

Workers, bosses guilty researchers say

Blue collar sexual harassment surveyed

United Press International
CEDAR FALLS, Iowa — In one of the first studies of sexual harassment in the blue collar workplace, Iowa researchers have discovered that co-workers are just as guilty of harassment as their bosses.

Donald E. Maypole, of the University of Iowa's social work department, said a study of union workers in Cedar Falls-Waterloo area factories showed 23 percent of the men and women have experienced job-related sexual harassment.

The random sample survey indicated 36 percent of the 243 women surveyed have been harassed on the job. Eight percent of the 1,561 men reported being victimized.

Rosemarie Skaine, who conducted the survey with Maypole in the summer of 1980, said previous polls have been incorrect in attributing all sexual harassment to male supervisors.

"We found that sexual harassment was perpetrated by co-workers in addition to supervisors," she said. "Our findings were validated by a recent study by the federal Merit System Protection Board.

"Co-workers' power may come from influence with the boss or with the other men. If the woman is in a position of less power, this is more likely to happen.

"And, since the workplace is male-dominated — both in numbers and job position — women are frequently found in positions with little power to protect themselves from bosses or co-workers."

The researchers said their figures for the number of people being sexually harassed are considerably lower than other surveys.

"We found our incident rate was lower than every survey except for the Merit Protection Board," Skaine said. "We think the reason for this is because we did it scientifically, using a random sample. We feel ours is more valid."

Skaine said sexual harassment was defined in the study as "any kind of behavior that was unwanted sexual behavior directed at a person, that causes a person discomfort and could include rape or attempted rape.

"The most blatant form is when you ask for sexual favor in return for other favors," she said. "It could be squeezing or pinching or dirty jokes. Or it could be subtle things such as staring.

"We found that both men and women felt verbal abuse, like dirty jokes, was the most common form. With women, the next thing was unwanted touching. But the men didn't report that."

Male workers agreed with their female counterparts that it is a form of rape when bosses use their authority to force someone into unwanted sex. But the men disagreed that sexual harass-

ment was traumatic. "Not only did they think it wasn't upsetting to themselves," Skaine said, "they also didn't feel it should be upsetting to women."

The sexes also disagreed on motives. Female workers said harassment was a way for men to use

their power to control women's behavior, especially sexual behavior. Men, however, felt harassment was purely for sexual gratification.

The study recommended industry management take preventive steps to curtail sexual harassment. "They can institute a policy

within their company that they do not allow sexual harassment," Skaine said.

"If you can get the employing body to enact a policy, a person who is harassed can go through the channels and get some re-course."

Beyond that, she suggested employers educate their work-

ers about their rights concerning sexual harassment.

She said their study showed few people were familiar with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits sexual harassment in firms with 15 or more workers.

Maypole said all the survey respondents were union members

from large factories covered by Title VII.

He said the study was just the tip of the iceberg.

"There's a lot more research to be done in this area," he said, but added that they did not find instances of women harassing men because they didn't ask that question.

"Our understanding was that male harassment originates more from a homosexual nature than from women.

"But as women work their way up the power structure, I know of cases where that kind of thing can happen. Those in power tend to take advantage of people below them."

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Complaint cites tree producers

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The nation's largest producers of artificial Christmas trees have been accused of violating an antitrust settlement with the government.

The Justice Department filed a civil contempt action Monday in U.S. District Court in Harrisburg, Pa., against American Technical Industries Inc. of Pittsburgh, a producer of artificial trees, and its corporate parent, Papercraft Corp. of Pittsburgh; and Marathon Manufacturing Co. of Houston and its corporate parent, Penn Central Corp. of New York.

The complaint also named as defendants Joseph M. Katz and his son, Marshall, both of Pittsburgh. The elder Katz is chairman of both ATI and Papercraft; his son is president of both operations.

In its complaint, the government asked the federal court to hold the companies in civil contempt and to set aside a sales agreement that called for ATI-Papercraft to acquire the artificial tree assets of Marathon's Carey-McFall Division, which manufactures artificial Christmas trees.

The complaint also asks that ATI and Papercraft be prevented from using any competitive information they may have acquired during negotiations for the company.

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