

Sexual Harassment: The Clock Still Hasn't Run Out

February 17, 2022

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- TW

Disclosures

- Consultant for Intuitive Surgical and Intuitive Foundation
- Co-founder of TIME'S UP Healthcare (resigned)

Media Timeline



Investigation

Harassment



Consequences

Andrew Cuomo resigns in wake of damning report on sexual harassment

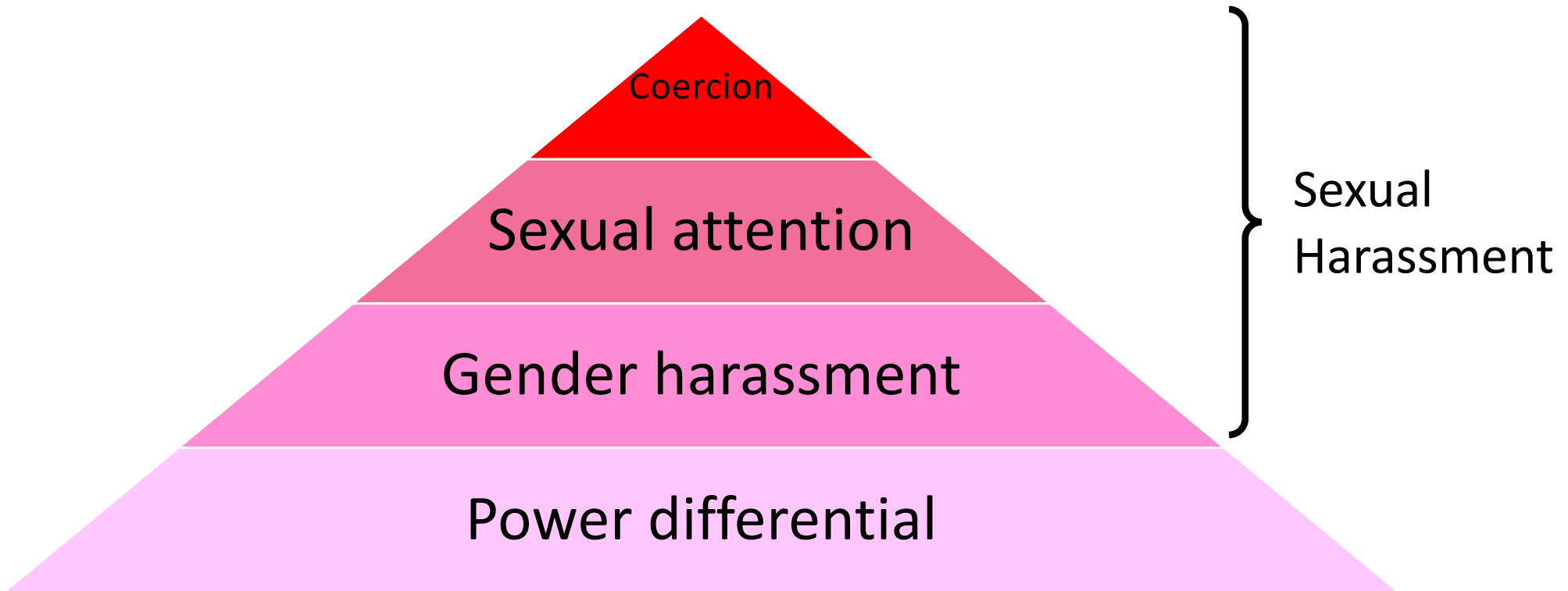
New York governor announced that he was stepping aside and said his resignation will be effective in 14 days

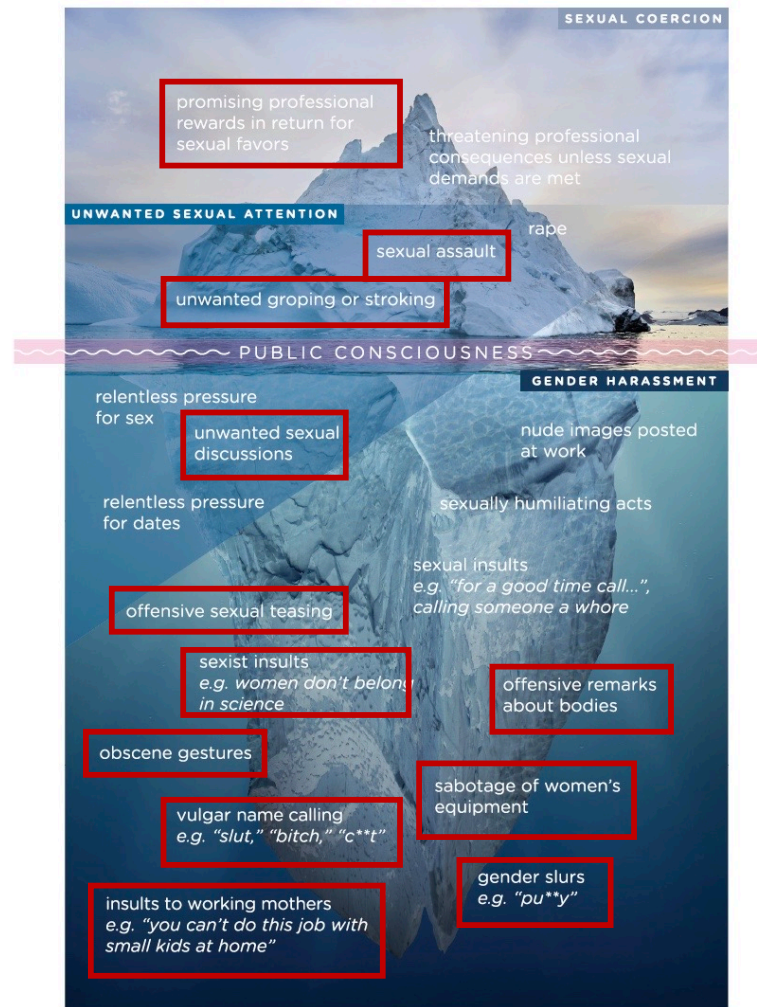


▲ Andrew Cuomo resigns after sexual harassment allegations - video

Do you think time is up for sexual harassment?

Harassment





National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Sexual harassment of women. 2018.



 @arghavanallesmd

FIGURE 2-2 The public consciousness of sexual harassment and specific sexually harassing behaviors.

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Sexual Harassment in Academia

The New York Times

A Lawsuit Accuses Harvard of Ignoring Sexual Harassment by a Professor

The controversy surrounding John Comaroff, an anthropologist, has divided the faculty, with scholars like Jill Lepore and Henry Louis Gates Jr. supporting their colleague.

The Harvard Crimson

38 Harvard Faculty Sign Open Letter Questioning Results of Misconduct Investigations into Prof. John Comaroff

104. Still, Harvard officials openly disparaged the ODR process. Mr. Avakian expressly told Ms. Kilburn that reporting to the press would be more impactful than participating in the ODR process. He cited Professor Jorge Dominguez, a Harvard professor who, on information and belief, had serially abused women students for over 40 years, telling Ms. Kilburn that Professor Dominguez's victims found speaking to the press more effective than Harvard's ODR process and

encouraged Ms. Kilburn to do the same. Department Chair Subramanian, too, urged all three Plaintiffs to speak to the *Crimson* and subsequently with *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, because, she said, *that* would give Harvard a reason to act. And Dean Zipser pressed Plaintiffs to speak to the *Chronicle*, because, she said, only a public article would give her cover to take action against Professor Comaroff.

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HHMI fires prominent biologist for sexual harassment

By [Meredith Wadman](#) | Aug. 21, 2021, 3:15 AM

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) on Friday fired prominent [biologist David Sabatini](#) after an investigation of his workplace behavior. Sabatini at the same time resigned from the Whitehead Institute, the nonprofit research organization in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where his large HHMI-supported lab was located.



1



Evolutionary biologist Francisco Ayala JACQUELYN MARTIN/AP

National Academy of Sciences ejects biologist Francisco Ayala in the wake of sexual harassment findings

Prominent GI oncologist Axel Grothey was forced out of Mayo Clinic for unethical sexual relationships with women he mentored

Three reprimands later, he retains leadership—and mentorship—positions

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We are collectively frustrated that (1) his former institution did nothing to prevent or respond to our individual incidences of harassment for many years until we faced the institution head-on as a group and gave them no choice, and (2) despite his termination, he still holds esteemed positions in NCI and continues to slander his victims in the scientific community, including attempting to undermine their career advancement.

During the years in which the harassment occurred, I was too embarrassed, ashamed, and frightened to come forward to my employer. I feared more consequences that would further limit my career possibilities, since Dr. Grothey is a very influential figure in the field of GI oncology.

The complainants also described how the culture within the Executive Chamber—rife with fear and intimidation and accompanied by a consistent overlooking of inappropriate flirtations and other sexually suggestive and gender-based comments by the Governor—enabled the above-described instances of harassment to occur and created a hostile work environment overall. As Ms. Bennett described the culture, “It was extremely toxic, extremely abusive. If you got yelled at in front of everyone, it wasn’t any special day It was controlled largely by his temper, and he was surrounded by people who enabled his behavior”⁵³ As a result, when the Governor said inappropriate things, Ms. Bennett said, “I was uncomfortable, but I also was acutely aware that I did not want him to get mad.”⁵⁴ Executive Assistant #1 felt similarly: “I think that he definitely knew what he was doing and it was almost as if he would do these things and know that he could get away with it because of the fear that he knew we had.”⁵⁵ In describing the dichotomy between fear and flirtation, Ms. Boylan said, “That was his light—I would say that was his ‘if he-liked-you’ toxicity. For most people, when you’re around, you saw the ‘if-he-hated you’ toxicity.”⁵⁶

on how she looked “lovely”;²⁵ and (4) asked whether she had a boyfriend. Ms. Liss noted that these interactions were, in her view, inappropriate. She did not complain about or raise these incidents while employed in the Executive Chamber because, she found, “[F]or whatever reason, in his office the rules were different. It was just, you should view it as a compliment if the Governor finds you aesthetically pleasing enough, if he finds you interesting enough to ask questions like that. And so even though it was strange and uncomfortable and technically not permissible in a typical workplace environment, I was in this mindset that it was the twilight zone and . . . the typical rules did not apply.”²⁶

Ms. Bennett reported the interactions to the Governor's Chief of Staff. While the Executive Chamber moved Ms. Bennett to a different position where she would not need to interact with the Governor in response to Ms. Bennett's allegations, the Executive Chamber did not report the allegations at the time to the Governor's Office of Employee Relations ("GOER"), the State agency tasked with conducting harassment investigations for State agencies, and did not otherwise conduct any formal investigation. Instead, the Executive Chamber's senior staff sought to implement a practice whereby individual staff members who were women were not to be left alone with the Governor.

Based on the investigation, and as set forth in greater detail below, we reach the conclusion that the Governor sexually harassed a number of State employees through unwelcome and unwanted touching, as well as by making numerous offensive and sexually suggestive comments. We also conclude that such behavior by the Governor was part of a pattern that extended to his interactions with women outside of State government, and was enabled and facilitated by a culture within the Executive Chamber of secrecy, loyalty to the Governor, and fear, as well as the normalization of inappropriate comments and interactions by the Governor. Finally, we conclude that the Executive Chamber's response to a number of the sexual harassment allegations violated its internal policies and that its response to one complainant's sexual harassment allegation constituted unlawful retaliation.

 *Voices | Opinion*

Sexual Harassment Is Still the Norm in Health Care

If you can't think of a high-profile doctor who got "taken down" by the #MeToo movement, it's not for a lack of perpetrators

By Arghavan Salles on October 24, 2019



ASCO Quality
Care Symposium

September 24-25, 2021
Boston, MA

Early Registration Deadline:
August 18 at 11:59 PM (ET)

GUEST EDITORIAL

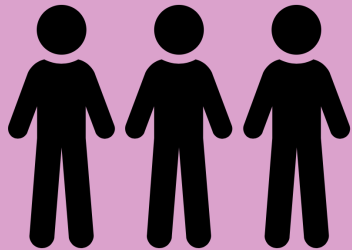
Let's stop passing the buck on sexual harassment in academic medicine

🕒 June 25, 2021 | 📄 Vol. 47 No. 25 |     

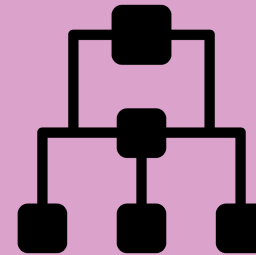
We've all heard this story before, just with a different set of names and places. Man harasses woman after woman, eventually someone (usually a woman) is brave enough to report him, a quiet investigation confirms the reports, and he quietly and seamlessly gets hired elsewhere with no one the wiser.

BYLINE

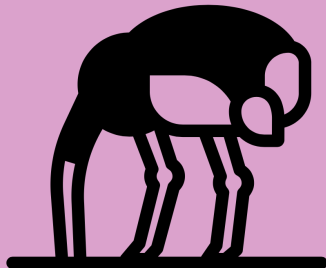
Environmental Factors



Male-Dominated



Hierarchy

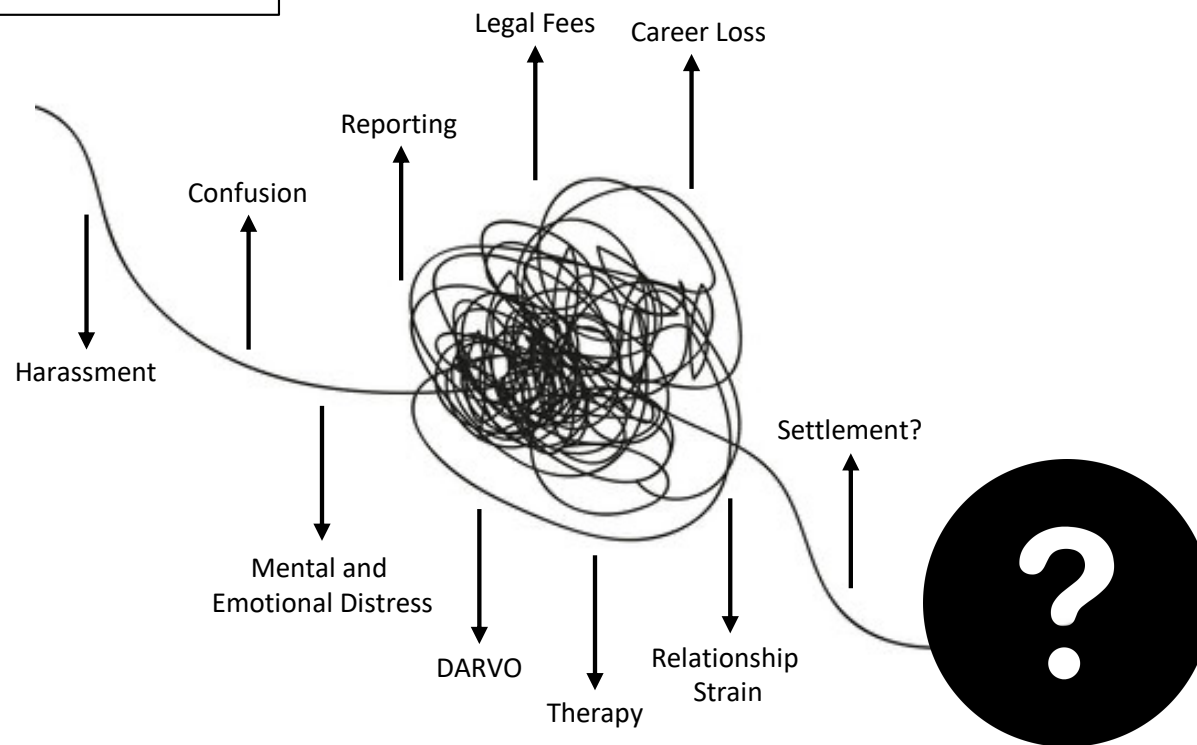


Tolerance



Isolated

Survivor Timeline



Harassment Consequences

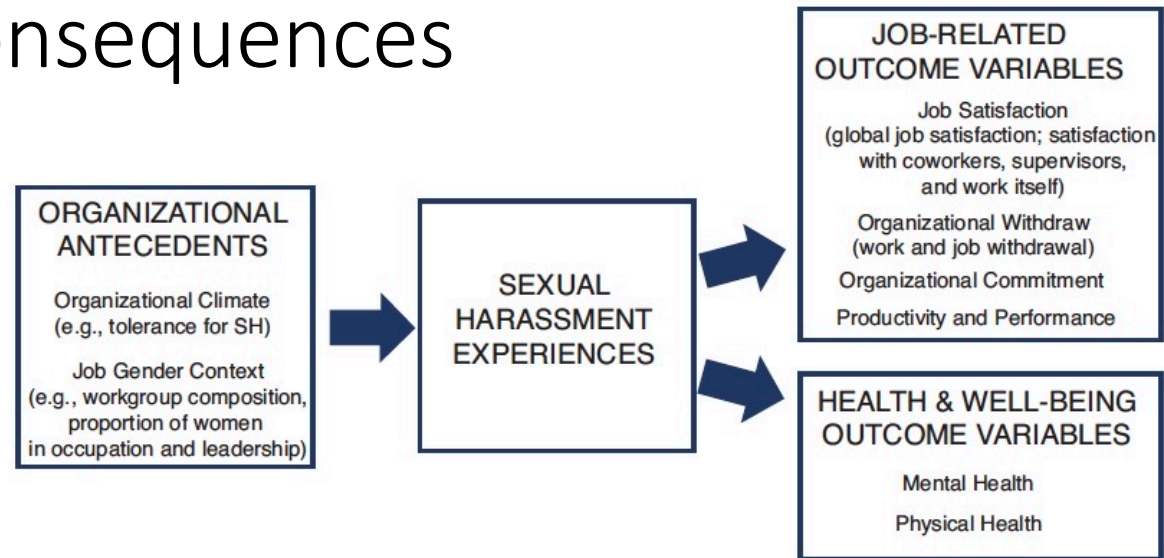


FIGURE 4-1 Visual representation of antecedents and outcomes from sexual harassment.
SOURCE: Adapted from Willness, Steel, and Lee 2007.

2003; Cady and Valentine 1999). Thus, the cumulative effect of sexual harassment is a significant and costly loss of talent in academic science, engineering, and medicine, which has consequences for advancing the nation's economic and social well-being and its overall public health.

Made by History • Perspective

Patients get better care from doctors who are women. But sexism persists in medicine.

Even as more women have entered the profession, they are often diminished or overlooked.



(Blend Images/Alamy Stock Photo)

By Anne M. Blaschke and Arghavan Salles
January 21 at 3:00 AM PT

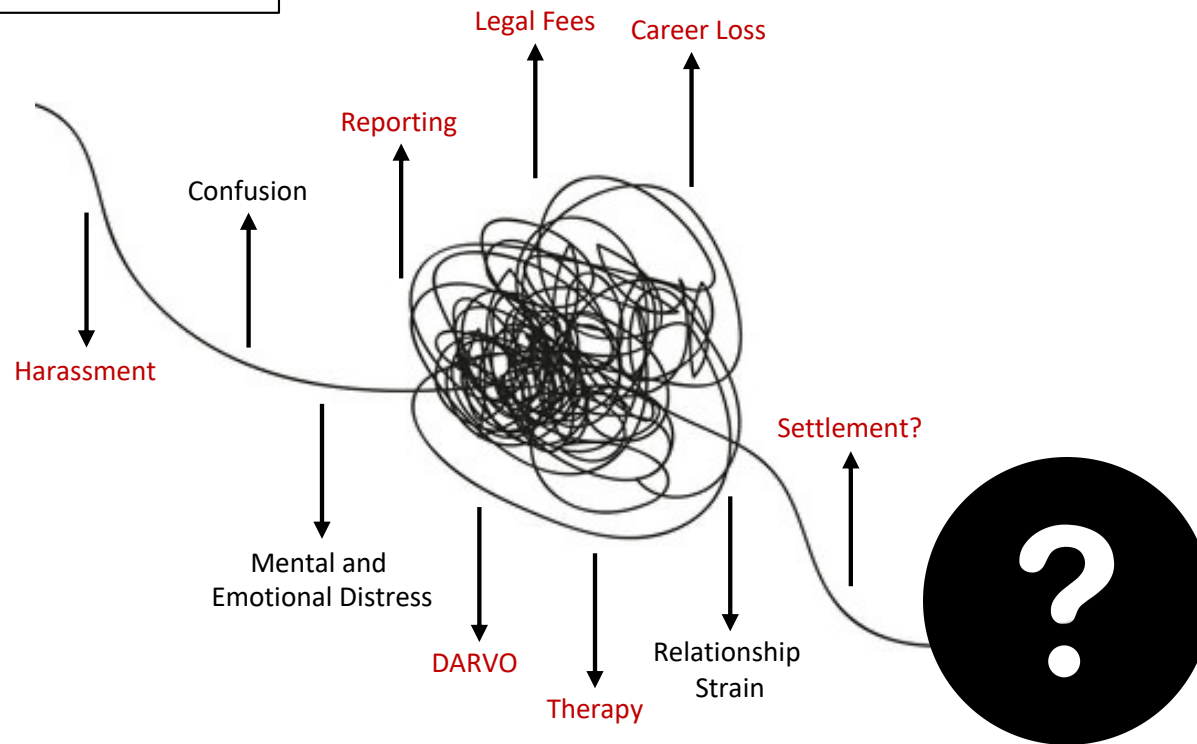
The Washington Post

If you're a woman needing surgery, you may be far better off in the hands of a female, rather than a male, surgeon. A [study](#) recently published in JAMA Surgery reviewed outcomes for more than 1.3 million patients and found that women were 32 percent less likely to die (and 16 percent less likely to experience complications) if treated by a female surgeon rather than a male one. It found that men were *also* less likely to die in the hands of female surgeons. While doctors' individual skills vary — there are good doctors of all genders — if these data are any indication, female surgeons are likely to provide, on average, safer treatment to patients of all genders.

This particular study demonstrates correlation, not causation. But this data is supported by decades of evidence documenting differences in patient care provided by women compared with men. However, because of a long history of sexism in medicine, the contributions of female doctors have been overlooked, downplayed or erased.



Survivor Timeline



Do you think time is up for sexual harassment?

Not yet.

“

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