

Unwanted attention

[from an Asian American graduate student]

He [another student] would come up and touch me, and other things, like [be] next to me all the time, so that I didn't really have a chance to interact with the other students, and [he'd] just really get into my personal space... things that really made me feel uneasy. And, when I confronted him about it, he would say, "Oh, well why should I have to tiptoe around you?" ... I didn't make a big deal about it because I realize that astronomy is a very small community. And I don't want to have a reputation as a bitch, because then who will want to collaborate with me?

Ong, Ko & Hodari, 2015

Questions:

- Explain the factors at play in the situation and connect them to the theoretical frames provided (intersectionality, implicit bias, stereotype threat)
- What could you do if you were this student?
- What could you do if you were her friend?
- What could you do if you witnessed this situation?

Left out of group work

A lab group of first year undergraduates consists of one woman and two men. The two men do all the interacting, they have all the materials except tape in front of them. The woman has the tape in front of her and is sitting with her hands in her lap; when one of the men wants a piece of tape he just reaches over and gets it. The two men don't look at her at all, and she sits on the edge of the action, observing. One of the men leans onto her piece of paper--her set of instructions--doing his work in her work space. As the activity continues, she moves farther away from the men than she was when the activity began--with a small smile on her face.

Later, in a discussion of effective scientific cooperation, the men in this group report that the activity was "a team building exercise" and that in order to be a good team member, you should "be inclusive. Not much fun being on a team if you're not going to use the entire team." The woman remains silent.

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Sex talk during class

[from a White undergraduate]

The other day, some people were making dumb jokes about the type of crypto currency you can use--like bit coin. One of the main industries that develops crypto-currency is adult entertainment, one group in the corner was talking about different names of crypto-currency. One of them was like "tit coin," and they kept saying that and talking about it.

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You should just get over it

[from a Black doc student in physics]

At an after-work gathering of everyone in her lab group “I communicated that it was a tradition on both sides of my family to honor surviving slavery, and that I thought that was really important for my [future] children – that I wanted them to know that they come from a background of people who have survived very difficult things and that makes them very strong.... And at some point, one of the [White] guys jumps in and says, “You know, you Black people are always complaining about slavery. And you should just get over it. It happened a long time ago and it doesn’t affect you anymore. And you Black people won’t shut up about it.”

Ong, Ko & Hodari, 2015

Questions:

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The Very Important Researcher

[from a White undergraduate]

God love them, I think [science agency] is a really good environment overall, but I guess they're all White guys. These weren't things like sexual harassment, but they were things that made me feel unwelcome. Mostly this one guy. He's the expert on the detector I use, and so my mentor and I set up a meeting with him for me to tell him about my research, and for him to answer any questions I had about the detector. And all the questions he had, he didn't direct to me, he directed to my mentor. He managed to make me feel I was being pushed out of my own meeting.

Questions:

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