

# **That Pesky Problem of Persisting Gender Bias**

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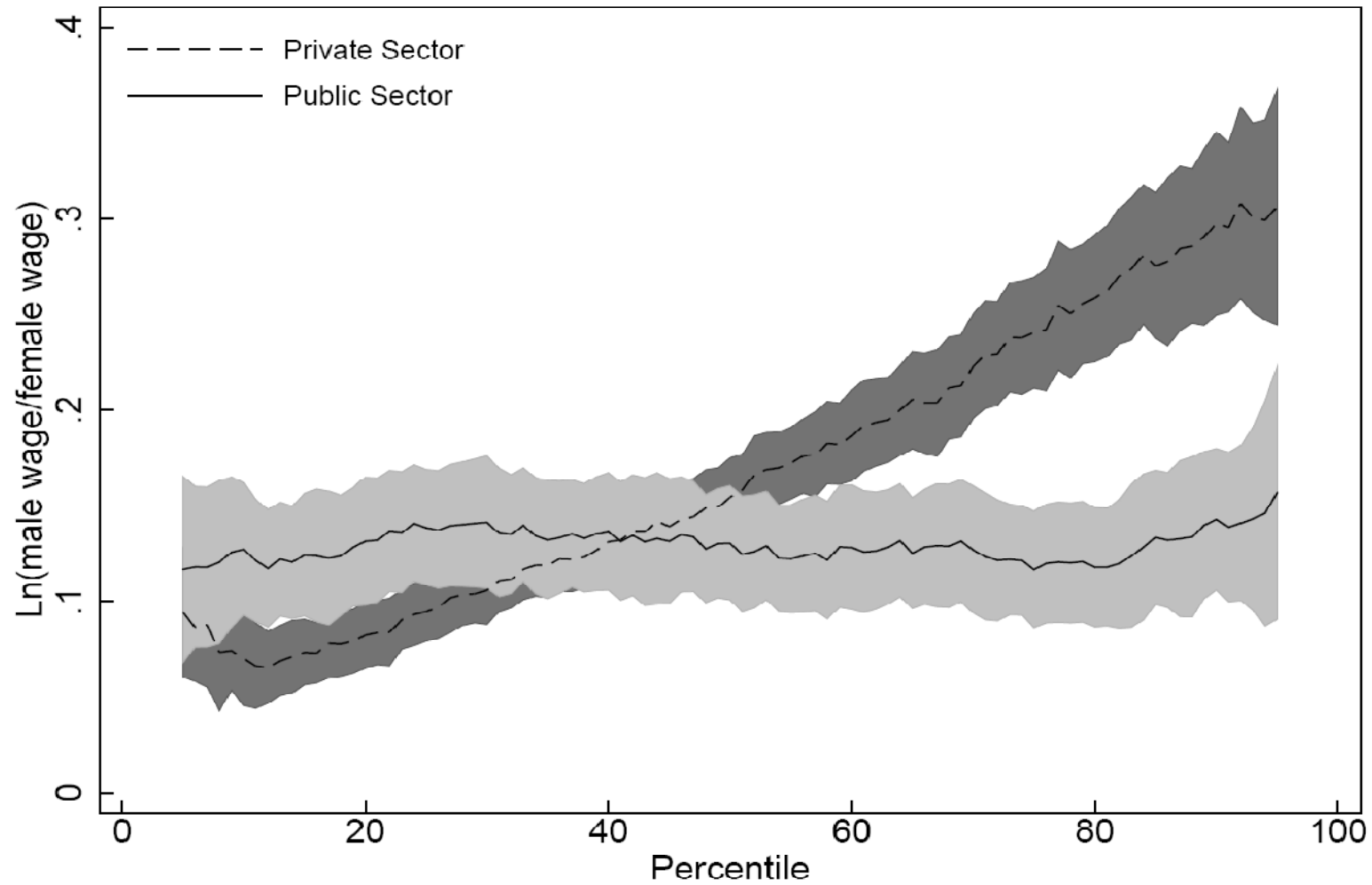
**Will we ever see equal pay? Does it matter?**

# Overview

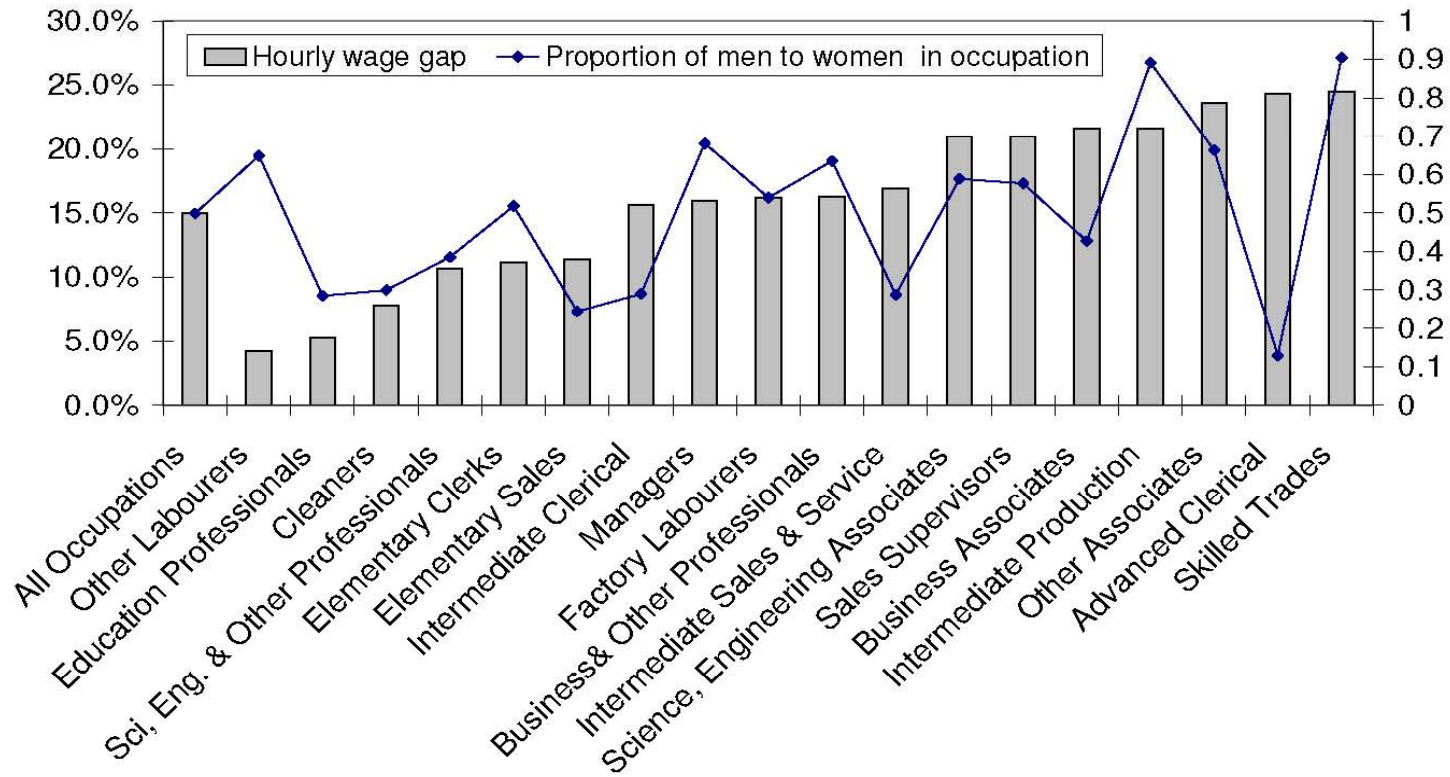
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- In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tribunals enforced pay discrimination against women.
- In 1969, the Equal Pay Case introduced equal pay for equal work improving women's relative wages.
- Today the Australian gender pay gap (15%) is slightly lower than the OECD average (18%).
- The gender pay gap is higher among i) self-employed; ii) high-wage workers; and iii) in the private sector.

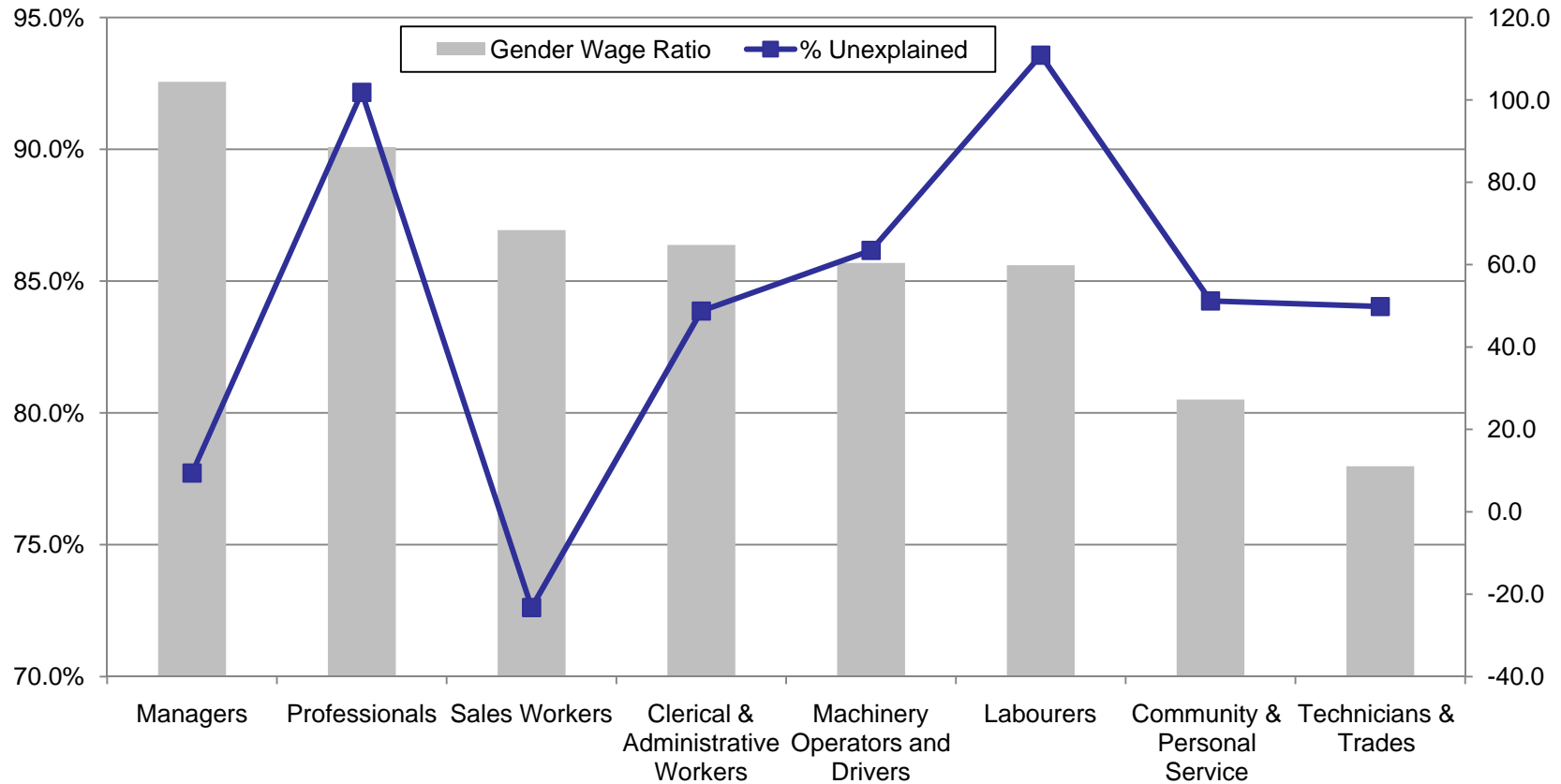
# Ratio of Australian Men's to Women's Wages Public vs. Private Sector



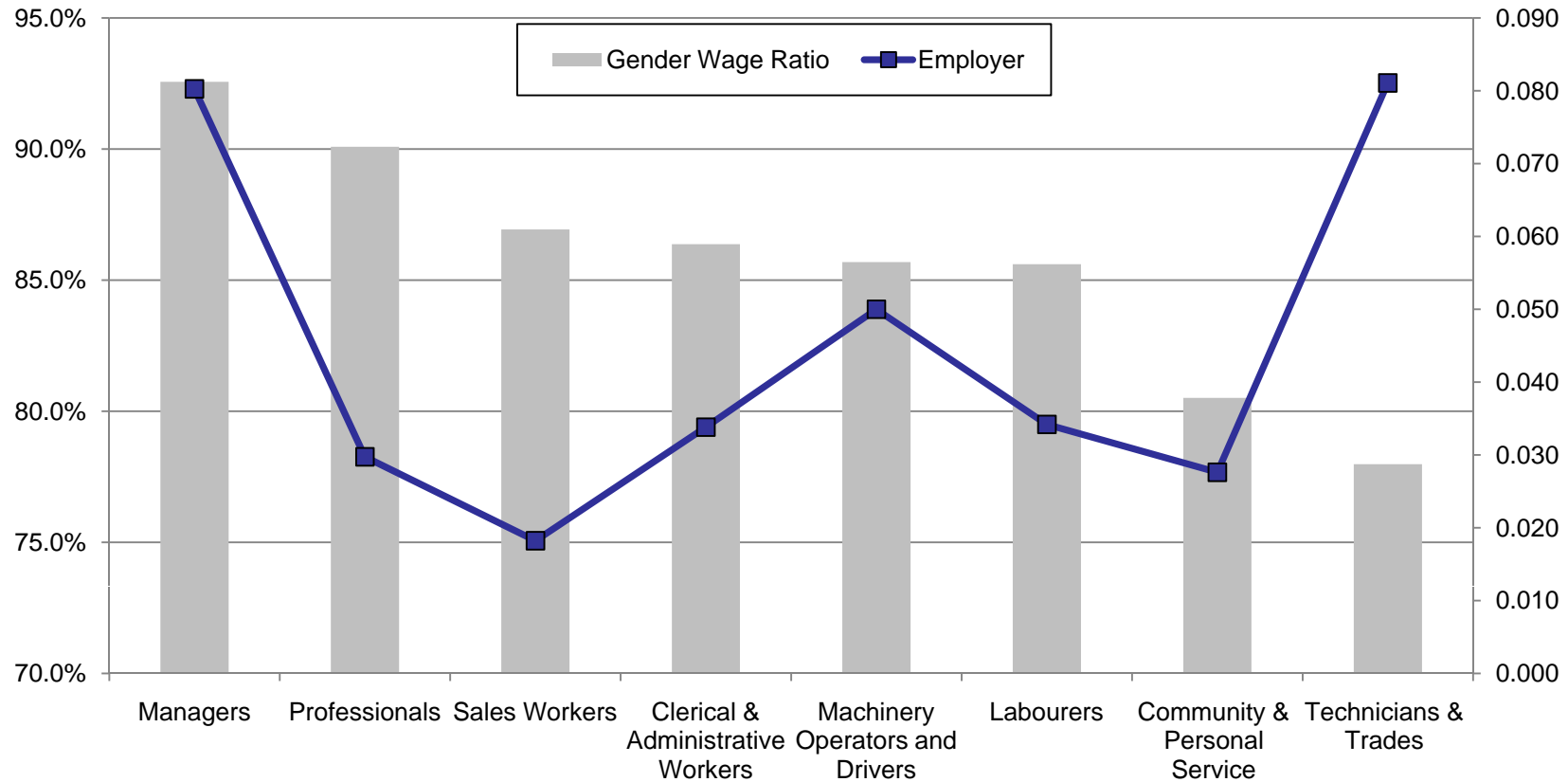
# Gender Wage Gap vs. Ratio of Men to Women in Employment




# Gender Wage Gap vs. Portion of the Gap that is Unexplained



# Gender Wage Gap vs. Percent of Women Reporting Employer Discrimination





This disconnect between gender pay gaps and Australian's women's feelings of being discriminated against is consistent with evidence for:

- Canadian women (Antecol and Kuhn 2000 )
- US women (Kuhn 1987)
- US lawyers (Antecol et al. 2011)

Discrimination occurs along many dimensions other than pay. “It’s not the pay, it’s the treatment that upsets women” (Kuhn).





**What do we know about other forms of  
gender bias, in particular sexual  
harassment?**

# The sorry fact of life for many working women

- Studies suggest that as many as one in two working women will experience sexual harassment in their working lives (Schneider, et al., 1997; Fitzgerald and Omerod, 1993);
- “Sexual harassment is a pervasive problem affecting substantial numbers of women in every industrialized country in which information is available” (ILO, 2002).

# 1995 Status of the US Armed Forces Survey

**In the previous 12 months have you been:**

- Often told sex jokes?
- Stared at in a sexual way?
- Drawn into unwelcome conversations about sex?
- Repeatedly asked for dates after saying “no”?
- Touched in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?
- Offered a faster promotion in exchange for sex?
- Scared if you don’t cooperate with request for sex?
- Treated badly because you refused a request for sex?

**Do you consider any of the behaviours that happened to you to have been sexual harassment?**

# What do we find?

## **Sexual harassment is pervasive in the US military!**

- 69.2% report crude/offensive behaviour
- 40.8% report unwanted sexual attention
- 12.3% report sexual coercion
- 70.9% report at least one harassing behaviour
- 5.7% report sexual assault<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

**Difficult to know if there is more SH in the military, but meta analysis suggests that the rate in the civilian work force ranges from 40% - 50% (Fitzgerald, et al, 1995) and can be as high as 90% (Welsh, 1999).**

# Women's views matter!

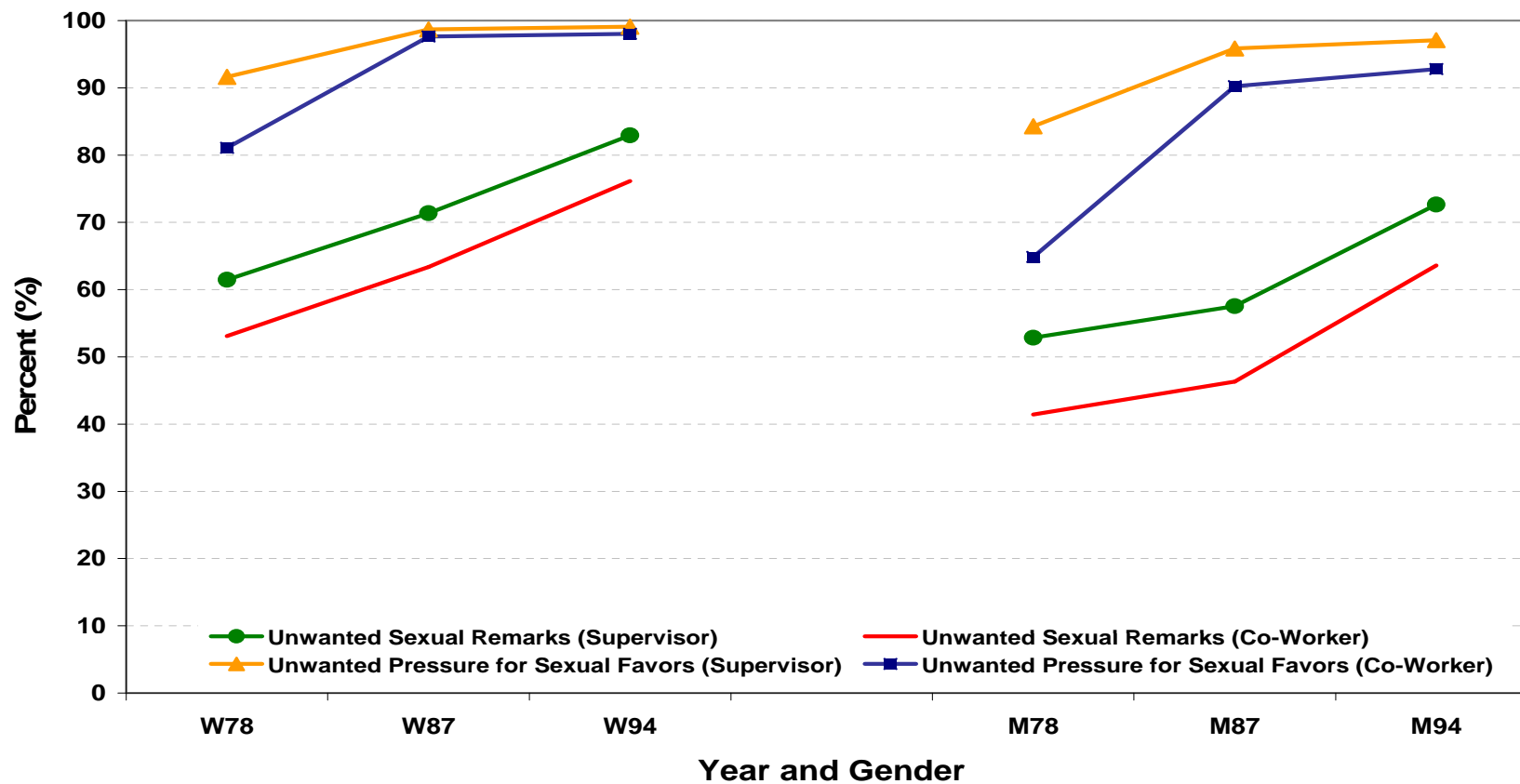
- Not everyone experiencing harassing behaviours labels their experiences as SH.
  - 68.0% experiencing crude/offensive label it SH
  - 80.3% experiencing sexual attention label it SH
  - 91.6% experiencing sexual coercion label it SH
- Psychologists often define SH on the basis of specific behaviour – not willingness to label it – since negative consequences are often the same.
- However, we find that women who see themselves as SH are more likely to be dissatisfied with and intend to leave the military than women reporting the same behaviour, but who do not consider it to be SH.

# Attitudes are changing

## US Merit Systems Protection Board (USMSPB) Data

- Civilian, public-sector workers across all US federal government agencies (1978, 1987, 1994)
- If initiated by supervisors, which of these behaviours would you consider to be SH?”
  - 1) sexual gestures,
  - 2) sexual remarks,
  - 3) sexual materials,
  - 4) pressure for sexual favors,
  - 5) deliberate touching,
  - 6) pressure for dates.
- If initiated by co-workers, which of these behaviours would you consider to be SH?


**Attitudes Towards Sexual Harassment  
by Year and Gender**





**What's the take-away message?**



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- Gender bias is about much more than measured pay gaps. In fact, measured pay gaps are very bad at identifying those women who feel that they have experienced discrimination.
  - We need to ask women – and men – directly about the bias they experience in the labour market. (Yes, this includes tackling the difficult subject of sexual harassment.)
  - Better information = better policy options.

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