

Examining Sexual Harassment, Younger Workers

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Workplace experiences of adolescents and those in their early 20s differ sharply from those of older workers, and the same can be said about generational perceptions of sexual harassment, according to research by a University of Maine sociologist.

Blackstone's research findings.

Provided by University of Maine

Since 2000, UMaine sociologist Amy Blackstone and University of Minnesota sociologist Christopher Uggen have studied how age affects [workers](#)' perceptions of sexual harassment. They are among the first researchers to consider the experience of young workers in this way.

"These workers are vulnerable to sexual harassment, but most prior research excludes them. The dearth of research on [adolescents](#) and those in their early 20s might lead people to assume that sexual harassment isn't a problem for young people but that would be the wrong conclusion to draw," says Blackstone, an associate professor of sociology whose research interests include gender, social movements, work and families.

Historically, most sexual harassment research has centered on mid-career workers, mainly women. That continues to be the case, but Blackstone says such a narrow focus only tells part of the story. Through their research, based on survey and interview data from Minnesota's annual Youth Development Study and the national General Social Survey, Blackstone, Uggen and their team give a broader view of sexual harassment across all ages and both genders.

It is her hope that this entire body of research will provide greater understanding about the underlying cultural and legal issues surrounding [sexual harassment](#) and lead to better training and prevention efforts in the future.

More information: A recent article in [UMaine Today magazine](#) has more information on

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