

You Too?

Female Radiologists' Narratives on Discrimination and Harassment

Marika A. Pitot, MD^a, Marney A. White, PhD, MS^b, Elizabeth Edney, MD^c, Monique A. Mogensen, MD^d, Agnieszka Solberg, MD^e, Taj Kattapuram, MD^f, Cynthia Sinha, PhD^{g, h}, Nadja Kadom, MDⁱ

^aMayo Clinic School of Graduate Medical Education, Rochester, Minnesota. ^bYale School of Public Health, New Haven, Connecticut. ^cUniversity of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska. ^dUniversity of Washington Medical Center, Seattle, Washington. ^eUniversity of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota. ^fRadKatt, La Crosse, Wisconsin. ^gAflac Cancer and Blood Disorders, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, Atlanta, Georgia. ^hDepartment of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology-BMT, Emory University, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia. ⁱDepartment of Radiology, Emory University Hospital, Atlanta, Georgia. Corresponding author: Nadja Kadom, MD, Emory University School of Medicine, Department of Radiology and Imaging Sciences, 1405 Clifton Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30322; e-mail: nkadom@emory.edu

Background: There is a paucity of examples for gender discrimination and sexual harassment in radiology. This lack of knowledge can limit radiologists' ability to relate to this topic, acknowledge its importance and impact, and take actions toward improvement.

Materials and Methods: We conducted a qualitative analysis using the model of thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke of narrative responses to a survey on the topic of #MeToo, which was distributed to a social media group of female radiologists.

Results: In all, 575 anonymous survey responses from 3,265 social media group members were analyzed. Among these responses, the study team identified important themes with examples, including Victims and Perpetrators, Acts of Gender Discrimination, Inequalities, Sexual Harassment and Assault, and Microaggressions.

Conclusion: The narratives provide relatable examples of gender discrimination and sexual harassment in radiology. These may spark discussions that raise awareness among radiologists and result in interventions geared toward improvement.

Theme: Victims

Trainees

- Q1: [I experienced] sexual harassment during residency and internship. [I] was kissed on [the] lips by an attending and hugged. During residency [I experienced] heavy flirting.
- Q2: I was sexually assaulted by a senior resident. After reporting him, I was outcast with my colleagues and lost most of my friends. He was promoted to chief resident. I have also experienced sexual harassment and gender discrimination from program directors and attendings.
- Q3: I did not report the incident in fellowship[,] which involves an attending I worked with directly and closely. The incidents involved inappropriate jokes of a sexual nature and staring at my postpartum breasts. Honestly I just thought this [] man was so pathetic at the time. We are taught not to burn bridges, that the radiology community is so small. I did not want to hurt my chances of getting a job in the future so I ignored it. I realize now that I should have said something because if the perpetrator is not stopped they just find new victims.

Theme: Perpetrators

Superiors

- Q6: The dean stuck his tongue down my throat when I came back to my med school for an event after graduating.
- Q7: I had an attending who would go out drinking with the residents, and hit on all the female residents. Once he tried to kiss me, [and] many times he tried to grab my ass.
- Q8: I have also experienced sexual harassment and gender discrimination from program directors and attendings.
- Q9: On night call in an elevator to the call room, assaulted physically by senior resident. Reported to department chair. Resident got a verbal reprimand only.
- Q10: One example is when I asked a supposed mentor about job search when I was in fellowship and looking to stay in the same area for one year, his suggestion was having a kid in that year and staying home.

Theme: Acts of Gender Discrimination

Interviews

- Q26: I applied for a job at [], and I was told I would never get an interview because the chair thinks women are useless.
- Q27: During residency interviews, being that radiology is male dominated, I felt that most programs didn't want to have a female. I wasn't a "bro" so there was a lot less interaction with me.

...and many more examples:

Pitot MA, White MA, Edney E, Mogensen MA, Solberg A, Kattapuram T, Sinha C, Kadom N. You Too? Female Radiologists' Narratives on Discrimination and Harassment. *J Am Coll Radiol.* 2022 Feb;19(2 Pt A):288-303. doi: 10.1016/j.jacr.2021.09.043. Epub 2021 Nov 22. PMID: 34822789.

Theme: Sexual Harassment

Verbal

- Q72: [When I was in training] I actually had one faculty that would ask me how large I thought a patient's breasts were based on how many bra hooks we saw on the x-ray and how that compared to my bra and breast size.
- Q73: "How are your tits today[?]" was my morning greeting every day on neurosurg rotation in internship.
- Q74: The incidents involved inappropriate jokes of a sexual nature and staring at my postpartum breasts.
- Q75: Comments on my bra size.
- Q76: Let me start by saying I take great effort to hide my figure when I'm at work. I always wear a sweater, jacket, white coat, or a loose-fitting top because I am a busty female with a small waist. This is intentional as to not draw attention to this fact. There have been occasions where I have to take off my white coat or sweater—ie, to put on lead or if I am sweaty. It was one of these occasions [] when I had to remove my white coat and the radiologist [] looked me up and down and said, "You've had [] kids?!" I responded yes. And then he said, "Will you have one of mine[?]" I was shocked, []. I looked at the tech standing next to him, who happened to be male, and said[,] "Did he just say that to me?[]" I wasn't brave enough to confront him directly but I wanted him to know I thought it was inappropriate.
- Q77: Inappropriate comment about my body at a social gathering at a CME conference from a senior person.

Theme: Sexual Assault

- Q93: When I was a medical student, I was subjected to unwanted sexual advances by a [] medical school administrator who successfully managed to isolate me from my friends and get me very drunk to the point of not being able to stop his unwanted sexual advances. Other personnel definitely knew about it. For years I blamed myself for being so stupid to allow myself get into that situation. Now I am just really angry that his behavior was even possible.
- Q94: Date rape.
- Q95: [I] [] posed for the faculty picture [], I was grabbed on the buttocks, thus explaining my surprised look in the picture.
- Q96: I was kissed on the lips and groped by a department chairman in medical school.

Theme: Inequalities

Unequal pay

- Q53: In a former practice, the female staff radiologists were paid at least 50% less than the male staff radiologists.
- Q54: [There was a] salary discrepancy between me and male colleague[s] hired on [the] same day at [the] same rank. Over several years, [this] deficit of salary was hefty.
- Q55: I was paid less than my male colleague of [the] same level of experience, even though I had additional administrative titles/duties [] that he did not have.
- Q56: [My] administrative duties were taken away and my salary was cut disproportionately more than my male colleagues during the time of cutting back and "restructuring."