

Written submission from a member of the public (SPP0006)

- Points in this submission include three instances of unwanted sexual contact which I personally experienced.
1. My name is [name], I am now [45-54] years of age. I am the mother of two grown up [children] and have been married [close to thirty years]. I work in the voluntary sector [job details]. I am submitting to this Select Committee as I feel something needs to be done to protect girls and women from these forms of harassment. I feel as though as women have gained more equality we have somehow become more vulnerable. It is as though the men who carry out these acts don't realise the impact it can have on the victim. My examples are not terribly serious and I am sure you will have very harrowing examples from women but I feel glad to get this opportunity to tell my story of what happened to me when I was younger.
 2. As a [under 18 year old] I was on a two week work placement in a Work Study department of [location] NHS. There were around 15 men who worked in the office and there was one older woman who was an administrator who had a separate office. When I left my desk someone would leave The Sun "newspaper" open at page three on my desk so that I had to look at it and close it over when I came back to my desk. The men all seemed to think this was very funny. The worst thing was I had to go out with these men on visits to hospitals or other NHS departments. When I was in the car with a man I would wonder if he was the one leaving the paper on my desk. It made me feel really uncomfortable. Now I am older I realise some of these men would have had daughters who were a similar age to me, how would they feel if this was happening to their daughter?
 3. When I was [18-24] years old I was walking to a restaurant with a group of friends to celebrate one of my friend's birthday. The pavement was narrow and as two boys approached us coming in the opposite direction we had to move into single file. As the boys passed me one of them grabbed my left breast. They then ran off. The boys were [under 18].

The incident left me feeling very shaken and vulnerable. The thing I wouldn't get over was that the boys were so young.

4. I was [18-24] years old and I was waiting for my friend at a train station exit. Someone came behind me and touched my bottom. I looked around but because there were a lot of people milling around I couldn't see who had done this to me. The rest of the time I spent waiting with my back to the wall in case it happened again.
5. This is the first time I have ever replied to a Select Committee and I hope my submission is acceptable.
6. Recommendations:- I am sure there is some good work happening in schools up and down the country but I feel there needs to be more work done to stamp out unwanted sexual contact. I feel that there is too easily accessed pornography which may skew boys' and men's view of women as objects. I also feel mums and dads at home have a major role to play on how boys and young men view women and girls. If you think of some of the terminology used to describe women and girls, this should become unacceptable.

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