

**American Political Science Association
Committee on Professional Ethics, Rights, & Freedoms
Draft Report on the 2017 APSA Survey on Sexual Harassment at Annual Meetings¹**

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Executive Summary

In light of concerns about sexual harassment within our profession, especially at the APSA Annual Meeting, the APSA Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms Committee surveyed the entire APSA membership during February-March, 2017 to determine the extent and nature of perceived harassment experience. The results were intended to complement the recent institution of a new anti-harassment policy to find out what, if any, further courses of action might be warranted. Close-ended questions asked respondents to indicate their experience with specific types of treatment at APSA Annual Meeting during a limited time frame: 2013-2016. Three open-ended questions elicited further detail. With a universe of 13,367 members contacted, we received 2,424 completed surveys, a response rate of 18.1%.

APSA members have not experienced harassing behavior at the Annual Meeting, a sizeable minority have, including a much higher percentage of women than men. About 63% of members, including 74% of men and 51% of women said they had never experienced any of the negative forms of behavior listed. We examined three broad categories of negative behavior. The first is feeling put down or experiencing condescension; 42% of women and 22% of men said this had happened to them. The second concerns inappropriate language or looks, such as experiencing offensive sexist remarks; getting stared at, leered, or ogled in a way that made them uncomfortable; or being exposed to sexist or suggestive materials which they found offensive. The results are that 30% of women and 10% of men report negative experiences in this regard. The third is inappropriate sexual advances or touching, such as unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship despite efforts to discourage it, being touched by someone in a way that was uncomfortable, or experiencing bribes or threats associated with sexual advances. About 11% of women and 3% of men reported these experiences.

Even in those cases where the percentage of members experiencing such incidents may be low, the number is nonetheless disconcerting. That 29 of our members felt they had experienced threats of professional retaliation for not being sexually cooperative, and 44 felt they were being bribed with special professional rewards is, respectively, 29 and 44 people too many.

Further analysis reveals no differences across race/ethnicity categories. Colleagues from newer professional cohorts are more likely than more senior colleagues to say they have had

¹ We express our appreciation to all members of that committee and the survey subcommittee for their work on the survey. We are also grateful to Betsy Super and Amanda Meyers of the APSA for their assistance. Thanks also to Andre Audette, who gave us invaluable help. He is now Assistant Professor of Political Science at Monmouth College.

experience with negative behavior. Likewise, untenured faculty experience more harassing and negative behavior than tenured faculty. Neither graduate students nor post-docs differ from senior faculty in these reports.

Multivariate analysis shows that gender, cohort, and meeting attendance predict negative conference experiences such that women and more recent Ph.D's are subject to more negative and harassing behavior as do colleagues who attend meetings more frequently. These results vary somewhat depending on the type of negative behavior.

The responses to open-ended questions amplified and added rich detail to this quantitative analysis. They revealed 5 general categories of behavior colleagues described as examples of the negative experiences they had had:

- (1) General disrespect, including being ignored or otherwise demeaned in ways that are not explicitly sexual;
- (2) Referencing their gender, sexuality, or bodies in non-professional ways;
- (3) Persistent or otherwise inappropriate romantic or sexual overtures;
- (4) Discriminatory statements or attacks on one's gender or sexuality;
- (5) Harassing, demeaning, or discriminatory behavior based on categories other than gender; especially, race and prestige.

The report published here provides more detail about the survey, and both the quantitative and qualitative analysis. The full report is available online at apsanet.org/reports. An abbreviated version has been published in *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51(1), January, 2018.

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1. Introduction: Legal and Historical Context of Sexual Harassment Related to Employment & Education

Recent news events highlight the prevalence of sexual harassment in many professions. But not so long ago there was not even a name for sexual harassment. When bosses or professors made persistent unwelcome sexual advances to their subordinates or students; when they requested sexual favors, especially with implied or actual offers of trading job, professional, or educational benefits for the sexual activity; or issued threats of job-, professional- or educational-related retaliation for refusing to comply with sexual demands, there was no name for this situation. There was no recourse, certainly no legal recourse for the many women, and sometimes men, who experienced such things at work or school. Women, especially, mostly stayed silent about these experiences, isolated and afraid to tell anyone, often suspecting that they had done something wrong to attract such unwelcome attention, distracted from their work tasks by anxiety, fear, or anger. They often worried that it was somehow their own fault. Even within the memories and life experience of many of us still in active professional life, the sexual "conquest" of female undergraduates by male faculty was widely regarded as a normal acceptable part of the culture of academic life, perhaps even something for professors to brag about. It was the normal stuff of academic novels. But it didn't have a name, certainly not one that condemned these abuses of power.

Sexual harassment certainly existed, but only 1974 was the term *sexual harassment* first used to describe when a Cornell lecturer is first said to have used the term (Farley, 1978).² Eventually, courts ruled that sexual harassment is covered by the prohibition of employment discrimination on the basis of sex found in Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which made the crucial difference in giving victims the possibility of seeking remedy through the law.

According to a Congressional Research Service history of the early years of federal law on sexual harassment (Dale 1993: 2), the first court case in which Title VII was the handle on which an anti-harassment case (minus the label) rested was *Corn v. Bausch & Lomb* (390 F. Supp. 161 D.Ariz 1975). The case was dismissed because the claim was about the actions and intentions of an individual supervisor, not company policy. The following year a federal district court held for the first time that sexual harassment doesn't have to be "company policy" in order to be regarded as prohibited discrimination within the terms of Title VII (*Williams v. Saxbe* (413 F. Supp. 654 D.D.C.)). Other cases followed, but in the early days the only kind of harassment that tended to be recognized as covered by the law was the *quid pro quo* form, where there is an explicit offer of trade of benefits or punishment for sexual activity or its refusal.

In 1980 the EEOC developed guidelines defining sexual harassment under the framework of Title VII that expanded the definition of sexual harassment beyond the *quid pro quo* form, stating that unwelcome sexual conduct violates Title VII when it "has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, a hostile, or offensive working environment." These two categories of sexual harassment – *quid pro quo* and the creation of a hostile working environment – still frame the legal short hand for understanding how harassment works. The Supreme Court finally recognized sexual harassment as a violation of Title VII in 1986, in *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson* (477 U.S. 57).

The *Meritor* logic was also applied to education through the Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments Act, which barred sex discrimination in educational institutions receiving federal funds. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 made an important further change that affected higher education, saying that institutions that receive federal funds are required to comply with civil rights laws such as this in all programs, not just in those receiving federal funds. Over time law and policy on harassment has expanded to be more comprehensive and specific in its coverage and remedies.

Although women's organization on university campuses have been working on the problem of harassment for decades, much of the academic profession became more aware of the issues due to increasing pressure by the federal government, especially during the Obama administration. One important turning point was the "Dear Colleague" letter issued by the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights in 2011 saying that institutions of higher education must "take immediate and effective steps to end sexual harassment and sexual violence" (<https://www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.html>). Colleges and universities stepped up their actions relevant to sexual harassment enforcement after that, although in September, 2017, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos withdrew the letter.

As a result of extensive research and legal and policy changes over the year, the concept of sexual harassment has changed over the years. Although much of the public likely understands

² This is not the place to offer a full-blown history of sexual harassment law and policy, but some context helps to contextualize the development of a sexual harassment policy and related actions, including the generation of this survey. There is plenty of scholarly, legal, and popular literature available, as well as survey data. For a review of research and intervention practices on sexual harassment in education and work settings see Paludi, Martin, Gruber, and Fineran, 2015.

sexual harassment to refer very specifically to sexual coercion, today this term generally refers to three different kinds of behavior and situations: (1) *sexual coercion*, involving bribes, threats or exchanges for sexual activity; (2) *unwanted sexual attention*, especially in which the recipient has made efforts to rebuff or escape the attention, or in which the power relations of the workplace make it difficult for the recipient to rebuff or escape the attention without fear of job consequences; and (3) *gender harassment*, or verbal or nonverbal behavior that is not explicitly about sexual relations, but which systematically demeans or insults people on the basis of their gender (Leskinen, Cortina, and Kabat 2011; Kabat-Farr and Cortina 2014).

How might we link this conceptual, legal, and policy history of sexual harassment to the professional life course experiences of contemporary political scientists and the dimensions of the problem we face in our profession? Assume for the moment most political scientists earn their Ph.D.'s by the age of 30. That means in 2017 something over 13% of current APSA members had entered the profession before the Supreme Court recognized sexual harassment as prohibited gender-based discrimination (<http://www.apsanet.org/RESOURCES/Data-on-the-Profession/Dashboard/Membership>). If we look back even one decade, it is easy to see that a very large portion of the senior members of our profession, including most of its leadership at all levels – were professionalized before that era, and in many cases, before there was a name for this phenomenon. Of the past 20 presidents of the APSA, only the most recent received her Ph.D. after the *Meritor* case. Ten of them earned their doctorate before the invention of the term, *sexual harassment*.

The historical point becomes even sharper when we consider the demographic change in the proportion of women in our profession. Figure 1 charts the number of doctorates awarded to men and women from 1966 to 2008. It reminds us of how few women most men in our discipline encountered as colleagues until relatively recently. The professional socialization of much of our profession, and certainly most of its leadership at all levels until very recently was shaped in a different era. Although the women's movement (including the Women's Caucus for Political Science, founded in 1969) has been working on the issue of sexual harassment for 40 years, this broader cultural is an important context. We see this in the course of the national discussion of harassment provoked by the Weinstein revelations, where many parties to the discussions say they have been unaware of the breadth and depth of the problems in the face of thousands of women speaking about their experiences aloud.

It unsurprising that the new policies, especially at the institutional level, engender conflict and anxiety, especially among people those who have been unaware of the issues or who fear that they may be unjustly accused of harassment. For many people, this is uncharted terrain. While research shows that relatively few victims of harassment report their experience, many other people express the belief that the relevant judicial processes are likely to be partial to the accuser. Many people also worry that the definitions of a "hostile working environment," especially in an academic setting, are likely to result in actions and procedures that run counter to academic freedom and freedom of speech. Some worry that a "stray remark" will lead them to be accused of harassment, or that normal social behavior may result in accusations.

Research has turned some of these fears into hypotheses to pursue empirical tests.³ Bhattacharya and Stockdale (2016), for example, used a Mechanical Turk sample to study reactions to different scenarios about sexual harassment, especially to find out how men and women perceive

³ Again, this is not the place for an extensive review of the research literature on perception of sexual harassment or reactions to it, but it is important to note that there *is* an extensive empirical literature for those who are interested in pursuing it.

evidence. They found, not surprisingly, that stronger quality evidence resulted in greater perception of sexual harassment, less perception of false accusation, and harsher penalties than when the quality of evidence was weaker. Subject gender made no difference in perception of sexual harassment. The impact of evidence quality was greater for women than men. In the low-quality condition, women “tended to have lower perceptions than men on ratings of severity, perceived guilt, and job consequences; women’s ratings were higher than men’s on ratings of false accusations” (p.599). Under the strong quality of evidence condition, “women’s ratings were higher than men’s for severity, perceived guilt, and job consequences and lower for false accusations” (p.599). Feminist attitudes had no main effects, but feminists reacted to the quality of evidence more strongly in general than non-feminists did. In general, right-wing authoritarianism did not interact with evidence quality in judgments about harassment.

A considerable literature shows that experiences of sexual harassment have deleterious effects on the victims, causing personal anxiety and stress, financial stress, and job and career track changes that are not motivated by the usual reasons for career decisions, but by the impact of harassment, including the need to escape contact with perpetrators (McLaughlin, Uggen, and Blackstone 2017).

As research shows, sexual harassment in higher education remains a serious problem and despite the existence of law and of institutional policies, we are far from eliminating it on our campuses. The question at hand is about the situation at our annual meetings.

2. Raising the Issue of Sexual Harassment at APSA Annual Meetings

In late summer 2015, eleven professors of political science from major universities around the United States addressed a letter to Executive Director Steven Smith, then-President Jennifer Hochschild, and the members of the APSA Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms Committee expressing concern about sexual harassment in the political science discipline. They wrote,

As senior women, we are often critical points of contact for junior scholars and graduate students who have experienced sexual harassment while attending conferences and other meetings in the discipline, including the APSA Annual Meeting. These individuals reach out to us for advice or just to vent about episodes they have experienced, including sexualizing comments, unwanted and often repeated pressuring for dates or sexually intimate encounters, refusal by instigators to back down after the person being pressured has clearly indicated a lack of interest, and even unwanted touching. We understand that this has been a longstanding issue in our profession but our continued awareness of these sorts of incidents suggests a need to develop a new culture in our discipline around this problem.

While they recognized the difficulty of eliminating the problem entirely, they noted that given “the debate over Title IX’s new standards, we believe that the moment is right to refocus attention on this issue and remind all our members that sexual harassment undermines the discipline’s effort to create a level playing field for all,” arguing that harassment “diminishes the capacity for some members of the discipline to participate fully as respected contributors to our scholarly conversations, and marginalizes and minimizes them as both scholars and people.”

The letter writers made a number of suggestions to achieve welcome change. These included

- reminding members that “it is the policy of the American Political Science Association to condemn sexual harassment;”
- authorizing a survey to explore the scope and nature of the problem;

- appointing a task force to address sexual harassment; and
- sharing resources and ideas with regional and other related associations.

The APSA Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms Committee (hereafter “the Committee”) adopted these suggestions as the major agenda for the 2015-16 year. We had little doubt that there is a problem – all current research suggests this -- but how extensive, we could not know. We were aware of the potential impact of the presence of so many alcohol-fueled receptions, dinners, and late evening social events that sometimes seem to lead to some individuals engaging in activity that would not be acceptable in the confines of their home institutions, perhaps believing that “what happens at APSA stays at APSA.” We were especially interested in differentiating between friendly social behavior that is appropriate for a professional meeting and sexual harassment, nuanced though that differentiation might be.

The Committee consulted legal counsel to determine the relationship of incidents of harassment at APSA meeting to the law. As discussed above, sexual harassment is covered by the law in workplaces through its relationship to employment discrimination, and in academic institutions through its relationship to Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act. The APSA meeting is technically neither a workplace for people attending as conference participants (in comparison, probably, with APSA staff and people paid by their employer to staff the book exhibits) nor an educational institution. People who violate other laws while attending APSA meetings – for example, by committing sexual assault – are covered by the law and law enforcement procedures. Individuals who commit acts of sexual harassment against members of their own colleges and universities – students or faculty --are probably covered by the policies and enforcement procedures of their own institutions. But there is a gap where sexual harassment between individuals not from the same workplace are concerned.

At its February 1, 2016 meeting the Committee developed these courses of action:

1. It began development of a new code of conduct at annual meetings that would seek to deter harassment at the annual meeting. It proposed that the code be passed by the Council and incorporated widely and noticeably into meetings-related communications.
2. A designated ombudsperson should be available at the annual meeting (a) to assist individuals who encounter harassment or other such problems to help them in determining options for resolution and (b) to bring systemic concerns to the attention of the organization for resolution.
3. It decided to undertake a survey of APSA members to gain more understanding of the dimensions of harassment problems at annual meetings from the point of view of members.
4. It agreed to sponsor or co-sponsor a roundtable discussion at the APSA meeting on the results of the survey.

The Committee also devoted focused discussion on matters related to the enforcement of any policy on harassment, including the powers and role of the Committee regarding enforcement and judicial matters. Although the Committee does play an advisory role in some judgment matters, it concluded that the appropriate role for the Committee with regard to harassment is as a policy committee, and it should not function in a judiciary capacity for a variety of reasons it discussed.⁴

⁴ An independent task force tasked by APSA President David Lake to deliberate over enforcement related to the APSA harassment policy recommended that judicial committees appointed to deal with specific harassment matters include members of the Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms Committee. This proposal was recommended to and passed by the APSA Council without consultation with the Committee, and

For follow-up, the Committee divided into subgroups to lead the main items in this plan. The Committee developed and approved final wording of an APSA Sexual Harassment Policy, available [here](#). It opens with this statement:

The APSA annual meeting and related regional political science meetings are convened for the purposes of professional development and scholarly and educational interchange in the spirit of free inquiry and free expression. Harassment of colleagues, students, or other conference participants undermines the principle of equity at the heart of these professional fora and is inconsistent with the principles of free inquiry and free expression. Consequently, harassment is considered by APSA to be a serious form of professional misconduct. The following Anti-Harassment Policy outlines expectations for all those who attend or participate in APSA meetings. It reminds APSA meeting participants that all professional academic ethics and norms apply as standards of behavior and interaction at these meetings.

After considerable discussion and further specification of details, the Association hired ombudspersons to serve for the first time at the 2017 Annual Meeting. Finally, a committee was assigned to draft a proposed survey on sexual harassment.

3. APSA Survey on Sexual Harassment: Method & Response

A Survey Development Subcommittee consisting of Virginia Sapiro (Boston University, Chair, Committee on Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms), David Campbell (University of Notre Dame), Scott Desposato (University of California – San Diego), and Elizabeth Zechmeister (Vanderbilt University) set to work reviewing the literature on sexual harassment surveys.

The purpose of the survey was simply to determine the extent of perceived harassment experience, along with basic information to help us understand who is most likely to experience harassment. It was not to do an analytical study of the causes and consequences of harassment because there is a large research literature on that, and we have little reason to believe the causes and consequences are different in our discipline. Further, much of the most informative work uses experimental designs, which is beyond our scope of work. Thus, we were able to keep our instrument relatively brief, hoping to increase its representativeness of our profession, and descriptive. The Committee concluded that the best model had been developed by the Department of Defense, and adapted its Sexual Experiences Questionnaire for the purpose of surveying APSA members (Fitzgerald, Magley, Drasgow, & Waldo 1999; Gutek, Murphy, & Douma 2004). The core of the survey described particular experiences, and asked respondents whether they had had those experiences once, more than once, or never. This is described below.

The survey was framed by two key questions. Should it focus on respondents' own experiences, or their reports on any incidents they had heard about? We limited the questions to people's own personal experiences for an obvious reason: some events and perpetrators become notorious, and as the rumor mill spreads, the details change. There are also likely unfounded rumors that come to be widely accepted "fact." Asking respondents about their own experiences should be a better measure of the dimensions of the problem. If an individual has harassed one person or 3 people, a survey of people's own experiences should detect that as separate incidents.

thus was unaware of the drawbacks of this proposal. The Committee Chair has objected to this process and policy on behalf of the Committee.

What should be the time frame for reports of harassment? The purpose of the survey was to understand the situation we face *today*, and to have information that is useful for understanding what steps the Association might take to seek improvement for the future. Although the experiences current members had 10 or 20 or 30 or more years ago are not irrelevant to how they experience the meetings today, the demographic, cultural, and legal changes that have occurred over time would render that information less useful as a guide for the present and future than more current reports. The Committee originally chose a 5-year time frame for the survey, but there was no 2012 meeting due to Hurricane Isaac in New Orleans. Therefore, the Committee framed the survey with a 4-year focus, 2013-16.

The core of the survey consists of closed-ended questions, it concluded with open-ended prompts that, respectively asked respondents to amplify on their responses and offer solutions to any problems they perceive.

The survey was vetted through the Institutional Review Board at Haverford College, the home institution of one of the members of the Committee, and approved as exempt.

A preliminary letter was sent to all members by email explaining the survey they would receive (Appendix I). The survey was sent via email to all APSA members on February 14, 2017 and was available through March 14, 2017. The “bounce-back” rate on the email addresses was around 3%. Reminders were sent to all members on February 21 and March 1, 9, and 13. Of the 13,367 members contacted, 2,810 started the survey and 2,424 completed it, yielding a response rate of 18.1%. Responses were collected anonymously.

Comparison with APSA membership data from the American Political Science Association shows that determining the representativeness of our response group is not straightforward because of non-response patterns in both APSA membership and survey data and our survey. Bearing that in mind, our survey respondents appear to over-represent women by about 16 percentage points and over-represent white people by about 21 percentage points. (See Table 1)

4. Reactions to the Harassment Survey

Because this survey was intended to address issues relating to the functioning of our profession, we found reactions to the project itself informative. Some made the effort to laud APSA for this initiative. Many commended APSA for doing the survey. Some defined it as a positive step for either seeking information about the situation at meetings or as a means for alerting the membership to the issue.

Soon after launching the survey we received a letter from a woman who described going to her “first and last” APSA meeting when she was a post-doc to tell us why she thought this effort was important. Having completed her Ph.D. at an elite institution, she was invited for drinks in the hotel bar by men who were “well-established in the field.” After she finished her drink she left the bar to go back to her room. The men continued to drink and, she later found, charged all their drinks to her room. She was afraid to confront them because of their stature, and learned a fellow post-doc had been threatened by a senior member of the field who said that if she said anything about such an experience, he would destroy her career.

Some were more critical. One colleague wrote approvingly of the “motives behind the survey,” but worried that the survey might be detrimental by implying “that the ‘victimization’ of

adult members of the political science community by other members is a rampant and pressing problem, or that adults cannot normally discourage unwanted sexual advances on their own without serious negative professional repercussions,” and that it has implications that are “both demeaning and potentially disempowering for those it intends to help.” This respondent also worried that “such a survey, by its very nature, blurs the line between relatively innocent flirtation ... and illegal harassment and assault, in ways that are more likely than not to generate misleading (and potentially alarmist) data.”

Some were more blunt in their critical responses, as in this example:

At first I thought this was a joke email. Now I realize it is not. Let me spare you the tension: your 'survey' will show that APSA conferences are seething with sexual assault and sexual harassment, that 50% of our female members claim to have experienced one or the other, that they do not feel 'safe' during the conference, and APSA will respond to alarm and hysteria and calls for new controls, perhaps training for all attendees. And all of this will be false, totally false, akin to our current sham campus rape crisis. And those who see this as such will ignore it, and increasingly APSA itself.

Few people wrote directly to us in any direction, but we read each communication and responded with acknowledgement and respect to each.

More respondents took the opportunity of the open-ended questions at the end of the survey to voice views about the survey. On the positive side, a number of people commended APSA for doing the survey. Some defined it as a positive step for either seeking information about the situation at meetings or as a means for alerting the membership to the issues.

A number of respondents also submitted more critical comments, sometimes stating that APSA should not have undertaken this survey. Some argued the questions were not relevant or important; for example:

This is absolutely ridiculous. I have literally never heard of a single incident at APSA. You all are fishing for yet more stats to feed into your PC narrative of rape culture, which is nonexistent at APSA and virtually every department in the country. Where is your survey on Islam's core teaching of rape? On the child sex abuse rampage in the UK? On female genital mutilation of Muslim girls in the US? On the sex assault wave in Cologne? On the rape epidemic in Sweden? On forced marriage in India? On honor killings of women deemed to have become too Western? You don't have one, because academics in America are preening cowards, hiding behind the neo-Marxist, Orwellian ideology of critical theory.

What a bullshit survey. If someone's been sexually assaulted the police should've been called. I know, I know, these issues are much better to be dealt with by a political theorist or methodologist than a law enforcement official.

I am wondering just how much of the concern over sexual harassment is the expression of narrow personal anger seeking an outlet. If the association wants to be concerned about something the possible end of democratic government in the U.S. and the emergence of an auto-plutocracy is a more pressing concern.

Don't make a big deal about what isn't a systemic problem.

This is not important. I'm a woman, I've been in the field nearly 30 years --have I ever had a colleague make a pass at me, yes, in fact it's happened over a 30 year career on more than one occasion. That's human, that's life. I said no, we're still friends. That's how it works in life, and in business. If it's a power issue, and department issue, then there are channels someone can go through for remedy. But I don't see how APSA has a remedy for these kinds of things and we are men and women and adults. We should have the skills to handle these things.

I don't think this is a problem at all. There are much more serious problems in the profession and it is unclear why APSA is focusing attention on this matter.

I suspect it's a non-problem, period.

In some cases respondents charged that the survey was intended to pursue a political agenda or for otherwise unacceptable purposes:

Forget this politically correct nonsense and focus on professional issues.

Stop listening to radical feminists who put together surveys like this hoping to lump together all of the categories to arrive at some shocking statistic as to the percentage who have been sexually harassed, when in reality you literally put in a category about being looked down on, which I answered yes to because I'm a conservative. And admit it: You're going to lump me into the number. Shame on you.

There was also a scattering of comments on the wording of the questions, and on issues that were included and left out.

A few men expressed concern in the open-ended questions about responding to the survey specifically because they believe that women are subject to harassment at meetings, sometimes because they have witnessed such behavior, and as a result, expressed the worry that because men like them are not as subject to demeaning and harassing behavior, they would artificially weaken our findings, or lead us to underestimate its prevalence.

The Committee is grateful to the more than 2,400 people who took the time to complete the survey. We are impressed with the seriousness and thoughtfulness with which people took this survey. Colleagues who experienced various forms of demeaning behavior, those who didn't have these experiences themselves but have witnessed or heard about instances, and those who have not had contact with such problems alike seemed generally to answer with care and in a spirit that offers useful insights into the diversity of experiences political scientists have with the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association.

5. Experiences of Harassment: Quantitative Data Analysis

The core of the survey asked, "At any APSA Annual Meeting you have attended in the past four years (2013-2016), has anyone attending the meeting ever done the following to you personally:

- Put you down or was condescending to you?

- Made offensive sexist remarks in your presence?
- Stared, leered, or ogled you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?
- Displayed, used, or distributed sexist or suggestive materials (for example, pictures, stories, or pornography) which you found offensive?
- Made unwanted attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage it?
- Made you feel like you were being bribed with some sort of reward or special treatment to engage in sexual behavior?
- Made you feel threatened with some sort of retaliation for not being sexually cooperative (for example, by mentioning an upcoming review, grant, promotion, etc.)?
- Touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?

Let us emphasize three aspects of the survey instrument before presenting the results.

First, although the survey was framed by reference to sexual harassment and the new APSA harassment policy, it did not ask respondents whether they had experienced “sexual harassment” because people have widely different definitions of that term. Respondents were asked whether they had experienced specific behaviors or situations.

Second, the experiences and situations tapped by the survey are encompassed within the different definitions of harassment discussed above: sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender-based harassment. The list identifies different forms of sexual coercion and unwanted sexual attention directly. With respect to other items, especially “put-downs” and condescension, the only way to identify these as gender-based harassment is in the aggregate, if, for example, women experience this more than men do.

Third, the survey did not ask people whether they heard sexual jokes, saw suggestive materials, experienced romantic overtures (or even unwanted romantic overtures), sexual looks, or touching at the meetings. They were asked whether there were *offensive* sexist remarks in their presence; whether someone stared, leered, or ogled you *in a way that made you feel uncomfortable*; whether someone displayed suggestive materials *which you found offensive*; whether someone made unwanted overtures *despite your efforts to discourage it*; or touched them *in a way that made you feel uncomfortable*. People have different expectations and toleration about personal behavior and appropriate communication and, of course, romantic overtures do not always or necessarily constitute harassment. The point of the survey is to discover the degree to which people at our professional meetings engage in behavior that makes other people feel uncomfortable or hurt. In almost every case it is difficult to imagine a situation in which the behavior we describe is directly germane to the professional and academic purposes of the meeting and therefore might be privileged by academic and scientific freedom.⁵

The majority -- about 63% -- of respondents say they had no personal experience with any of the negative behavior the survey lists within the specified time frame. Some took the opportunity of the open-ended questions to make positive comments about the professional atmosphere of at the meetings and their opportunities there. Some explained that while they said “no” to the closed-ended questions, they had, in fact, experienced these negative behaviors, but before the 4-year time

⁵ The major exception, which we consider below, is the possibility that some meeting participants; perhaps especially those who are young, inexperienced, and especially professionally vulnerable; are unused to rigorous scholarly and scientific debate or criticism.

frame. Some said that as older women they were no longer subject to these problems, but had encountered them when they were younger.

Among those who indicated that they had experienced one or more forms of demeaning or offensive behavior, the largest percentage had experienced a “put-down” or condescending behavior. About 16% said they experienced put-down behavior only and another 15% said they had experienced put-down behavior and another form of negative behavior. About 5% said they had experienced only some form of negative behavior other than put-downs or condescension.

The topline results are enumerated in more detail in Table 2. Almost one-third of respondents said they have experienced condescending or “put down” behavior, evenly divided between those who said it had happened once and those who say it had happened more than once. The other categories are smaller, some considerably so, but considering the seriousness of the charges colleagues are making in some cases, we cannot feel relieved by the data. Consider that 29 colleagues say they were threatened with retaliation for not being sexually cooperative at a meeting, and 44 thought they were being bribed with some sort of reward or special treatment to engage in sexual behavior. Another 4% -- 108 people -- feel that they have been sexually pursued at our professional meetings “*despite ... efforts to discourage it.*” Although these represent small percentages of our membership, too many colleagues have had their experience of our professional conference marred by encountering seriously nasty behavior.

Figures 2-4 combine the specific listed behavior into three categories: put down, language and looks, and advances and touching. They analyze, respectively, gender, Ph.D. cohort, and occupational differences. We do not show differences by race and ethnicity because that analysis revealed no differences in harassment reports. As expected, women are more likely than men to have experienced most of these forms of negative behavior, as are younger cohorts, and untenured professors. Although we expected graduate students and post-docs to stand out as well as compared with tenured faculty, they do not.

Finally we did multivariate (ordinary least squares) analysis to investigate the impact of gender, cohort, occupation, frequency of attendance, and race/ethnicity on experience of harassment (Tables 3-5). In general, gender, cohort, and meeting attendance predict negative conference experiences such that women and more recent Ph.D’s and colleagues who attend more regularly are subject to more negative and harassing behavior. We note that being untenured “falls out” of the picture in the multivariate analysis, presumably because age/cohort remains in. In the case of “advances and touching,” – the clearest case of sexual harassment in the most conventional sense – only gender and regularly attending the APSA conference are significant predictors.

6. Responses from the Open-Ended Questions

Responses to the open-ended questions add examples and texture to the quantitative survey results.

Respondents who had not personally experienced harassment

The majority of respondents had not themselves experienced any of the demeaning and objectionable behaviors listed in the survey and, not surprisingly, a large number of respondents reiterated this in the open-ended questions. As one person put it, and others implied or said in other words, “My experience is that males and females typically have normal conversations that include showing affection and friendship such as hugs, handshakes, laughing, touching, smiling... in other

words, normal human interaction.” Indeed, the point is not whether people are socially comfortable with each other and engage in these acts of friendship and comradeship, but whether there are colleagues whose behavior is threatening, demeaning, or presumptuous and regardless of the perceptions and feelings of others, especially (but not only) systematically on the basis of gender.

At least 23 respondents – most of them men – explained that they had not experienced any of these things but that they witnessed or heard from female graduate students and colleagues about experiences they had had. One respondent memorably put it:

I'm a straight, white, Christian male, who leans conservative on social issues and even I know the conference is a breeding ground for older men to behave inappropriately toward women, particularly younger women-grad students (sometimes their own students), postdocs, young professors. I have not seen much touching, but I have witnessed leering, sexist jokes made in the presence of women, inappropriate and gross comments about a woman's appearance (in at least 2 cases this comment was made directly to or in front of the woman in question).

People who themselves have not been subject to demeaning or harassing behavior differ in the degree to which they might be in the kind of situations where they might witness it. Also, people are differently able to see instances when it is happening, for example, when only some people in a group are aware that a situation has made the only woman present uncomfortable. It is plausible that while some faculty advisors engender a comfort level in their female graduate students that leads students to feel comfortable seeking advice and help from them after an incident of harassment, others will remain less unaware because their students are less likely to approach them with this topic.

Some men reported on inappropriate behavior toward women that occurs out of the earshot of the particular woman concerned, for example: “Was present as a male professor inappropriately engaged a female graduate student. After she left, professor made sexually suggestive comments about following her up to her room. Was shocked.” As we have seen, a few respondents said they had not experienced harassment, had not witnessed it, and thought it was a non-issue or merely a politicized concept.

Examples of harassment

Many women and some men offered examples that help us understand the experiences to which the close-ended responses referred. In the vast majority of cases pronouns indicate that incidents of harassment were heterosexual, although some reported same-sex incidents. The examples – some hundred or so of them – fall into 5 general categories: (1) General disrespect, including being ignored or otherwise demeaned in ways that are not explicitly sexual; (2) Referencing their gender, sexuality, or bodies in non-professional ways; (3) Persistent or otherwise inappropriate romantic or sexual overtures; (4) Discriminatory statements or attacks on one's gender or sexuality; (5) Harassing, demeaning, or discriminatory behavior based on categories other than gender; especially, race and prestige.

(1) General disrespect, including being ignored or otherwise demeaned in ways that are not explicitly sexual

The most common complaint by women is that they find themselves ignored, dismissed, or not taken seriously at the meetings. Examples include noting when men on panels are introduced or referred to by their titles, while women are introduced or addressed using their first name. Often

the feeling is a general sense of disrespect; as one person said, "The sexism I have experienced is generally more subtle, such as being ignored or talked over in group conversations." Another reported, "It's just a feeling in the room. Like when a man repeats exactly what I just said as if it were his own idea." In some cases the dismissiveness explicitly concerns expertise:

I had a very senior male professor make a comment about what could a "girl" like me know about the topic. That's really something since I was [in my 40s] at the time, and plenty knowledgeable about the topic. That bothers me more than the time a colleague was hitting on me.

I frequently encounter "mansplaining." In fact, last year I had someone mansplain my own paper to me. To a man (I was standing between them). I am senior to both, so it was pretty surprising. But I've learned to handle these situations.

Some women use a more traditional definition of sexual harassment, but describe their own experiences of gender harassment: "I haven't personally felt this to be a problem. Condescension from male to female colleagues, sure. But sexually harassing behavior? No."

(2) Referencing their gender, sexuality, or bodies in non-professional ways

Women gave a variety of examples of how this happens both through physical and verbal behavior. With regard to physical behavior, one woman reported,

At the annual meeting two years ago, I felt so ogled and stared at older male attendees for wearing a dress instead of a pantsuit one morning that I went all the way back to my hotel room to change because I was made to feel so uncomfortable for wearing a professional dress. It was distressing, upsetting, inconvenient and disappointing.

Many women reported on comments they found inappropriate:

My attire and physique was commented on by an older male academic after a panel on which I was a presenter.

I was visiting the exhibition booths and decided to stop and talk to one of the publishers. Before I could get out my name and institution, the publisher stopped me, looked me up and down, and asked the friend he was sitting with, "Did professors look like that when you were in school?" Needless to say, I will not be considering that press for publication of my book manuscript. I wish publishers and other attendees understood that making comments like that not only makes the recipients of them incredibly uncomfortable, but can also hurt their own interests--whether acquiring a book manuscript or, as a political scientist, a larger audience for one's ideas.

A few women referenced the annoyance of having men "staring at our chests when they're talking to us."

One respondent offered an example of how such inappropriate gender-referencing can frame apparently professional interactions.

I got my first job by doing interviews at the APSA meeting back in the late 1980s. I cannot tell you how many times I was asked if I could teach a course on women even though nothing on

my cv indicates that I'm trained in that field. It was so insulting that I started cutting interviews short if that question was asked.

Indeed there is no reason to ask women to teach women and politics, or African Americans to teach race politics, or gay people to teach sexual politics if nothing in their cv suggests they are trained, expert, or professionally interested in that field of inquiry.

(3) Persistent or otherwise inappropriate romantic or sexual overtures

Institutional sexual harassment policies explicitly warn staff and faculty about initiating sexual or romantic relationships across status and supervisory lines, but we wonder whether some colleagues think that at professional meetings away from home they don't need to attend to these norms. The responses to the open-ended questions offered examples:

I am personally aware of an incident that happened at [a recent APSA meeting] in which a senior male professor ... sexually harassed a female PhD student. The professor suggested [to] the student they should talk to about her research "after hours," which involved leaving the conference hotel at night with him for a drink and then walking outside together (alone), and finally him making an unwanted advance on her. All of this was done under the ostensible premise of providing feedback on the student's paper and helping her prep for the job market.... Not only did this situation put the student in a compromised position, but it also traps her in that her refusing the advancements of someone who is very senior and likely to be influential in recommending her candidacy (let alone sit on a search committee) may result in him actively damaging her career prospects.

Another individual made it a point to seek me out at every possible opportunity to comment at length on my looks, even if it is complimentary. This was done even in the presence of others who were shocked and put off. Perhaps--though this is a really long shot--that it is inappropriate to constantly comment about a person's look. This was done every single day of the conference, more than once. It got to be so bad that I would walk away when I saw him approaching. He also made a note to let me know that he was on the editorial board of journals to make me aware of his senior status.

Both instances occurred at receptions and involved overly-aggressive male attendees who made persistent sexual advances, despite being told no. On the scariest occasion, one man followed me back to my hotel room.

On several occasions, I have experienced mostly male colleagues treat the Annual Meeting (and other PS conferences) like their personal playground and the women who attend it -- including graduate students -- as their weekend dating pool. A prominent scholar in the discipline, for example, texted a grad student in the department where he was on faculty and told her to bring her "hot friends" to the bar he was at. A very senior and very prominent scholar gets drunk at every conference and leans all over and fondles women, touches their hair, etc.

Although our survey asked only about unwanted overtures that persisted despite being rejected, making sexual or romantic overtures in a business setting can interfere with professional relations, which is all the more serious if it is in the context of unequal professional status:

A senior scholar made physical sexual advances after walking me back to my hotel after a group dinner. I declined. It was not made explicit that I would face professional penalization for declining, but our working relationship has not been the same since.

Later, with the same group, one of the professors tried to grab my hand and told me that I was very beautiful. I had known this professor from a couple of years ago at a recruitment fair and I felt incredibly uncomfortable that someone that I considered only in a professional capacity quickly tried to cross that line and felt he could grab me without my consent.

Our data suggest that young women are especially subject to this experience. As one wrote,

I'm not comfortable talking about specific instances, but I will say that being a young woman scholar at APSA is often exhausting. The harassment is nearly constant, from men who stare at your chest rather than your eyes while you're speaking to explicit propositioning after a few drinks at a reception, with the strong implication that saying "yes" will lead to career opportunities.

Socializing in between meetings is when this happens. Nearly all the female students in my department had some sort of similar experience.

Professional political scientists are not the only people at the meetings who are implicated in the dynamics of sexual and gender harassment. Two book exhibitors who responded to the survey discussed the discomfort of being "trapped" in their booths, having to be polite to potential consumers or authors, but suffering inappropriate and persistent attention. As one put it, "I get the impression that there are some people who believe that women who work in the exhibition room are 'open for business.' There have been times I was more or less trapped in my booth (which I basically cannot leave) by someone who insisted on talking me up."

(4) Discriminatory statements or attacks on one's gender or sexuality

A few men said that they experienced explicit discrimination on the basis of their gender, often in combination with their race or ideology. For example, one wrote,

As a white male, I have repeatedly been told in no uncertain terms that I am innately dangerous to others, especially women. I have been specifically told that I am, by nature of my race and gender, a rapist who is only held in check by the threat of physical violence by the state. I have been repeatedly told that, while I personally have not done anything to contribute to this, nor have I acted in any way inappropriately, my mere existence is a de facto threat to others different from myself. This attitude appears to pervade the discipline. While white males have disproportionately dominated the discipline and action must be taken to open it up to other groups, open, officially sanctioned, hostility towards white males only hardens the divides within the discipline.

Numerous panels and private discussions have belittled white males and portrayed them as inherently inferior, by nature oppressive, and determined to do ill to all others. The vitriol, the smugness, and the assumed status of victimhood made me extremely uncomfortable, as did the clear looks of disapproval, the open hostility to my point of view, and the determination to see to it that my arguments would not be heard. This hostile atmosphere is pervasive at APSA events.

It is a bit frustrating and oppressive to see APSA privilege the suffering of those who are neither white nor male. APSA could be more inclusive and welcoming by not being so discriminating.

(5) Harassing, demeaning, or discriminatory behavior based on categories other than gender; especially, race and prestige.

Although this survey was framed as a study of sexual harassment, a few respondents took the opportunity to point to other bases for discrimination and harassment, and gave examples. In a few cases, colleagues believe that there is a strong political bias, especially toward the left, which impedes scholarly discourse or excludes particular individuals:

Most folks are very professional. However, each panel has one or two individuals that are so politically biased (usually left of center) that they are unprofessional or one cannot take their paper serious.

Others pointed to instances of race bias or homophobia:

I have been in a number of situations where colleagues made misogynistic and homophobic comments. The latter stand out in particular, since those colleagues assumed I was heterosexual.

Other responses underscored the specific impact of being an African American woman at the conference; some colleagues reported that hotel security where the conference was being held accused some African American women colleagues of being prostitutes. As one respondent said, "Coaching hotel security to not question the presence of black women in business suits during the convention would be a long way towards making the conference more inclusive to them." Others reported on a lack of respect they encounter from colleagues who are dismissive of people who study gender or sexuality and politics.

Some respondents complained about a status system in which the prestige of one's institution, or personal prestige determines how people are treated, what some people called the "nametag effect."

Causes of and Solutions to Harassment and Demeaning Behavior

Most respondents merely described incidents they experienced or witnessed and did not speculate on the reasons why people engage in these behaviors toward colleagues at political science meetings. Others suggested reasons for such behavior, often perceiving the problem as a generational issue and cultural lag. Of course, the data do not give us no clue as to the age distribution of the people who actually engage in this behavior. Others define it simply as ignorance and lack of awareness. For example,

Some men in the profession may not be aware that being in a position of power and making advances puts untenured women in an uncomfortable situation where while they still say no, they can't say so as strongly or with as much emphasis as they would outside of a professional context. Making men aware of this could be helpful.

I think many men do not realize what harassment entails, and often think they are engaging in harmless joking around.

I think my experiences are to some extent generational and to some extent about heteronormativity rather than sexism or misogyny simply. Generationally, I would just say that older and most established male scholars are unused to working with women and, in particular, younger women and, in particular, women of color and, in particular, queer women and they just say the damndest things. They're unaware of it, of course, but that's at least part of the problem.

For women who encounter these situations, it can be a disheartening recognition of some of the roadblocks not just to women's professional success, but their ability to enjoy professional settings in ordinary ways:

Though I did say that I had experienced unwanted sexual advances, I don't think it rose to the level of sexual harassment but rather was more of a misunderstanding. It certainly wasn't anything that merited a formal complaint. Nonetheless, it's quite disheartening to realize that while *I* thought I was successfully networking, the person I saw as a new professional contact did not see me primarily as a fellow scholar but rather as a potential hookup.

In response to the question of whether there is anything that can be done to make the meetings more inclusive and welcoming, many respondents said that it is important to broadcast the [APSA anti-harassment policy](#) more widely. Many also called for clear means for reporting violators of the policy, and for investigation and enforcement, an issue tackled by an APSA special committee in 2017.

Others were less sure there is a solution. As one person responded, "No. I don't think the people I've seen engage in this behavior is aware of or would be willing to acknowledge it as problematic. And I imagine any 'education' around it would fall on deaf ears, and that these people would assume the problem was someone else."

Some men and women wondered whether they could do more to alleviate the problem by intervening more as bystanders. Some said they weren't sure what they should do.

I observed a tenured professor speak to and touch a female graduate student in an extremely inappropriate fashion at an APSA dinner. It was extremely uncomfortable, and it was unclear whether I should intervene.

I witnessed a senior scholar make unwanted sexual advances toward a female junior scholar, she rebuffed him eventually was able to leave, and I later confronted him about it, but didn't know what to do after that. The senior scholar is on the younger woman's dissertation committee. Socializing outside the meeting is really important for developing your network, but it can really put young female scholars in very powerless and uncomfortable positions. How should we act as young women? What do we do as bystanders?

One respondent's suggestion for future action is "bystander education," a type of training that has become increasingly common on college campuses across the country to help people who might otherwise be unsure of whether they should do anything and if so, what they should do if they witness a case of harassment or discrimination.

One respondent showed what difference a bystander can make. A young woman reported,

What I experienced is a "normal" act of micro-aggression of being spoken down to, as though I were still a graduate student. A male member of the audience came up to me and asked whether he had just witnessed an act of sexism, calling my attention to how I had been dismissed and lectured to, as though a student. Of course I had noticed this myself, but I felt affirmed in having a senior male colleague corroborate this. The panel member in question is very senior and famous, and this incident is typical of what I have experienced throughout my career. I wish more attention would be drawn to this so that possible more male colleagues would exhibit the awareness that I experienced after this panel concluded.

Although it should not be necessary for women to receive corroboration from men to deal with these challenges, when men speak up about witnessing harassment, the alliance against demeaning behavior is very helpful, especially for younger colleagues who see harassment as an added burden to the normal issues of making one's way in the profession. Many campuses are now offering bystander education and workshops, to help people think about ways they can make a difference when they witness harassment.

A persistent theme in the open-ended responses concerned the negative impacts of the gender imbalance of participation in the meetings and on panels, and the importance of addressing that imbalance. Women discussed the challenges posed by being the only woman on a panel, a point underscored by research on the impact of a group's gender balance on communication and behavior within the group (For a review and further research, see Karpowitz and Mendelberg 2014.) Recent analysis of survey data in three different employment domains -- academia, the court system, and the military -- concludes that underrepresentation of women does not affect the likelihood that they will experience sexual advance types of harassment, but it does increase gender harassment (Kabat-Farr and Cortina 2014). The same study found that underrepresentation of men did not affect the likelihood of their experiencing either type of harassment. Consider this comment from the APSA survey:

I was the only woman on a panel of very distinguished men and the chair, a former APSA President, made a disparaging remark about my research and its relevance. As a junior professor, I was mortified and intimidated.

We cannot know from this comment whether there was any gender-based motivation or manifest content to the reaction to this colleague's paper. But research suggests that being the only woman on such a panel, and being junior at that, is very likely to lead to the reaction this colleague had. Other respondents similarly referenced the impact of small numbers of women, especially of being the only woman in a setting:

When one is the only woman in the room, it seems like it's pretty easy to be overlooked or to have one's contributions (if one can get a word in) discounted. When I co-author with men, my co-author tends to be pulled into post-panel conversations to which I serve as an attentive audience. To be fair, I feel more marginalized than harassed.

I have had experiences where I was the only woman in the room and the men felt it was appropriate to discuss female students and other women in sexually suggestive ways or commenting on their looks.

Of course problems can arise from "misunderstandings" over the nature of a social interaction, but some misunderstandings can derive from gender-based assumptions about what it means when women act in a proactively friendly way toward men:

I think that "conference culture" in general can be more complicated for women to negotiate. Most of us are trying to be polite (especially junior scholars and those on the job market), but this politeness sometimes seems to be an open invitation for male colleagues to assume that we're interested or that a smile is some kind of a come-on. This is an especially problematic dynamic when it comes to networking with strangers: on more than one occasion, I have sought to engage a man in a professional conversation, only to have him assume that I was trying to hit on him. Weird, right? Would a man assume that another man at the conference was trying to hit on him? I remember waiting in a very long line to get coffee ... and having what I thought was a pleasant, professional conversation with the man standing next to me. Later that night, I found numerous phone messages in my hotel room from him, inviting me for a drink. Apparently, he had simply seen my name on my name-tag and called the conference hotel to leave a message. There's nothing "wrong" with this on its face; it's just creepy. I very frequently get the signal at APSA that men can easily initiate networking with men and with women, but that when women try to network with men, it gets misinterpreted.

A couple of men indicated that they had experiences of women who used their sexuality for professional advancement. As one said,

As a quite successful man with lots of "informal power" in the profession I have many times been approached by younger un-tenured female colleagues (and also by female PhD students) at APSA meetings with not so subtle invitations to intimate encounters. After a number of such experiences, it became very obvious to me that what was interested in was not me but the emotional and professional support (advice, access to networks, etc etc) I could give them for advancing their careers. Every time, this had ended badly and with lots of sadness, both for me and for them.

In other cases, men report on the problem of women's intentions being misinterpreted:

I was out with some of my colleagues, one of whom is female and who brought along a more senior man. He wrongly made assumptions about my friend's intentions, leading to an increasingly awkward situation as we sat at dinner. She didn't feel comfortable confronting him because he is more senior and is someone she felt that she needed to impress.

In this case it is not just the women who feel uncomfortable and awkward, but the male observer as well.

Sometimes one kind of power seems to get translated to another:

When I sat down to speak with a professor whose work I admired, he said that the only reason I was interested in speaking with him was because "[he's] a professor at [Ivy League] university" and he suggested that I come up to his room. Later, I received an email from him (I had previously corresponded with said professor inquiring about the political science department at this university), implying that he would like to "continue having a conversation with me."

One especially worrying situation that some responses underscored is the discomfort women experience when senior faculty use their hotel room to interview candidates for jobs, and suggest that people should be counseled against this. The reasons should be obvious.

7. Conclusions

The results of this survey gives us little reason for either extraordinary alarm or celebration about the presence of harassment at American Political Science Association annual meetings. The majority of respondents had not experienced or witnessed instances of harassment or demeaning behavior as we enumerated them. But a large number of colleagues, and an especially large number of women have had unfortunate experiences.

There is no acceptable amount of sexual harassment other than none. That 128 of our colleagues reported experiencing unwanted sexual advances despite rejecting them, threats or bribes, or inappropriate touching in just the past four years in what is, after all, a professional setting, says we must give careful thought both about how to reduce and eliminate that number and also how to support those colleagues who have had these experiences. The multivariate analysis shows that two things – gender and how often one goes to meetings – are predictors of these forms of harassment. No woman should learn the lesson that not attending the Annual Meeting is an effective means of avoiding harassment.

That such a large number of our colleagues – 30% of women who responded to the survey – have encountered situations in which by language or nonverbal behavior colleagues in this professional setting have made sexist comments or called inappropriate attention to their gender, sexuality, or bodies in what is, after all, a professional setting, also warrants careful thought to how to reduce that number and also how to support those colleagues who have had these experiences. For some women it is just part of the atmosphere, rather than some specific event:

I don't have a particular event in mind but I cannot in good conscience say that I have not heard sexist remarks at APSA because they are so ubiquitous. Let me put this another way: I would not be surprised in the least to hear at least some sexist remark while in the company of men at a professional meeting.

Our youngest colleagues, women, and those who attend meetings more regularly are more likely to have these experiences. Some older women reflected that these things used to happen to them when they were younger, but don't any more. Harassment should not be a hazing experience for our newest colleagues.

We are struck by the very large number of colleagues of both sexes who have had occasion to feel put down or experience condescension by others. This suggests a broader issue about professional communication needs attention. The Twitterverse of political scientists often jokes about "Reviewer #2," the one who seems to regard professional reviewing as self-inflating combat. No doubt Reviewer #2 participates in APSA Annual Meetings and wreaks emotional havoc there, too. As one respondent put it, perhaps only partly jokingly. "It's an academic conference. People are condescending towards me ALL THE TIME. I thought that was the POINT of academic conferences." Or, as one man put it: "Asking if someone at APSA was ever condescending to me is like asking if the sky is blue."

Perhaps session chairs and other bystanders can assist with encouraging a more civil and productive – even if rigorous and intellectually sharp – tone.

It can be difficult to distinguish put downs and condescension that are gender-based (or based on any other specific demographic category) and those that are not. As one respondent said,

This is an interesting exercise because even though I cannot recall a specific incident and I answered 'no' to the questions, I think it is possible that I may not notice/care/report to others some of these issues. I have talked to other APSA attendees who would have classified some of the behavior directed at me as harassing (e.g. unwanted hug) while I tend to be somewhat oblivious (so a friend would point out that something like this happened to me in their presence and was inappropriate and I would only then realize it).

But in the context of the great gender imbalance that remains in our senior ranks, in many parts of our profession, and that still describes many conference panels, women have good reason to suspect they have been subjected to gender-based belittling even when gender is not explicitly referenced, because research indicates that gender balance helps determine how women are treated. Moreover, when women are a minority, and experience other forms of behavior that reference their gender and sexuality in inappropriate settings, they are likely to experience the condescension as gender-related.

One of the most prominent recent efforts to highlight women's contributions to our discipline and to encourage people to pay attention to and use their work is #womenalsoknowstuff, which lists on its website (<http://womenalsoknowstuff.com/>) well over 1,000 women experts in political science and provides details people can use to learn more about their work, cite them, and include their work in syllabi. Its active Twitter presence as @womenalsoknow, helped to spawn @pocalsoknow and @womenknowhistory.

People who perpetrate sexual and gender harassment can be unaware of the implications and impacts of their actions. The fact that women receive more disruptive questioning in finalist job talks (Blair-Loy, et al. 2017) is not likely noticed by those doing the questioning; they probably see themselves as asking particular individuals appropriate questions. Young women who have the uncomfortable – but common -- experience of men “talking to their chests” rather than to their faces tend to understand that the men who are doing this are probably unaware that they are doing it, or that the women see where their eyes are pointed. People who tell sexist jokes just think they are funny, and don't understand that, especially when women are a small minority of those present, these jokes can make them very uncomfortable. Sometimes they think making women uncomfortable and watching them blush is also funny, and they make further jokes that are clearly personally directed at embarrassing the woman in question.

Many women are very conscious of the fact that, historically speaking, they have only recently been welcomed into the discipline, and that their minority status highlights the “unusual” fact of their gender in some circles. For women who use the annual meetings as a time to focus on scholarship, make professional contacts, and even spend time with professional friends, this makes unwanted romantic or sexual approaches especially distracting, frustrating, or even hurtful, and speak together about strategies and tactics for avoiding such experiences. These tactics sometimes involve segregating themselves away from certain regular professional or social occasions of the meeting, which demonstrates again the negative professional impact of a climate in which women may expect to be subject to sexual or gender harassment.

We have only investigated sexual and gender harassment in the collective life of political scientists at the Annual Meetings of the APSA. We have not investigated any of the regional meetings

or other related meetings such as the International Studies Association or other international political science meetings. We are not surprised that some respondents commented that they didn't find the situation any worse at APSA than they did at other conference meetings. We have no reason to suspect there are many systematic differences, especially controlling for gender imbalance at the meetings.

Political science is not alone, as recent news has made clear. A recent widely-circulated paper did a linguistic analysis of the Economics Job Market Rumors website, and found telling and disturbing differences in the words used to describe and refer to women and men (Wu 2017). Men and women alike have commented on the demeaning qualities of the Political Science Job Rumor website, and the recent invention of #PSMinfo is intended in part to provide a better source of information.

It is not surprising that the cultural change in the profession has left some colleagues uncomfortable with those changes. Some are left uncertain about how to interact in normal, social, and professional ways with women. Some feel personally attacked and demeaned by discussions such as these. Others fear being hurt by policies against sexual harassment. Some expressed a view that discussing these issues, or creating policies about harassment actually makes it more difficult to engage in appropriate professional relations:

The policies about "harassment" make it difficult to behave in a normal friendly way and actually create a hostile environment that makes me want to avoid ever talking to someone of the opposite sex for fear that I will be accused of inappropriate behavior. What is inappropriate is interposing APSA rules between men and women who simply want to meet and converse socially.

Stop making it impossible for people to have normal male-female interaction without having to worry if casual conversation constitutes "harassment."

For some respondents, the solution is not policies, or even efforts to change men's behavior, but women developing the right skills to handle problems they encounter.

We know of no evidence suggesting that such policies have a negative impact on work quality, professional opportunity, or social or professional relations in the workplace. In contrast, there is considerable evidence that sexual and gender harassment have negative impacts. Nevertheless, change requires listening across the discipline.

Our reading of the surveys and of the open-ended responses suggests that most women, at least those who responded and said they have experienced sexual or gender harassment, just want to be treated like professional colleagues. As one respondent said, "Basic etiquette should prevent bad behavior." But given that it doesn't in a significant minority of cases, the new APSA policies and the presence of Ombuds at our meetings aim to support an atmosphere at our annual meetings where all should expect to be treated in appropriate professional ways.

With the national even international explosion of public conversation since the powerful film producer Harvey Weinstein was publicly accused of egregious harassment in early October, 2017, it is likely that many people who were either unaware of or dubious about the extent and seriousness of sexual harassment are now more aware and more understanding. It certainly seems to be the case that where most women used to remain silent in the face of harassment, many more now feel strengthened to speak out. The APSA Sexual Harassment Survey was launched long before these

events hit the news because we care about the climate in which our members come together to share their work, learn from each other, and advance our profession. The next step is to review the findings to determine what actions, if any, should follow.

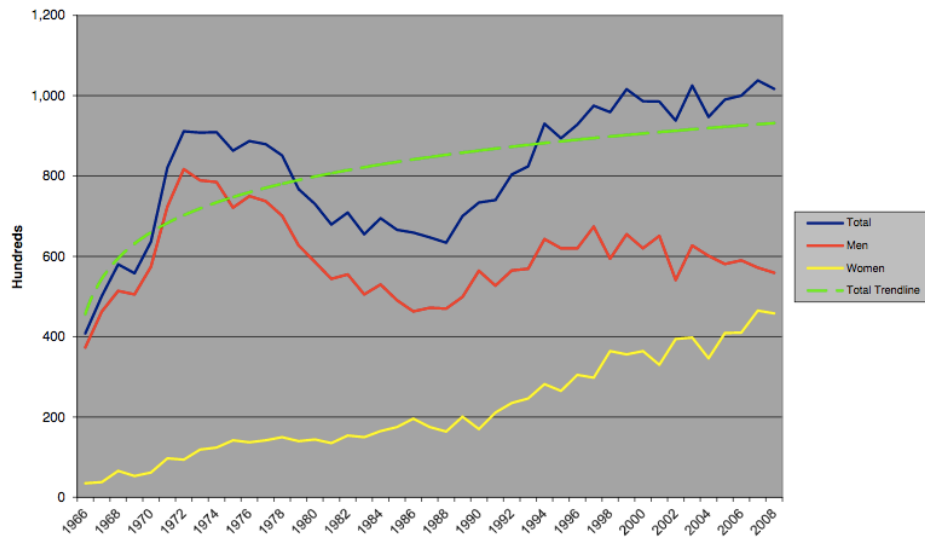
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Figure 1

Doctorates Awarded in Political Science, 1966-2008

Source: National Science Foundation, *Science and Engineering Degrees*



Source: APSA website: <http://bit.ly/2CaS6ju>

Table 1

APSA Harassment Survey Demographics				
Category	Number	Percentage*	APSA Records	2015 Survey of APSA Members
Gender				
Male	1,322	51.9%	55.7%	
Female	1,182	46.4%	30.8%	
Other	12	0.47%		
Prefer not to answer	30	1.20%	13.0%	
Race & Ethnicity				
Black, Afro-Caribbean, African American	56	2.1%	3.3%	
Latino or Hispanic American	130	4.9%	3.8%	
Native American or Alaskan Native	10	0.4%	0.2%	
East Asian or Asian American	113	4.2%	3.7%	
Pacific Islander	4	0.2%	n/a	
South Asian or Indian American	35	1.3%	0.9%	
Middle Eastern or Arab American	48	1.8%	0.6%	
Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American	1,964	73.7%	52.0%	
Other	131	4.9%	3.4%	
Prefer Not to Disclose	139	5.2%	32.1%	
Year of Ph.D. Granted				
>2010	714	38.8%		
2000-2009	579	31.5%		
1990-1999	298	16.2%		
1980-1989	143	7.8%		
<1980	104	5.7%		
Occupation				
Undergraduate Student	4	0.3%		
Graduate Student	418	16.3%		16.7%
Untenured Professor	565	22.1%		24.7%
Tenured Professor	1,171	45.8%		48.9%
Post-doctoral Researcher	167	6.5%		
Non-tenure track instructor or administrator	72	2.8%		
Independent Scholar	53	2.1%		
Journalist	1	<1.0%		
Conference Exhibitor	26	1.0%		
Other	80	3.1%		
Annual Meeting Attendance, prev. 4 yrs				
Never	18	0.7%		
Once	682	26.2%		
Couple of times	1,193	45.8%		
Every year	711	27.3%		
*APSA has multiple sources of data, described in the original report				
*percentages do not add to 100% because respondents could select more than one category				

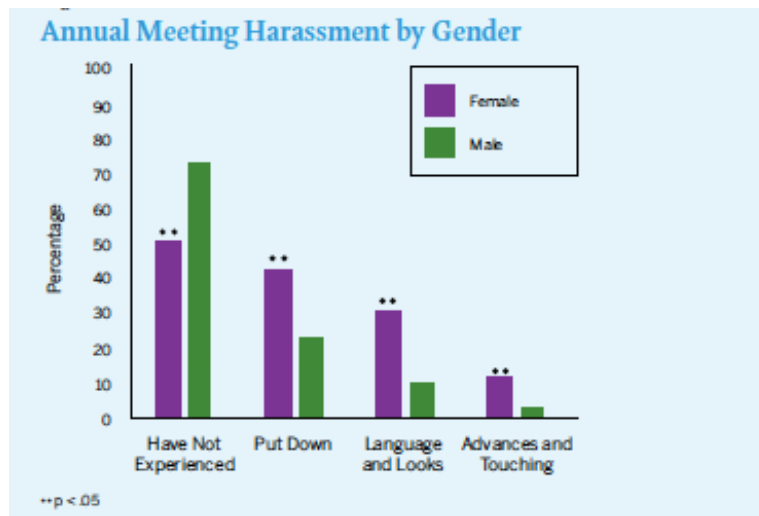
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Table 2
APSA Harassment Survey: Topline Results

Category	At All (#)	Once (#)	More than Once (#)
Put Downs	31.7% (789)	15.1% (376)	16.6% (413)
Sexist Remarks	14.7% (364)	6.7% (166)	8.0% (198)
Ogled	10.9% (272)	4.8% (119)	6.1% (153)
Offensive Material	1.5% (36)	.8% (19)	.7% (17)
Unwanted relationship	4.4% (108)	2.8% (69)	1.6% (39)
Bribe or reward	1.7% (44)	.9% (23)	.8% (21)
Retaliation	1.1% (29)	.4% (11)	.7% (18)
Touched	4.6% (115)	2.9% (72)	1.7% (43)

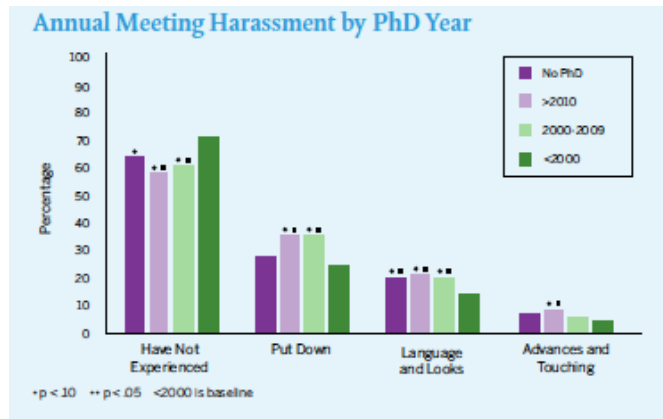
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Figure 2



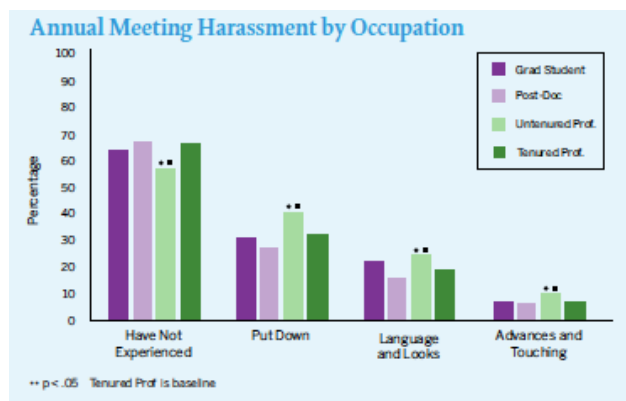
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Figure 3



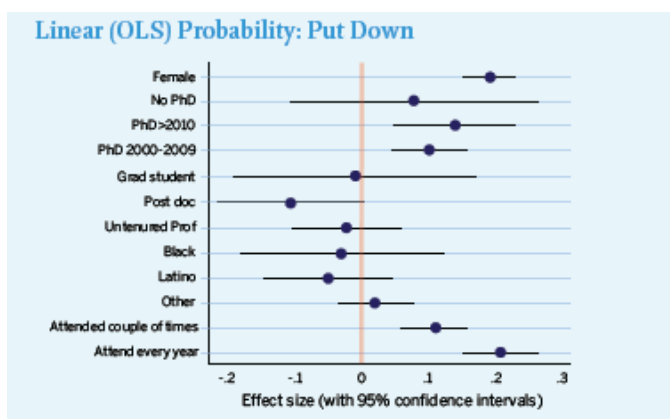
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Figure 4



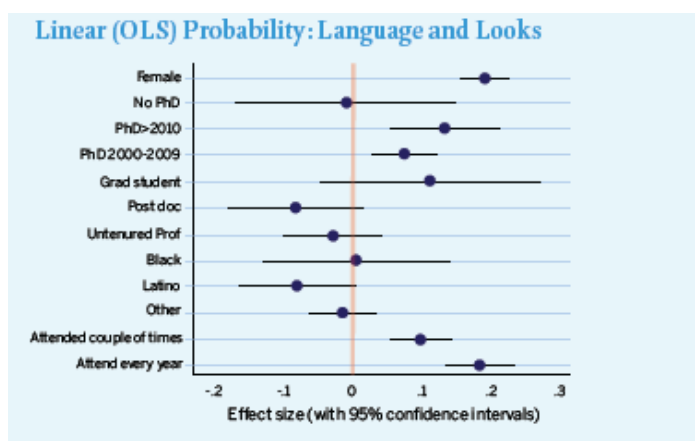
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Table 3



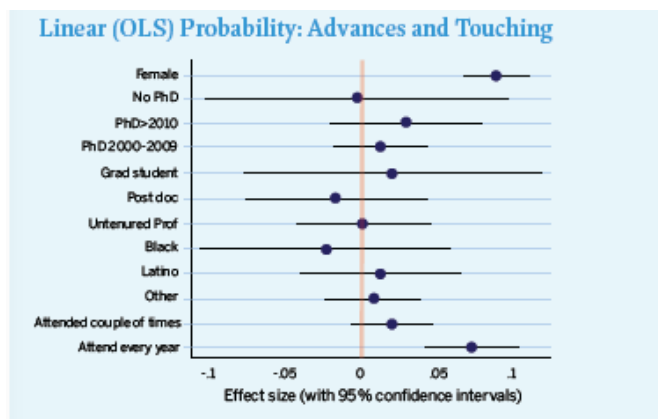
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Table 4



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Table 5



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APPENDIX I



Dear Colleague,

You will shortly receive an invitation to participate in a survey about experiences with sexual harassment at APSA annual meetings. The American Political Science Association (APSA) needs your help to make sure that APSA Annual Meetings offer the best possible working climate for all participants. To this end, in 2016 APSA approved a new policy reminding colleagues of appropriate standards of behavior at APSA meetings related to sexual and other forms of harassment. **You can access that policy [here](#).**

Our next step is to survey all current APSA members to find out the degree to which participants in recent Annual Meetings have experienced harassment so that we can address any systematic problems that might exist. We are focusing on experiences at the past four Annual APSA meetings, 2013–2016. The survey focuses only on the APSA Annual Meeting, not any other APSA or regional meetings. The survey encompasses all events and experiences related to members' presence at the Annual Meeting.

We urge you to complete this survey if you attended any Annual APSA meeting from 2013–2016. We understand that the topic of this survey – sexual harassment and unwanted sexual advances – may be upsetting. We nonetheless hope that you will participate in order to help the APSA determine what the Association might further do to address the issue of sexual harassment and unwanted sexual advances at our annual meetings. All responses are anonymous and therefore completely confidential.

This survey was designed by political scientists under the auspices of the Committee on Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms and was approved by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subject Research of Haverford College. If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact the Committee on Professional Ethics, Rights, and Freedoms at ethics@apsanet.org.

Sincerely,

Virginia Sapiro, *Chair*
APSA Committee on Professional Ethics, Rights and Freedoms

David Campbell,
APSA Committee on Professional Ethics, Rights and Freedoms