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Implementing a Definition of Street Harassment at Gettysburg College

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Implementing a Definition of Street Harassment at Gettysburg College

Abstract

My project focuses on implementing a definition of street harassment at Gettysburg College. To do so, I plan to add the definition to the Student Code of Conduct through meetings with the Student Life Committee. In order to ensure my success in adding the definition, I will pass an opinion through the Student Senate and send out a survey through engageGettysburg to show support for the definition. By accomplishing this, I hope to make Gettysburg College a more inclusive, open, and safe environment for all students,

Keywords

Street Harassment, Harassment Prevention, Implementation of a Definition

Disciplines

Higher Education | Policy Design, Analysis, and Evaluation

Comments

This poster was created based on work completed for FYS 108-1: Change Agency and Activism, and presented as a part of the eighth annual CAFE Symposium on February 8, 2023.

Implementing a Definition of Street Harassment at Gettysburg College

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Introduction - The Issue

- College campuses have often been the breeding ground for various types of harassment.
- AAU reported that “...significant levels of sexual misconduct [are] on campus [of colleges]” and the “overall rate of nonconsensual sexual contact by physical force or inability to consent...was 13.0 percent”(Cantor et al., 2020).
- Issues of harassment occur based on race, religion, sexuality, and more (Anderson, 2016; Broderick & Fosnacht, 2018; O’Neil et al., 2022).
- Harassment has various negative issues on those harassed, such as an increase in fear and anxiety as well as self-objectification (Davidson 2016).
- Street harassment can be a prelude to more serious types of harassment such as the ones listed above.
- A report done by market research company GFK and published by the non-profit Stop Street Harassment found that 65% of women and 25% of men had experienced street harassment in the United States (Kearl, 2014).
- A report done by two Professors of Sociology and Criminology at the University of Nottingham found that 75% of those who experienced street harassment expressed that it had a long-term impact on them (Mullany & Trickett, 2018).



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My Proposal – A Definition of Street Harassment: “...group of abuses, harrings, and annoyances characteristic of public places and uniquely facilitated by communication in public”(Gardner, 1995).

Implementation in Washington DC

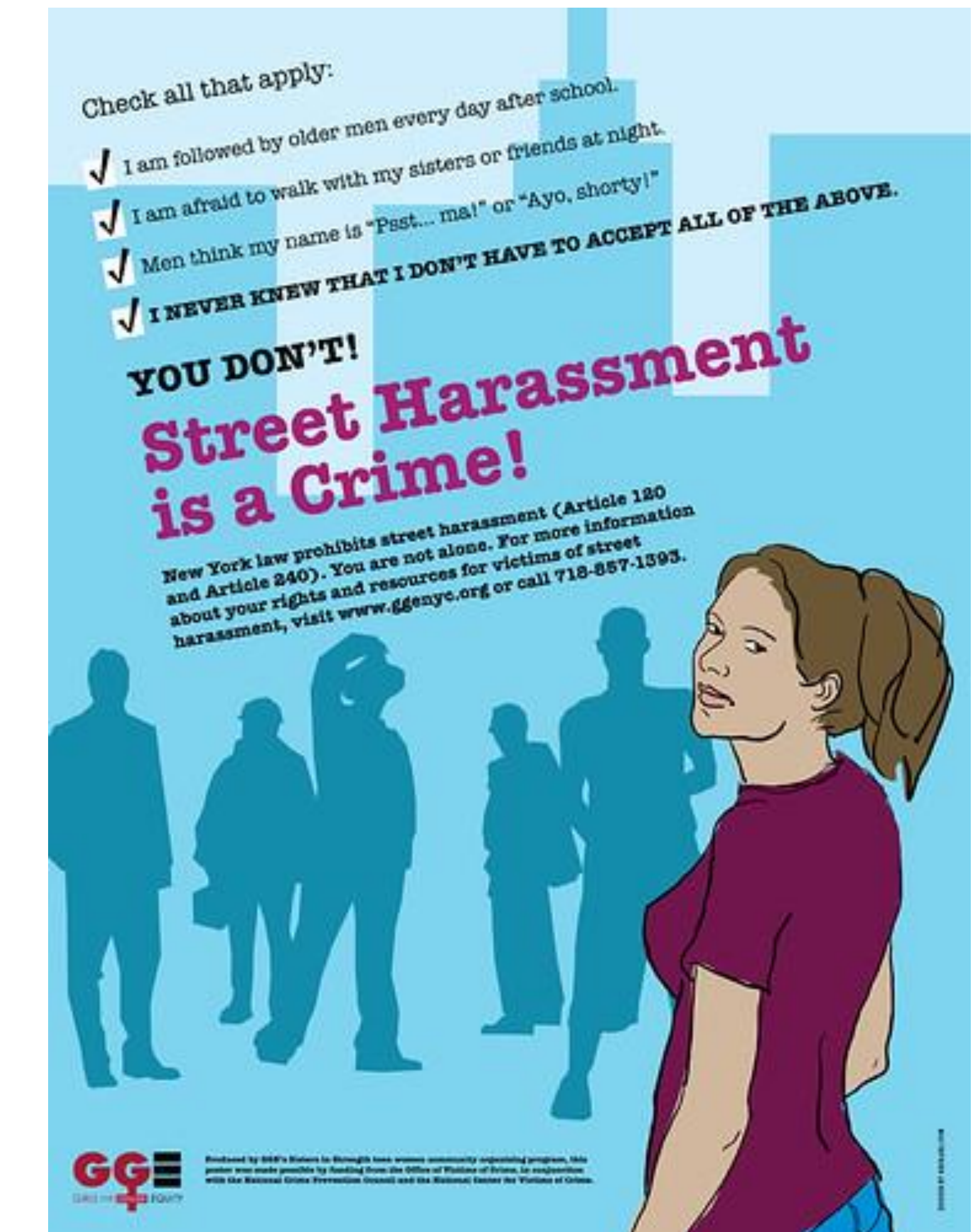
- Legislated the Street Harassment Prevention Act of 2018 (*Street Harassment*, n.d.)
- Put in more work to prevent street harassment, such as creating an Advisory Committee on Street Harassment and a public information campaign.
- The areas where street harassment most occurred were located, and increased efforts were put in place there to combat it.
- A report done by the Washington D.C. Office of Human Rights found that the **Street Harassment Prevention Act has made victims of street harassment feel safer** (Vizvary, 2020).

Implementation at Gettysburg College

- The policy would be a part of the Student Handbook rather than a specific policy for an office so that the policy does not seem targeted to any certain group or any certain misconduct.
- To pass the policy I would need to go through the Student Life Committee
 - The committee is composed of various members of the student body, faculty, and College administration.
- Ensure proper backing:
 - Opinion passed by the Gettysburg College Student Senate.
 - Send out a survey to the student body through Engage Gettysburg to show support for this policy.
 - Meet with members of the Student Life Committee to explain the policy to them individually.
- Spreading the word:
 - Work with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Office to add the definition of street harassment to the first-year students’ modules.
 - Work with the Center for Student Success to highlight the definition during the first-year monologues, which are performed during orientation.
 - Advertise the change in policy through social media, posters at the school, and word of mouth.
 - Create a team to oversee how the implementation of a street harassment definition affects the campus community.

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"street harassment is a crime poster" by arieevergreen is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Challenges & Benefits

- Challenges
 - A reluctance for this policy to be added to the Student Handbook by the Student Life Committee
 - An increase in reports of harassment may occur.
 - There will be a great amount of time put into this new policy.
- Benefits
 - The campus will be more open and welcoming to students of all backgrounds, attracting more to the school.
 - Will be a college policy rather than a federal policy, like Title IX, so the school will be able to utilize it and hone it the exact ways they wish to.
 - Very innovative for Gettysburg College, as there are few to no other schools that have this type of policy.
 - Low monetary cost.

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Responses

Other Colleges and Universities:

- PSU created policies to go along with Title IX regulations, adding more explicit terms and outlines of specific resources to Penn State (The Pennsylvania State University, 2020).
- Minnesota State System of Colleges created a unique policy that focuses on restricting hate or offensive speech to mitigate acts of harassment. (Minnesota State, 2022).

Gettysburg:

- Created a Sexual Misconduct Task Force that consisted of various faculty, staff, and students (*Sexual Misconduct*, 2021).
- Was awarded the “It’s On Us PA” grant from the commonwealth of Pennsylvania to combat sexual misconduct on college campuses as well as to reframe the conversations about sexual misconduct (*It’s On Us*, n.d.).
- Diversity and Inclusion Office has bias reporting, but it does not specifically use the word harassment and is separate from the other ways to report harassment (*Bias Incidents*, 2022).
- Can also report harassment through the College Life Office with a Misconduct Form (*Report*, n.d.).
- Issues in confusion and lack of focus on a specific type of harassment.