administration of boss, dysphoria scores were

relatively greater when the initiator was a boss than when the initiator was a coworker (see Figure 1). For behavior, when boss preceded coworker, assertiveness was relatively greater under the coworker than boss condition. When coworker preceded the administration of boss, this effect was reversed, such that there was relatively more assertiveness for the boss than coworker condition (see Figure 2). Both the dysphoria and behavior scores suggest that the first occurrence of harassment carried over to elevate dysphoria and assertiveness upon the second occurrence of harassment at each level of initiator. For self-blame, when boss preceded the administration of coworker, self-blame was relatively greater for the boss condition than the coworker condition. When coworker preceded the administration of boss, self-blame was relatively less for the boss condition than the coworker condition (see Figure 3). This finding suggests that the first occurrence of sexual harassment diminished self-blame upon repeated harassment regardless of the initiator.

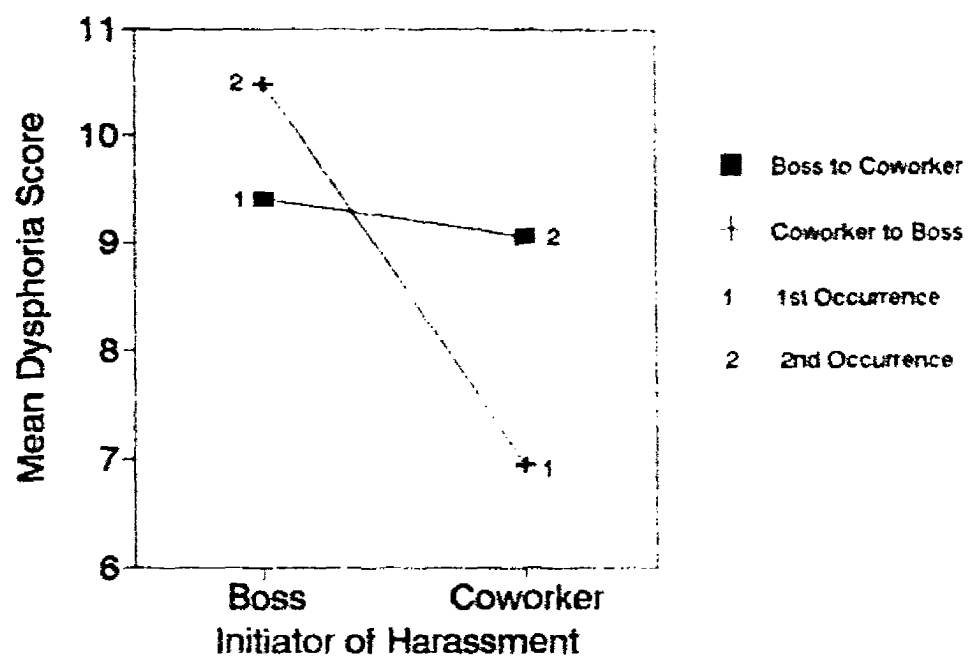
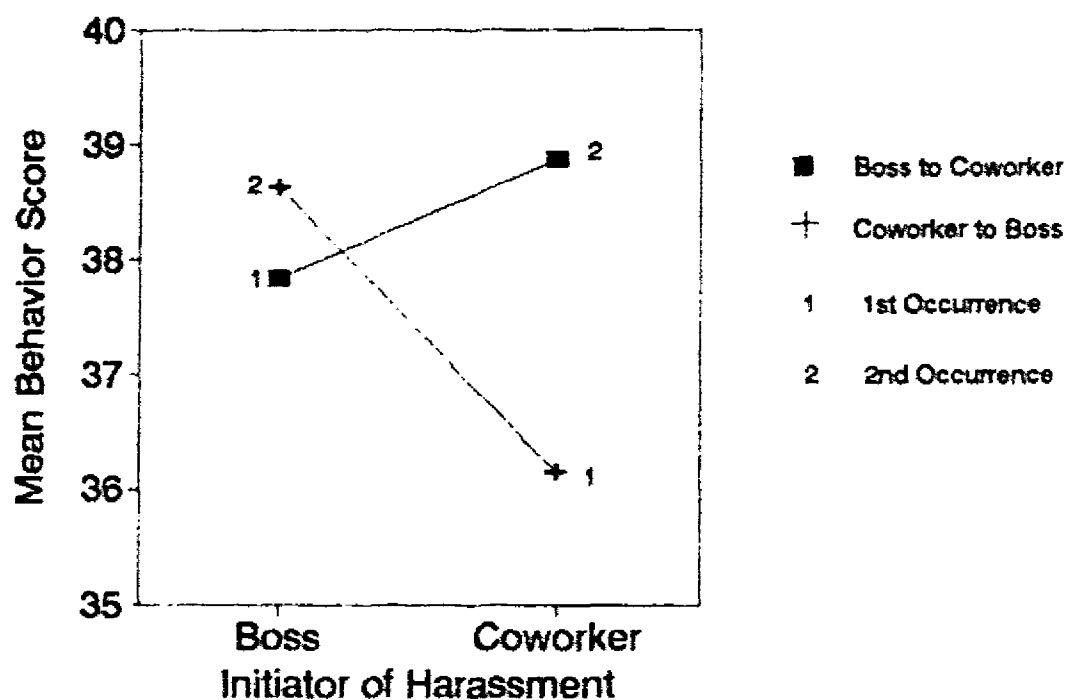
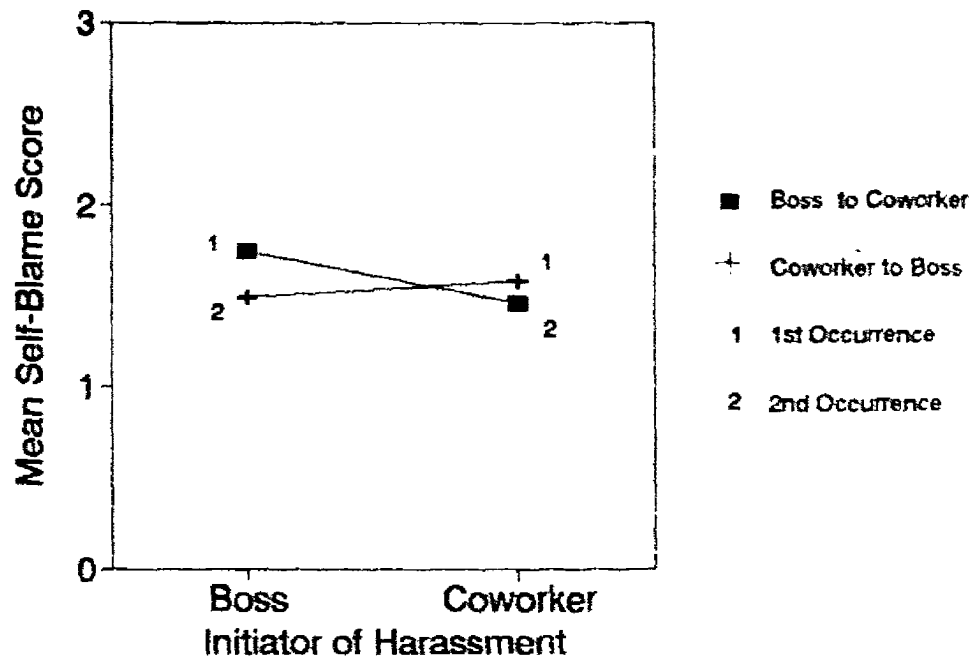


Figure 1. Dysphoria as a function of initiator of harassment and administration order of treatment conditions.



**Figure 2.** Behavior as a function of initiator of harassment and administration order of treatment conditions. (Behavior measures the amount of assertiveness in response to sexual harassment.)



**Figure 3.** Self-blame as a function of initiator of harassment and administration order of treatment conditions.

### *A Completely Randomized Factorial Analysis*

The overall design was clearly influenced by the order of presentation of the initiator of harassment, especially the dependent variables of dysphoria, behavior and self-blame. As a result, a completely randomized factorial design (CRF) was employed, in which only each participants' first set of scores was analyzed. Consequently, the sample size for each cell of the design was reduced from 42 to 21 ( $N=84$ ).

Interaction of Social-Sexual Behavior and Initiator. For the CRF design, multivariate analysis of the interaction of type of social-sexual behavior and initiator of harassment was significant, Pillais  $V=.18$ ,  $F(4,77) = 4.13$ ,  $p<.004$ ,  $D^2=.18$ . Univariate analysis revealed the interaction was attributable to self-blame,  $F(1,80) = 6.21$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.07$ , and dysphoria,  $F(1,80) = 4.93$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.06$ . (See Figures 4 and 5.)

Main Effects. The effect of initiator of harassment was nonsignificant, Pillais  $V=.06$ ,  $F(4,77) = 1.27$ , n.s. The effect of type of social-sexual behavior was significant, Pillais  $V=.22$ ,  $F(4,77) = 5.47$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $D^2=.22$ . Univariate analysis revealed that this main effect was attributable to behavior,  $F(1,80) = 13.56$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=.14$ , dysphoria,  $F(1,80) = 6.06$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.07$ , and other-person blame,  $F(1,80) = 4.76$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=.06$ . Specifically, univariate

analyses revealed that direct sexual harassment (DSH) resulted in significantly greater other-person blame, dysphoria, and assertiveness relative to sexualization of the workplace (SWP). (See Figures 5, 6, and 7 for illustration of the significant main effects of type of social-sexual behavior).

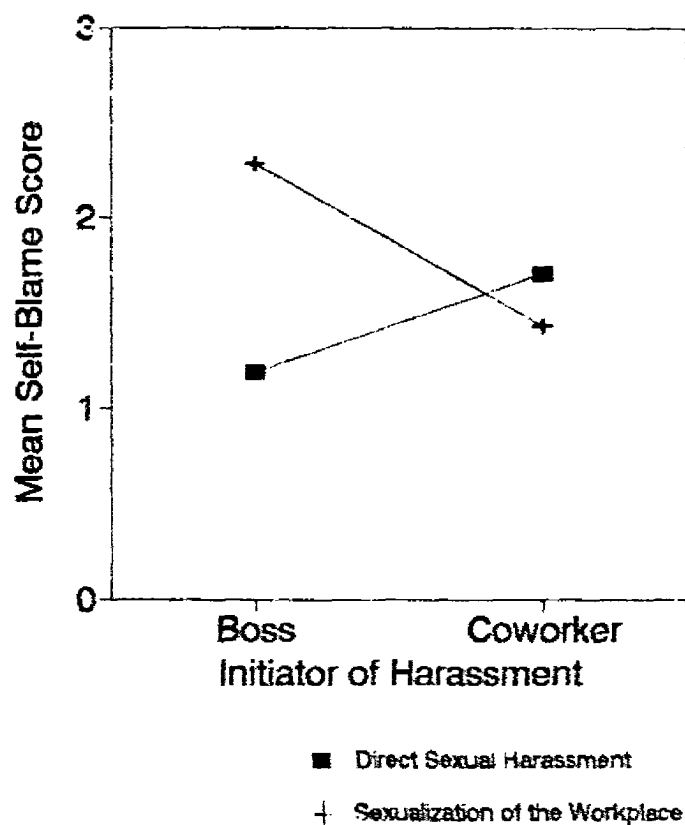


Figure 4. Self-blame as a function of initiator of harassment and type of social-sexual behavior.

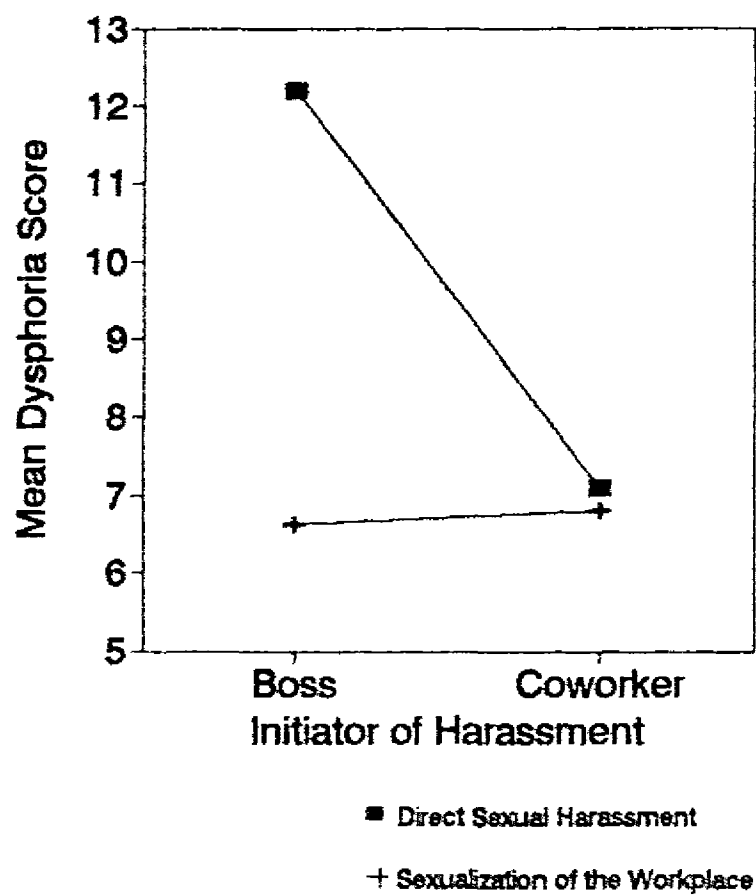
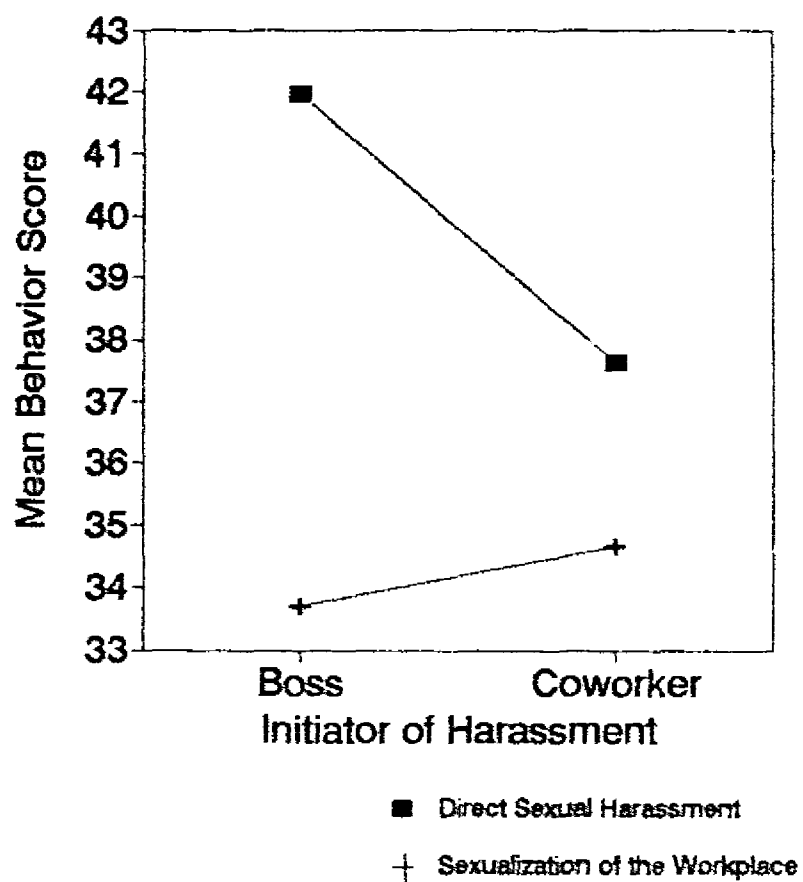


Figure 5. Dysphoria as a function of initiator of harassment and type of social-sexual behavior.





**Figure 6.** Behavior as a function of initiator of harassment and type of social-sexual behavior.

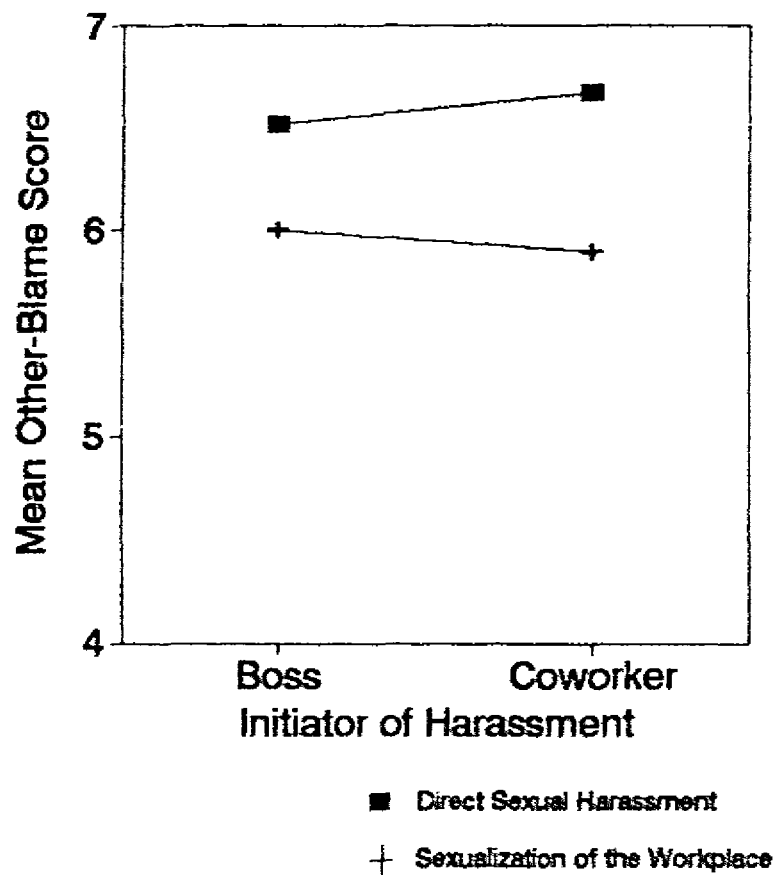


Figure 7. Other-blame as a function of initiator of harassment and type of social-sexual behavior. (Other-blame measures external attribution of responsibility.)

Interpretation of Significant CRF effects. Table 5 reveals the means for all dependent variables. Because the interaction was significant with a comparable effect size, interpretation of the main effect of type of social-sexual behavior is qualified. The interaction revealed that direct sexual harassment (DSH) by a boss resulted in relatively more dysphoria than sexualization of the workplace (SWP) by a boss. This effect was diminished somewhat when the harasser was a coworker, although DSH by a coworker still resulted in slightly more dysphoria than SWP by a coworker. Self-blame was relatively greater for SWP by a boss as compared to DSH by a boss. This effect reversed, however, for a coworker, where DSH by a coworker resulted in relatively more self-blame than SWP by a coworker.

Table 5

Table of Means for the CRF Analysis

Boss as Initiator (n=21)				Coworker as Initiator (n=21)			
Self- Blame	Other- Blame	DYS	BHV	Self- Blame	Other- Blame	DYS	BHV
Direct Sexual Harassment (n=42)							
1.19	6.52	12.19	41.95	1.71	6.67	7.10	37.62
Sexualization of the Workplace (n=42)							
2.29	6.00	6.62	33.71	1.43	5.90	6.81	34.67

Note. DYS=dysphoria; BHV=behavior (assertiveness).

#### ***Hypothesis 4: Gender-Role Attributes***

The fourth hypothesis examined the relationship between gender-role attributes, attribution of responsibility, and behavioral response. Specifically, instrumentality and expressivity, (using the M or masculine, and F or feminine scales of the PAQ) were correlated with self-blame, other-person blame, and assertiveness. (See Table 6.)

Table 6

#### **Correlations between Gender-Role Attributes, Attribution of Responsibility and Assertiveness**

Group	Boss/Supervisor			Coworker		
	Self Blame	Other Blame	Behavior	Self Blame	Other Blame	Behavior
Direct Sexual Harassment (n=42)						
MPAQ	-.393**	.331*	.255	-.379**	.328*	.260*
FPAQ	.442**	.006	-.234	.344*	-.221	-.122
Sexualization of the Workplace (n=42)						
MPAQ	-.350*	.143	.400**	-.274*	.185	.218
FPAQ	-.040	-.098	.186	.013	-.146	-.007

\*p<.05, one-tailed. \*\*p<.01, one-tailed.

Note. MPAQ = masculinity or instrumentality

FPAQ = femininity or expressivity

Behavior = assertiveness

The M score revealed the strongest correlations. The more instrumental, the less self-blame ( $r = -.393$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and the more other-person blame ( $r = .331$ ,  $p < .05$ ), in response to DSH by a boss/supervisor. Additionally, the relationship between instrumentality and assertiveness was marginally significant ( $r = .255$ ,  $p = .051$ ). Similarly, the more instrumental, the less self-blame ( $r = -.379$ ,  $p < .01$ ), the more other-person blame ( $r = .328$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the more assertiveness ( $r = .260$ ,  $p < .05$ ), in response to DSH by a coworker.

Instrumentality was also inversely related to self-blame under SWP by a boss or by a coworker ( $r = -.350$  and  $-.274$ ,  $p < .05$ , respectively). For SWP by a boss, instrumentality remained positively correlated with assertiveness ( $r = .400$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Hence, the more instrumental, the less self-blame and the more assertiveness in response to SWP by a boss.

Expressivity was positively related to self-blame under DSH by a boss or coworker ( $r = .442$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $r = .344$ ,  $p < .05$ , respectively). These results suggest the more expressivity, the greater the self-blame in response to DSH. Expressivity was not significantly related to self-blame, other-blame, or behavioral reaction under SWP by a boss or coworker.

In sum, the strongest relationships were found between expressivity and self-blame ( $r = .442$ ,  $p < .01$ ) in response to

DSH by a boss, and between instrumentality and assertiveness ( $r = .400$ ,  $p < .01$ ) in response to SWP by a boss. These relationships reveal that 20% of the variability in self-blame as a result of DSH by a boss was attributable to expressivity, and 16% of variability in assertiveness as a result of SWP by a boss was attributable to instrumentality. Under DSH by a boss and coworker, 15% and 14% of the variability in self-blame, respectively, were accounted for by instrumentality.

#### *Hypothesis 5: Thought-Listing*

Analysis of Number of Thoughts Reported. Across groups and conditions women reported an equivalent number of thoughts; for type of social-sexual behavior  $F(1,82) = 2.18$ , n.s., for harasser,  $F(1,82) = 0.89$ , n.s., and for the interaction,  $F(1,82) = 0.00$ , n.s. When order was entered as an addition between-groups factor, the interaction of order of administration and initiator of harassment was significant,  $F(1,80) = 8.02$ ,  $p < .01$ , but the interaction only accounted for 2% of the total variation. No other main effects or interactions were significant. To correct for the influence of order, a CRF design was performed. The main effects and interaction were not significant for the number of thoughts reported across all groups and conditions: for type of social-sexual behavior,  $F(1,80) = 2.40$ , n.s., for initiator of harassment,  $F(1,80) = 1.20$ , n.s., and for the interaction,

$F(1,80) = 2.69$ , n.s.. (See Table 7 for means and standard deviations for the number of thoughts reported).

Table 7

Table of Means for Number of Reported Thoughts (CRF Design)

Social-Sexual Behavior	Boss as Initiator		Coworker as Initiator	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
DSH	4.33	(1.74)	4.05	(2.42)
SWP	4.29	(2.33)	5.71	(2.94)

Analysis of Each Valence by Target Dimension. Because order revealed slight significance in the number of thoughts reported, it was included as a between-groups factor when exploring for mean differences within each valence dimension by the four target dimensions (self, source, task and irrelevant). That is, the thought-listing data was analyzed by three MANOVAs, one for each valence dimension (positive, negative, and neutral) with the four target dimensions within that valence as dependent variables. Each MANOVA resulted in singularity, thereby jeopardizing the analyses. The analyses were further jeopardized by the individual interpretations of what constitutes a positive thought. For example, some participants labelled an expression of anger as positive while

others interpreted anger as negative. As a result, only descriptive statistics are reported. See Appendices L, M and N, for the positive, negative and neutral valence dimensions, respectively. Note that order is not included in the tables for ease of interpretation.

Analysis of Number of Negative Thoughts. Hypothesis 5 posits that, in support of the Organizational Model, there would be more negative thoughts elicited by sexual harassment initiated by a boss as compared to sexual harassment initiated by a coworker. The Sociocultural Model argues there would be no difference in the number of negative thoughts elicited by a boss as compared to a coworker. A CRF analysis of variance was utilized to explore for differences in the number of negative cognitions (only each participants' first score was utilized to avoid confounding by carryover effects). The marginal means for type of social-sexual behavior (DSH and SWP) were 3.12 and 3.98, respectively. The marginal means for initiator of harassment (boss and coworker) were 3.29 and 3.81, respectively. The interaction and main effects were not significant: for type of social-sexual behavior,  $F(1,80) = 2.48$ , n.s., for initiator,  $F(1,80) = 0.93$ , n.s., and for the two-way interaction,  $F(1,80) = 0.03$ , n.s.

Hypothesis 5 also posits that, if there is support for the Biological Model, there would be overall more positive than



negative thoughts elicited by any type of sexual harassment. This model was not supported; sexual harassment elicited significantly greater negative thoughts ( $M = 3.55$ ) than positive thoughts ( $M = 0.62$ ),  $t(83) = -9.14$ ,  $p < .001$ , when participants' first set of scores were analyzed in a CRF design.

### Discussion

#### *A Multivariate Test of the Models of Sexual Harassment*

This research was designed as a test of the three primary models of sexual harassment. The models postulate the causes of sexual harassment and thereby provide implications for predictions and prevention. The Biological Model posits that workplace social-sexual behavior is not hurtful, but rather the expression of sexual attraction. If the Biological Model is credible, the participants in this study should not have been unduly distressed by the simulations of sexual harassment. The Organizational Model ascribes the occurrence of workplace social-sexual behavior to facilitating factors within the organization, for example, hierarchical relations. Those located higher within the hierarchy can exercise their legitimate power to extort sexual favors. If the Organizational Model is credible, the participants in this study should have been more distressed by the simulations of

sexual harassment initiated by a boss/supervisor as compared to a coworker. Lastly, the Sociocultural Model posits that facilitating factors afford the opportunity for sexual harassment, but locates these facilitating factors within society at large rather than the organization. The organization merely reflects the patriarchal structure of society. If the Sociocultural Model is credible, all women are equally distressed by the male exploitation of their socialized status, no matter where the male is located within the organization's hierarchy.

The preresponse (control) dysphoria scores differed significantly from the average of the two postresponse dysphoria scores. Thereby, the Biological Model's premise that workplace social-sexual behavior is not distressing has been undermined by the before-after design. Dysphoria scores were significantly higher after the simulations, that is, after the participants imagined that they were sexually harassed.

A completely randomized factorial design also revealed the influence of a single event of sexual harassment. The CRF analysis offered full support for Hypothesis 1; that is, the type of social-sexual behavior impacted upon the participants over all dependent measures. Univariate analysis revealed that direct sexual harassment resulted in significantly more

dysphoria, other-person blame, and assertion relative to sexualization of the workplace. Combined, these findings imply that, not the harasser, but rather the severity of the workplace social-sexual behavior, dictates the negative affect, attribution of responsibility and behavioral reaction for the victim.

Hypothesis 2 predicted a main effect for initiator of harassment over all three measures--affective, cognitive and behavioral. The multivariate effect was not significant. Specifically, no differences were found between participants harassed by a boss/supervisor compared to those harassed by a coworker. The nonsignificance of this main effect implies support for the Sociocultural Model; participants were equally distressed by sexual harassment initiated by a boss as compared to that by a coworker.

While the main effect of type of social-sexual behavior accounted for the largest proportion of variance, the interaction between type of social-sexual behavior and initiator of harassment accounted for a slightly smaller yet significant proportion of the variance. The significant interaction, as proffered by Hypothesis 3, between type of social-sexual behavior and initiator of harassment, affords greater understanding of the phenomenon. The interaction was attributable to dysphoria and self-blame (an internal

attribution of responsibility). Specifically, direct sexual harassment by a boss or coworker resulted in relatively more dysphoria than sexualization of the workplace by a boss or coworker. The effect, however, was diminished when the initiator was a coworker, with little difference in negative affect between the two types of social-sexual behavior. It appears that the severity of the social-sexual behavior, sexual touching with a proposition (made even more severe when initiated by a boss) as compared to sexual joking, elevate the negative affect or dysphoria experienced by the victim of sexual harassment.

On the surface, the findings regarding dysphoria offer some support for the Organizational Model in that direct sexual harassment by a boss is, on average, more distressing affectively. The boss has power over the employee who responds with greater anxiety. Caution must be exercised in the interpretation, however. To the extent that the greater power of the boss is a reflection of the greater power of men within society in general, then the Sociocultural Model cannot be dismissed. Moreover, the multivariate effect for initiator of harassment was not significant.

The interaction of type of social-sexual behavior and initiator of harassment was significant for self-blame. Self-blame was relatively greater for sexualization of the

workplace by a boss as compared to direct sexual harassment by a boss. This effect reversed when the harassment was initiated by a coworker. Direct sexual harassment by a coworker resulted in relatively greater self-blame than sexualization of the workplace by a coworker. Hence, the participants assumed relatively more self-blame for sexual touching with a proposition when initiated by a coworker than when initiated by a boss. This suggests that the hierarchical position of the boss diminished the attribution of self-blame. Alternatively, participants assumed relatively more self-blame for sexual talk and joking when initiated by boss than by a coworker. For a less imposing behavior, initiated by those higher within the organization's hierarchy, women were willing to assume relatively more responsibility.

The findings on self-blame are not easily explained by the models. Rather, the extant research on attribution of responsibility in response to sexual coercion is relevant. Mynatt and Allgeier (1990) found that women who were less assertive, and who had been sexually coerced by an acquaintance without physical force, made relatively more internal attributions. The participants in this study were on average least assertive in response to sexual joking when initiated by a boss. Sexual joking is nonphysical compared to the sexual touching in the direct sexual harassment simulation. Hence, the relatively nonassertive and self-

blaming response to sexual joking initiated by a boss offered support for the previous research by Mynatt and Allgeier; that is, for the behavior to which women responded least assertively, they assumed relatively more self-blame.

Overall, this new test of the models of workplace social-sexual behavior advances the Sociocultural Model. Across a linear combination of affect, attribution of responsibility, and assertion, sexual harassment initiated by a boss did not elicit greater distress than sexual harassment initiated by a coworker. Hence, the hierarchical position within the organization, which affords extortion of sexual gratification, cannot alone explain the findings. The severity or level of imposition found in the direct sexual harassment simulation generated significantly more assertion, dysphoria and other-person blame. The significant interaction between type of social-sexual behavior and initiator highlighted that the elevation in affective distress created by the more severe social-sexual behavior, direct sexual harassment, was enhanced when the initiator was a boss. Fortunately, self-blame was relatively diminished for this same behavior. In sum, the severity of the behavior, sexual touching with a proposition, as compared to sexual talk and joking, appear to dictate the affective, cognitive and behavioral response, which is especially true of affect when the initiator is a boss.

***Thought-listing: An Additional Test of the Models***

Lack of support for the Organizational Model has, by default, been offered as support for the Sociocultural Model. Support for the Sociocultural Model, however, is reinforced and amplified by the thought-listing data. Hypothesis 5 explored for differences in the number of negative thoughts as an additional test of the models of sexual harassment. The Sociocultural Model was supported in that no significant difference was found for the number of negative thoughts elicited by a boss as compared to a coworker. If cognitions are an indication of distress, then harassers higher in organizational power generated no more distress than the victim's peers or coworkers. Moreover, the Biological Model's premise of no distress was clearly disproved. Not only did the post-simulation affect scores illustrate significantly greater dysphoria as a result of the simulations, but the simulations elicited significantly greater negative than positive thoughts. This was true even though participants often coded thoughts of anger as positive cognitions, within their individual interpretation of the valence dimensions.

***The Importance of Gender-Role***

Hypothesis 4 predicted significant relationships between gender-role attributes and assertion and attribution of

responsibility. This hypothesis was supported, more for masculinity than for femininity. Participants who were more instrumental displayed significantly less self-blame across all experimental conditions. Instrumentality was also significantly related to greater assertion in response to sexualization of the workplace by a boss and direct sexual harassment by a coworker. And lastly, instrumentality was significantly related to greater other-person blame (an external attribution) for direct sexual harassment by a boss or by a coworker. Femininity or expressivity was positively related to self-blame as predicted. All other relationships failed to reach significance for femininity.

This research extends the earlier findings of Malovich and Stake (1990). They found that a nontraditional orientation towards women's rights was associated with lower victim blame, higher perpetrator blame, and lower endorsement of no blame. This study employed the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) to measure conformity to stereotypic attributes, in comparison to the measure of attitudes in the Malovich and Stake study. A general goal orientation, which is associated with stereotypic masculine attributes, appears to buffer against an internal attribution of responsibility for sexual harassment. As well, instrumentality explained 16% and 7% of the variability in assertiveness in response to sexual joking by a boss and sexual touching and proposition by a coworker.



Alternatively, a concern with interpersonal relationships is associated with greater self-blame, implying that stereotypic feminine attributes may be a liability for attribution of responsibility in response to sexual harassment.

### *Implications for Past and Future Research*

The results of this research are qualified by three factors: carryover effects, problems with the thought-listing technique, and differential perception.

#### *Carryover Effects*

The presence of differential carryover effects necessitated a completely randomized factorial analysis of the data. This carryover effect was realized when the treatment administration sequence for the within-subjects factor (i.e., the administration of sexual harassment by a boss before a coworker and by a coworker before boss) revealed significant interactions. Typically such an unintended result would indicate the need to ignore the previous confounded results by conducting a completely randomized factorial analysis of the data. However, the significant interaction with order is heuristic in that sexual harassment can indeed occur more than once to the same individual. Hence, the results reveal the influence of consecutive events of sexual harassment.

The significant interaction between order and initiator of the harassment was attributable, in descending order of effect size, to dysphoria, assertiveness, and self-blame. Dysphoria was relatively greatest when the initiator was a boss and when coworker preceded the administration of sexual harassment by a boss, collapsed across type of social-sexual behavior. For the initiator as coworker, however, this effect reversed; boss before coworker resulted in relatively more dysphoria when the initiator was a coworker. A similar pattern was found for assertiveness. When the harasser was a boss, greater assertiveness resulted for the coworker before boss sequence. And when the harasser was a coworker, greater assertiveness resulted for the boss before coworker sequence. These combined findings suggest that the earlier harassment by a boss will positively carryover to heighten the affective and behavioral response to later harassment by a coworker. Similarly, the earlier harassment by a coworker will positively influence the later affective and behavioral response to harassment by a boss. Hence, no matter what sequence, boss before coworker or coworker before boss, the second occurrence of sexual harassment increases dysphoria and assertiveness.

Self-blame was relatively greater in response to harassment by a boss when boss preceded coworker, than when coworker preceded boss. Self-blame was relatively greater in response

to harassment by a coworker when coworker preceded boss, than when boss preceded coworker. These findings suggest a negative carryover effect in response to repeated harassment. That is, self-blame lessens with repeated harassment.

Previous studies have employed a repeated measures design to study sexual harassment (see, for example, Baker, Terpstra, & Larntz, 1990; Kenig & Ryan, 1986; Konrad & Gutek, 1986; Lester et al., 1986; Malovich and Stake, 1990; Reilly et al., 1982; Terpstra & Baker, 1987). While the scenarios used may or may not have been randomly ordered or counterbalanced, the researchers may have reported different results had a between-groups design been employed or if order had been included in the analyses. While counterbalancing can control for systematic sequence or order effects, only sufficient time between trials can eliminate the influence of differential carryover effects.

In the present research, the PAQ was inserted between trials to eliminate the potential for differential carryover effects. However, the few minutes required by the participants to complete the measure was insufficient to dissipate the effect of the previous simulation on the next audio simulation. This finding has several implications, first of which was the analysis of the effects of repeated harassment as discussed above. Secondly, however, and more simply, the findings

suggest that even an audio simulation of sexual harassment can be powerful enough to maintain a level of distress over a period of time. Surely the level of distress created by a real event of social-sexual behavior will dissipate even more slowly. Beyond a doubt, this repeated-measures analysis of workplace social-sexual behavior has highlighted the potential for long term distress, whether in response to salient sexual harassment (sexual touching with a proposition) or the less salient sexual harassment produced by a polluted work environment (sexual talk and joking).

#### *Thought-listing Technique*

Belenky (1986) argues for the importance of research by, with and for women, not on women. In that spirit, the thought-listing technique was utilized to allow the participants the opportunity for individualized responses to the simulations, rather than simply forcing Likert-style responses of the attribution and behavioral measures. The thought-listing data posed several difficulties, as already highlighted in the Results Section. One difficulty deserves greater emphasis-- participant coding.

Instructions (as included in Appendix D) detailed the coding to be employed by the participants. So, for example, negative thoughts were defined as, "statements that are negative

towards the simulation or source of the tape-recorded communication." Alternatively, positive thoughts were defined as, "statements that are positive towards the simulation or source of the tape-recorded communication." From a methodological point of view, difficulties arose when several women coded "negative" thoughts as "positive" with the explanation that expressions of anger, for them, are positive events in response to sexual harassment. For example, one participant responded that the following two thoughts were self-related positive: "Where would he like my knee?!!" and "Who shall I report him to?" This same participant coded "How dare he?" as self-related negative. Clearly all of the statements are negative in that they express a negative emotion. The first two thoughts, however, express the participants' desire to take action, while the later thought expresses the emotion.

Several others displayed the same logic in their use of coding. "I would tell him he is a jerk, slap his hands, explain to him that he has offended me" was coded self-related positive. The same participant coded "I was angry to think he called me back, & suggested I go to bed with him," as source-related negative. Another wrote "desire to respond/act" and coded this thought as self-positive, while she coded "disgusted" as source-negative.

In keeping with Belenky's (1986) premise on "women's ways of knowing," forcing precise definitions of positive and negative onto the women as they coded their thoughts would be antithetic. Belenky writes that "for the silent, words have an impact only when uttered with force and violence" (p. 158). That words have impact and can be experientially positive events for women when uttered with force and violence could be added to Belenky's statement.

From a purely scientific perspective, the thought-listing technique must be coded by external judges who share the same definitions of the valence and target dimensions. The problem inherent in such pure science, however, is the loss of accuracy. Moreover, some data would simply have to be tossed out as unscorable. Only the participants themselves can code sparse, telegraphic speech such as "how awful."

Despite the obstacles, the thought-listing data was salvageable, and in fact, provided additional support for the Sociocultural Model. By summing the number of thoughts into only the valence dimensions (ignoring the target dimensions), mean differences were calculated for the number of negative thoughts. Moreover, the mean negative versus positive thoughts was compared allowing for refutation of the Biological Model.

### *Perception Control*

The simulations were intentionally designed to meet the Canadian Human Rights Commission's definitions of harassment. By definition, harassment includes off-color joking, gestures, unnecessary physical contact, and sexual propositions. The majority felt that sexual touching and pressure for sexual relations, whether initiated by a boss or a coworker, was an example of sexual harassment. However, participants were less convinced that sexual joking in the workplace was an example of sexual harassment, despite the significant increase in dysphoria scores from pre- to post-simulations. It appears that public education has been insufficient regarding an employer's responsibilities to keep the work environment free of unacceptable joking and horseplay.

### *Clinical Implications*

The inclusion of multiple measures of the repercussions of workplace social-sexual behavior allowed for analysis of the link between thoughts, feelings, and actions. This link has important implications for counselling and therapy with victims. Specifically, the findings suggest that direct sexual harassment, while emotionally distressing, may be severe enough to evoke assertiveness and external attribution. Alternatively, a less severe and emotionally distressing

event, such as sexual joking, appears to be least likely to evoke an assertive response, and via cognitive dissonance, greater self-blame ensues.

Perception has an important role here. The participants were less convinced that sexual joking was an example of sexual harassment as compared to sexual touching with a proposition. Self-blame, embarrassment, and humiliation are likely to continue until a woman perceives herself as having been sexually harassed. Consequently, greater awareness of the legal definitions of sexual harassment must be a societal and organizational goal. For the victim seeking assistance, therapeutic goals should include cognitive restructuring. A change in the perception and interpretation of the event as one of sexual harassment may precipitate greater dysphoria (anxiety, hostility, and/or depression), yet simultaneously encourage assertiveness and external attribution.

This link between thoughts, feelings, and actions has another useful clinical implication. Victims of sexual harassment appear to benefit from stereotypic male attributes. Specifically, women who ascribe traits such as independence, superiority, competitiveness, and self-confidence to themselves appear to be more likely to respond assertively with an external attribution of blame. Nontraditional gender-role identity, then, may function as a natural cushion against



the harmful effects of workplace social-sexual behavior. For the victim of sexual harassment, attainment of these "male" attributes may be advantageous.

Beyond the measures they completed, the participants were provided the opportunity to comment on the research as part of the interview. Many women replied that the higher their self-esteem and self-confidence, the less likely they felt they were to be personal targets of sexual harassment. In fact, two high-powered women did not complete the interviews. One emphatically stated that she was unable to imagine herself in the situation directed by simulation. While such qualitative data does not offer hard support for the Sociocultural Model, it certainly points to a definition of sexual harassment as an abuse of power.

Power can be institutionalized as found in gender-relations or as secured from an organization's hierarchy. Starhawk (as cited in Lips, 1991) defines another aspect of power -- "power from within." Lips describes this form as power as follows:

[Power from within] focuses on the individual value of every person and the inner strength that comes from that innate value if the person recognizes it. It cannot be measured necessarily by the amount of change a person manages to accomplish or by the number of people whose behavior she or he controls; indeed, the idea of

measuring it at all is almost ludicrous . . . . [It is] something that keeps us sane in insane times and that allows us, once in awhile, to endure against overwhelming odds, and to make unpopular choices in the face of negation by the power structure that surrounds us.

(pp. 9-10)

While a measure of personal power was not utilized in this research, the Personal Attributes Questionnaire measured how stereotypic the participants perceived themselves to be. To the extent that gender power relations are present within the workplace, stereotypic male attributes may be beneficial to working women. It is interesting to note, however, that the participants were homogeneous in their endorsement of instrumentality versus expressivity. Perhaps a sample of women who endorsed a greater number of expressive items than instrumental items would react with even greater distress to the audio simulations. It certainly appears from the significant correlations that instrumentality can buffer against the ill effects of sexual harassment. Coping with sexual harassment may be an experience where one needs power from within to overcome the "overwhelming odds" found in the workplace; and perhaps there is a relationship between instrumentality and personal power, a question not explored in this research.

In addition to documentation of the repercussions of sexual harassment, an ultimate goal of this type of research is prevention. The results reveal the need to further educate employers and employees regarding the detrimental effects of an offensive work environment. Less than half the participants perceived the sexualization of the workplace simulation to be sexual harassment, yet there was a significant increase in dysphoria as a result of exposure to the simulations. Hence, education must be devoted to changing the perception that an offensive work environment, as created by sexual joking and horseplay, must be tolerated. Equally important, no support has been found for the Biological Model. No longer can others argue, in good conscience, that sexual harassment is misinterpreted sexual attraction. By logical extension, it can no longer be argued that sexual harassment is the personal responsibility of the adults involved. Rather, the organization and society must be held accountable for its prevention.

Motivating change has become the next challenge, and organizations are a more manageable venue for change than society at large. As is often the case, an organization's motivation may be provided by economic concerns. In addition to the personal costs of emotional distress, sexual harassment creates economic and organizational costs. Economic costs for both the employer and the harassed employee can be staggering.

The costs to the harassed employee include a decrease in concentration, job satisfaction, motivation and work performance, as well as absenteeism, loss of productivity, lowered aspirations, emotional and physical illness, and diminished self-esteem. Any or all of these responses may result in job turnover and loss (Hoffman, 1986; Salisbury et al., 1986). Additionally, for the victim who is compelled to leave the job, the costs include loss of income and seniority, a disrupted work history, problems with references for future jobs, potential for failure to qualify for unemployment benefits, and the less tangible but equally important erosion of confidence and enthusiasm in seeking another job (Hamilton et al., 1987).

Not only may the victim's work routine be affected, but that of everyone working in her section. The entire unit may experience a disruption in group cohesion with a resultant decrease in productivity, and an increase in employee turnover, accidents and mistakes. Similarly, the organization suffers legal fees, lowered productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization, as well as a loss of valuable employees (Gosselin, 1984; Gutek, 1985; James, 1981). Clearly such economic and organizational costs of sexual harassment are potential motivators for change.

### ***Suggestions for Further Research***

This research represents a first attempt to include a multi-effect assessment of the repercussions of workplace social-sexual behavior. Multivariate analysis allowed for an appreciation of the interplay between dysphoria, attribution of responsibility, and assertiveness. For example, it was learned that while dysphoria increased in response to repeated harassment, assertiveness increased as well; and when assertiveness was lower, self-blame was greater. Research on workplace social-sexual behavior needs to continue to move beyond a primary emphasis on descriptive statistics and survey methodology. Suggestions for further research include replication on other samples of women, inclusion of subordinates as initiators, continued development of measurement techniques, and caution regarding carryover effects.

This research cannot be generalized to the experiences of all women. The sample was selected from among professional women's network. It is not inconceivable that women who seek out the support of others have the inner sense of personal power to which Lips (1991) refers. Consequently, this study needs to be replicated on other samples of women, for example, nurses, teachers, secretaries, and food service industry workers. The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) and a

measure of personal power should be included in subsequent replications. It should be cautioned, however, that these measures should be administered prior to any others to be sure that they are not biased as potential covariates by the presentation of a simulation.

To advance the conceptualization of sexual harassment as an abuse of power, a third group of initiators could include subordinates who make sexual comments and jokes. If women are not as distressed by subordinates who initiate harassment, further support could be found for the role of power as the mediating variable in response to sexual harassment.

This study has extended previous research by including assessment of affective, cognitive and behavioral responses to sexual harassment. Replications should advance the newly developed measures. Particularly, reliability of the attribution of responsibility and behavioral measure should be improved. The poor reliability of summary attribution score necessitated the use of only two items to measure attribution of responsibility. Reliability of the behavioral measure might be improved by revising some of the items, particularly Item No. 9. Additionally, a physiological measure, such as the galvanic skin response, could also be employed to offer yet another measure of the distress caused by sexual harassment.

Finally, research which employs a within-subjects design should be wary of the potential for differential carryover effects. The alternative, of course, is a completely randomized factorial design, or a time lag of sufficient length, perhaps several days, between the two testing interviews.

### *Concluding Remarks*

During the confirmation hearings of Judge Thomas, a senator commented before the senate that Anita Hill would now be subjected to "real harassment not just the sexual kind." It is hoped that the results of this research will assist in dismissing the myth that sexual harassment is not hurtful to women. The use of a before-after design has unequivocally discredited the Biological Model in that just imagined sexual harassment via an audio simulation can elevate dysphoria. Support has been found for the Sociocultural Model and for the role of goal-oriented or masculine attributes as a buffer against the ill effects of sexual harassment. Additionally, the within-subjects design allowed for assessment of the detrimental effects of repeated harassment. In sum, the results highlight that factors, other than just organizational power, moderate the impact of sexual harassment.

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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### Summary of Demographic Variables used in this Study

Variable	Total		DSH <sup>a</sup>		SWP <sup>b</sup>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age						
25 - 34	20	23.8	11	26.2	9	21.4
35 - 42	22	26.2	5	11.9	17	40.5
43 - 49	22	26.2	13	31.0	9	21.4
50 - 67	20	23.8	13	31.0	7	16.7
Education						
9 - 11 years	1	1.2	0	0	1	2.4
high school	3	3.6	2	4.8	1	2.4
some post-secondary	28	33.3	19	45.2	9	21.4
university graduate	25	29.8	8	19.0	17	40.5
graduate degree	27	32.1	13	31.0	14	33.3

<sup>a</sup>DSH refers to the direct sexual harassment condition.

<sup>b</sup>SWP refers to the sexualization of the workplace condition.



## Appendix B

### Summary of Participants' Personal Experiences with Similar Workplace Social-Sexual Behavior

Behavior	Total		DSH <sup>a</sup>		SWP <sup>b</sup>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sexual talk or joking						
Frequently	15	18.1	11	26.8	4	9.5
Sometimes	46	55.4	19	46.3	27	64.3
Not at all	22	26.5	11	26.8	11	26.2
Use of rough language						
Frequently	7	8.4	5	12.2	2	4.8
Sometimes	48	57.8	21	51.2	27	64.3
Not at all	28	33.7	15	36.6	13	31.0
Touched by a man in a sexual way						
Yes	47	56.0	23	54.8	24	57.1
No	37	44.0	19	45.2	18	42.9
Asked to engage in sexual relations as part of job						
Yes	15	15.5	5	11.9	8	19.0
No	71	84.5	37	88.1	34	81.0

<sup>a</sup>DSH refers to the direct sexual harassment condition.

<sup>b</sup>SWP refers to the sexualization of the workplace condition.

## Appendix C

### Control MAACL-R Instructions

**HOW DO YOU FEEL?** The following words describe different kinds of moods and feelings. Put a check mark beside the words which describe how you feel now. Some of the words may sound alike, but we want you to check all the words that describe your feelings. Your first impressions are important, do not spend too much time considering each word.

### Post-Simulation MAACL-R Instructions

**HOW DO YOU FEEL?** The following words describe different kinds of moods and feelings. Put a check mark beside the words which describe how you feel now - after hearing this tape. Some of the words may sound alike, but we want you to check all the words that describe your feelings. Your first impressions are important, do not spend too much time considering each word.

### Dysphoria Subscales

Anxiety (A)	Depression (D)	Hostility (H)	
afraid	alone	angry	irritated
fearful	destroyed	annoyed	mad
frightened	discouraged	complaining	mean
impatient	forlorn	critical	
nervous	lonely	cross	
panicky	lost	cruel	
shaky	miserable	disagreeable	
tense	rejected	disgusted	
timid	sad	enraged	
worrying	suffering	furious	
	sunk	hostile	
	tormented	incensed	

## **Appendix D**

### **WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?**

We are interested in what you were thinking during the presentation of the message on the tape. Please list these thoughts, whether they were about yourself, the situation, the other person(s) involved, or anything else; whether they were positive, neutral, and/or negative. Any case is fine; simply list what it was that you were thinking during the tape-presentation. Feel free to be concise; a phrase is sufficient. Ignore spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

You should take about 3 minutes to write. The next page contains the form we have prepared for you to use to record your thoughts. We have deliberately provided more space than we think people will need to insure that everyone will have plenty of room. So don't worry if you don't fill every space. Simply write down the first thought that comes to you in the first box, the second thought in the second box, etc. Please put only one thought or idea in each box. Please be completely honest. Your answers will be confidential.

## CODING THE THOUGHT LISTING MEASURE

Your listed thoughts are to be coded by you personally for accuracy of scoring. Each thought written is to be coded on both a target and valence dimension.

The target dimension reflects your focus of attention when you had the thought. This dimension answers the question "Where was your focus of attention when you had this thought?" The target dimension is classified into the following categories:

- (1) **Self-Related**--statements pertaining to yourself as the recipient of the tape-recorded communication;
- (2) **Source-Related**--statements pertaining to the initiator(s) of the tape-recorded communication;
- (3) **Task-Related**--statements pertaining to the research methodology or issue of sexual harassment in general; and
- (4) **Irrelevant Thoughts**--all remaining statements which are external to this research.

The valence dimension indicates the degree to which the tape presentation is positive or negative or neutral/irrelevant for you as reflected by your thoughts. This dimension answers the question "How were you feeling when you had this thought?" Coding the reported thoughts along the valence dimension is done as follows:

- (1) **Positive Thoughts**--statements that are positive towards the simulation or source of the tape-recorded communication;
- (2) **Negative Thoughts**--statements that are negative towards the simulation or source of the tape-recorded communication; and
- (3) **Neutral/Irrelevant Thoughts**--statements that are neither positive nor negative towards the simulation or source of the tape-recorded communication.

Several examples illustrate the coding:

- (1) "I wonder what this research is really looking for" would be coded as a **task-related neutral thought**;
- (2) "I could lose my job if I refused this kind of attention" would be coded as a **self-related negative thought**;
- (3) "This kind of attention from my employer would be enjoyable" would be coded as a **source-related positive thought**; and
- (4) "I don't have time for this researcher; I have to get back to work" would be coded as an **irrelevant negative thought**.

Please refer back to the thought listing measures now. Code each thought listed on both the target and valence dimensions. List your coding to the left of each thought recorded by you.

## Appendix E

(A1)

Below you will find three questions. For each one, please indicate the extent of responsibility you feel best describes your thoughts regarding the tape presentation by circling the appropriate number. Use the following categories for each answer:

- 1 - Not at all responsible
- 2 - Mostly not responsible
- 3 - Somewhat not responsible
- 4 - A little of both
- 5 - Somewhat responsible
- 6 - Mostly responsible
- 7 - Completely Responsible

---

(1) To what extent do you think you have encouraged or tolerated this kind of behavior?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(2) To what extent do you think the other person is responsible for this incident?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(3) To what extent do you think the workplace has encouraged or tolerated this kind of behavior?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

---

Below you will find eight statements related to the tape presentation. Please place a check mark beside those items with which you agree.

- \_\_\_\_\_ (1) I must have unintentionally sent some kind of message that sexual horseplay doesn't bother me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2) I have not earned his respect.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (3) I must be dressing too attractively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (4) I have gotten myself into an awkward situation with this man.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (5) He is being a jerk.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Boys will be boys, there's nothing I can do about this.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (7) I should never have gotten a job in this organization.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (8) He doesn't respect women.

## Appendix F

(A1/B1)

We would like to find out what the term *sexual harassment* means to you. You have just imagined that your recently-hired boss/supervisor has let his fingers stray to your breast as he asked you to have sexual relations with the understanding that it would help your job situation. Do you consider this incident to be sexual harassment? Please circle the item number of the answer with which you agree:

- (1) Yes, this is sexual harassment;
- (2) No, this is not sexual harassment; or
- (3) I do not know or I am not sure.

(A2/B2)

We would like to find out what the term *sexual harassment* means to you. You have just imagined that you have unexpectedly witnessed two of your co-workers who were just recently hired using sexual gestures, coarse language, and sex-oriented jokes. Do you consider this incident to be sexual harassment? Please circle the item number of the answer with which you agree:

- (1) Yes, this is sexual harassment;
- (2) No, this is not sexual harassment; or
- (3) I do not know or I am not sure.

## Appendix G

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO ABOUT THIS?

Imagining that this taped presentation has occurred in your workplace, how likely are you to respond in each of the following ways? Please read each item carefully and circle the appropriate number for each reaction type. Use the following categories for each answer:

- 1 = Definitely unlikely
- 2 = Very unlikely
- 3 = Unlikely
- 4 = Neither likely nor unlikely
- 5 = Likely
- 6 = Very likely
- 7 = Definitely likely

---

(1) leave the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(2) report the incident outside my workplace (for example, to the Human Rights Commission)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(3) report the incident to someone inside my workplace (for example, to your manager or senior official)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(4) physically resist or react (for example, walk away or slap him)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(5) refuse to work with the individual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(6) verbally react, negatively (for example, tell him or them what you think)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(7) verbally react, positively (for example, thank him or them for the compliment)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(8) change your appearance (for example, dress less attractively)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(9) avoid the man or men involved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(10) ignore or do nothing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## Appendix H

### Instructions and Sample Questions from the Personal Attributes Questionnaire

The items below inquire about what kind of a person you think you are. Each item consists of a pair of characteristics, with the letters A-E in between. For example:

Not at all Artistic

Very Artistic

A....B....C....D....E

Each pair describes contradictory characteristics--that is, you cannot be both at the same time, such as very artistic and not at all artistic.

The letters form a scale between the two extremes. You are to choose a letter which describes where you fall on the scale. For example, if you think you have no artistic ability, you would choose A. If you think you are pretty good, you might choose D. If you are only medium, you might choose C, and so forth.

1. Not at all independent

Very independent

A....B....C....D....E

2. Not at all emotional

Very emotional

A....B....C....D....E

3. Very passive

Very active

A....B....C....D....E

4. Not at all able to devote  
self completely to others

Able to devote self  
completely to others

A....B....C....D....E

5. Very rough

Very gentle

A....B....C....D....E

6. Not at all helpful to others

Very helpful to others

A....B....C....D....E



## **Appendix I**

### **Relevant Questions from the Interview Schedule**

11. Would you say that joking or talking about sexual matters at your workplace happens frequently, sometimes, or not at all?

12. Would you say that workers swear or use rough language at work frequently, sometimes, or not at all?

49. Sometimes on the job a man might touch a woman in a way that is meant to be sexual. On your present or previous job(s), have you ever been touched by a man in a sexual way?

51. Sometimes a woman is expected to engage in sexual relations with a man with the understanding that it would hurt her job situation if she refused or help if she accepted. On your present or previous job(s), have you ever been asked to engage in sexual relations as part of your job?

## Appendix J

### Letter sent to participants

November 28, 1991

Dear ,

I am writing this letter to introduce myself and my research project to members of the Women's Network. As a member of the Network, I have met some of you. I am a Psychology professor at Saint Mary's University and I also consult with individuals and businesses on workstress and health, particularly related to women's issues.

At this time I am asking your assistance in a research project I am conducting. I am interested to find out how women are getting along with men in their workplace as clients and co-workers. This project is being sponsored by a SSHRC, Federal Government Granting Agency that assesses issues with respect to women and work. The results of this study will contribute to the development of practical methods for assessing women's workstress, and to government policy-making in areas affecting women's mental health in the workplace.

I will be contacting you by telephone within the next week to ask if you would be willing to be interviewed on this topic. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for you. All information will be gathered anonymously; your responses will be strictly confidential and not identified with you in any respect.

If you are willing to participate, you will be invited to attend a free evening workshop on women's workstress in January, which will focus on skills for women in business.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope you will participate.

Sincerely,

Grace M. H. Pretty, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor

**Appendix K**

**Debriefing**

## DEBRIEFING

First, I want to take the opportunity to thank you for your willingness to participate in this research. I am hoping that this research will contribute a better understanding of the societal problem of sexual harassment. In order to assist me in the further collection of data, I would ask that you kindly refrain from discussing this research with acquaintances who may also be participating in this study. Subsequent to complete analysis of my results, I plan to send each participant an abstract of my findings. If you would like to receive this abstract, please write your name and address on the front of the attached envelope.

In summary, this research is designed to assess the consequences of two types of sexual harassment initiated by a boss or supervisor as compared to the same behavior initiated by a co-worker. The Canadian Human Rights Commission considers sexual harassment to be an illegal form of discrimination on the grounds of sex for which the employer is responsible. Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal and environmental. Examples of sexual harassment include explicit or suggestive gestures, deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, and pinching. Verbal harassment includes pressure for dates, sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, questions, and retaliation. Sexually explicit pictures, graffiti, or other materials of a sexual nature which create a polluted or offensive work environment also constitute sexual harassment.

The most severe form of harassment is actual or attempted rape or assault.

Sexual harassment has also been defined more broadly as social-sexual behavior. Direct sexual harassment and sexualization of the workplace are two examples of workplace social-sexual behavior which are being studied in this research. You served in only one of these conditions. The simulation of direct sexual harassment includes sexual touching and a proposition with promises of job enhancement from a male to an individual female worker. The simulation of sexualization of the workplace comprises sexual gestures, coarse language, and sex-oriented joking, among males in the presence of, but not directed towards, an individual female worker.

Victims of sexual harassment often experience a variety of emotional reactions, from simple annoyance to more profound symptoms, such as anger, fear, depression, anxiety, irritability, diminished self-esteem, humiliation, and vulnerability. You may have felt some of these emotions as a result of previous sexual harassment or simply by participating in this research.

Complaining of sexual harassment is a double-edged sword. Reporting sexual harassment may assist a victim in regaining a sense of control at the potential cost of retaliation and victim blaming. Workers, customers, clients, or tenants can all complain to the Human Rights Commission regarding unsolicited sexual attention. Sexual harassment can also be

reported internally within the workplace to senior officials and union representatives or externally to a general practitioner.

A list of phone numbers is provided below. These organizations can be contacted if you have further individual concerns and/or questions regarding sexual harassment.

Crisis Centre	24 hour Help Line	421-1188
Human Rights	Nova Scotia	424-4111
Commission:	Federal	426-8380
Service for Sexual Assault Victims (SSAV)		425-0122

## Appendix L

### Mean Number of Positively-Valenced Cognitions

Social-Sexual Behavior	Boss as Initiator		Coworker as Initiator	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Self-Related Positive Cognitions				
DSH	0.52	(0.92)	0.50	(0.99)
SWP	0.17	(0.54)	0.31	(0.68)
Source-Related Positive Cognitions				
DSH	0.12	(0.63)	0.14	(0.65)
SWP	0.05	(0.31)	0.02	(0.15)
Task-Related Positive Cognitions				
DSH	0.05	(0.31)	0.05	(0.31)
SWP	0.07	(0.46)	0.14	(0.52)
Irrelevant Positive Cognitions				
DSH	0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)
SWP	0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)

Note. DSH = direct sexual harassment

SWP = sexualization of the workplace

## Appendix H

### Mean Number of Negatively-Valenced Cognitions

Social-Sexual Behavior	Boss as Initiator		Coworker as Initiator	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Self-Related Negative Cognitions				
DSH	1.14	(1.41)	0.83	(1.08)
SWP	1.10	(1.78)	1.07	(1.44)
Source-Related Negative Cognitions				
DSH	1.60	(1.50)	2.02	(1.96)
SWP	2.52	(1.84)	2.57	(2.23)
Task-Related Negative Cognitions				
DSH	0.17	(0.44)	0.12	(0.40)
SWP	0.10	(0.37)	0.17	(0.44)
Irrelevant Negative Cognitions				
DSH	0.02	(0.15)	0.02	(0.15)
SWP	0.00	(0.00)	0.02	(0.15)

Note. DSH = direct sexual harassment

SWP = sexualization of the workplace



## Appendix N

### Mean Number of Neutrally-Valenced Cognitions

Social-Sexual Behavior	Boss as Initiator		Coworker as Initiator	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Self-Related Neutral Cognitions				
DSH	0.19	(0.63)	0.26	(0.73)
SWP	0.24	(0.58)	0.12	(0.33)
Source-Related Neutral Cognitions				
DSH	0.05	(0.31)	0.05	(0.22)
SWP	0.17	(0.58)	0.14	(0.42)
Task-Related Neutral Cognitions				
DSH	0.02	(0.15)	0.07	(0.34)
SWP	0.07	(0.26)	0.14	(0.42)
Irrelevant Neutral Cognitions				
DSH	0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)
SWP	0.05	(0.31)	0.02	(0.15)

Note. DSH = direct sexual harassment

SWP = sexualization of the workplace

### **Author Notes**

Preparation of this thesis was supported in part by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Grant awarded to Dr. Grace Pretty.