

Practical Exercise #2

Sexual Harassment Case Studies

Case Study 1

Specialist (SPC) Jones (a female Soldier) and SPC Smith (a male Soldier) are good friends, assigned together as military police (MPs) with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Stewart, GA. There are three other female MPs assigned to the unit, including SPC Sweeney, who often makes comments that SPC Smith “has a nice body.” When SPC Sweeney makes these comments, SPC Jones usually chimes in saying, “What else do you have to go with all those muscles?” SPC Smith usually laughs and says, “Milk, it does a body good.” SPC Jones mentions that she has something that is also good for the body, and chuckles. Conversations like this are common in their unit, where the female MPs are often considered “one of the guys.”

One day while pulling duty at the brigade, SPC Smith approaches SPC Sweeney and asks if she wants to feel “how hard he can get after a workout.” SPC Sweeney is uncomfortable and tells him no. He then says, “You know that you want to feel me.” She tells him that she has a boyfriend and that she is not interested in him. SPC Smith continues to make comments to SPC Sweeney about how much she wants him. Disturbed, SPC Sweeney goes to the Staff Duty NCO and tells him about the situation, but he just laughs at her.

1. Identify any instances of inappropriate behavior in this scenario.
2. Because SPC Sweeney previously made flirtatious comments to SPC Smith, does that mean that SPC Smith’s behavior is acceptable?
3. What else should SPC Sweeney do after the Staff Duty NCO does not take her report seriously?
4. How would you resolve the situation?

Case Study 2

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Glass is a Mess Sergeant with the 2nd Brigade Dining Facility at 25th Infantry Division (Light), Schofield Barracks, HI. SFC Glass is often talking with the Soldiers who are assigned to the dining facility and Soldiers who eat there. He is always around. Staff Sergeant (SSG) Washington eats in the dining facility every day for lunch along with other Soldiers that work in her section. Each time SSG Washington goes into the dining facility, most of the male Soldiers stop and stare as she and other female Soldiers approach the serving line. SSG Washington notices that SFC Glass is one of the Soldiers who routinely stares at her, and it often makes her uncomfortable. In contrast, SFC Bullock, SSG Washington’s platoon sergeant, enjoys the attention and says she thinks that SFC Glass is “cute.” SSG Washington has observed that SFC Glass always winks at SFC Bullock whenever she enters the area. SFC Bullock always smiles and winks back.

One day SSG Washington goes to the dining facility alone and receives the usual stares. She notices SFC Glass staring. As she walks by, he says, “Hey lady, you look tight in that uniform today.” SSG Washington feels uncomfortable. All the attention is beginning to really bother her—so much so that she no longer wants to eat in the dining facility.

1. Identify any instances of inappropriate behavior in this scenario.
2. Because SSG Washington never objected to the attention, does that mean that SFC Glass’ behavior is acceptable?
3. How would you resolve the incident?

Case Study 3

Ms. Whitaker is an Army IT contractor providing IT support to units deployed to Iraq from Fort Campbell, KY. She is in her mid-20s and single. Her job is to perform maintenance on computer equipment. Captain (CPT) Smith is the commander for B Company, in the Signal Battalion. He and other Soldiers are always complimenting Ms. Whitaker on her looks. Sometimes these comments are made in the presence of junior Soldiers. She smiles and tells them she works out daily, and she invites CPT Smith to go running with her after work. He agrees to join her.

After a run one evening, CPT Smith says, "Let's go to my containerized housing unit (CHU) and talk and see what comes up." When they arrive at the CHU, CPT Smith removes his T-shirt. Ms. Whitaker is startled and says that she has to go back to her office to do some work. CPT Smith says, "What happens here stays here," and continues to walk toward Ms. Whitaker. Ms. Whitaker insists that she has to get back to the office. The next day she avoids CPT Smith and the other officers.

1. Identify any instances of inappropriate behavior in this scenario.
2. Since Ms. Whitaker never objected to the attention (prior to going to CPT Smith's CHU), does it mean CPT Smith's behavior is welcomed?
3. How would you resolve the incident if Ms. Whitaker asked you to intervene as a third party?

Case Study 4

Private First Class (PFC) Luther recently graduated from 11M Advanced Individual Training. He is assigned to an infantry unit in Germany. When PFC Luther arrives, he is welcomed into the unit in front of the company during the morning physical training formation. First Sergeant (1SG) James tells Staff Sergeant (SSG) Calhoun, a squad leader, to make sure he takes care of PFC Luther. SSG Calhoun says, "I will make sure he is squared away." SSG Calhoun tells PFC Luther that every other Friday the squad gets together after work for a few drinks. PFC Luther is 20 years old and gets excited about hanging out with the squad. At a local bar, SSG Calhoun buys rounds for all the Soldiers. The Soldiers have a lot of fun, talking, playing pool, and challenging each other to drinking games.

After about four rounds, PFC Luther and Specialist (SPC) Grant start some horseplay—pushing and shoving each other around. SSG Calhoun tells them to "cut it out" before they get the squad kicked out of the bar. They take the horseplay outside and start to wrestle. PFC Thomas is the designated driver and is told to take the two back to the barracks because they are drunk. The next morning, PFC Luther wakes up with shaving cream all over him and remembers talk of lewd sex acts. PFC Thomas mentions to PFC Luther that he has an extremely long tongue. PFC Luther is embarrassed and wants to transfer to another company.

1. Identify any instances of inappropriate behavior in this scenario.
2. What are PFC Luther's options?
3. How would you resolve the situation?

Case Study 5

Colonel (COL) Lowenthal is the commander of the 3rd Basic Combat Training Brigade at Fort Jackson, SC. Ms. Anderson, the brigade secretary, manages COL Lowenthal's calendar as part of her administrative duties. Ms. Anderson is a middle-aged woman from California who dresses "business professional" every day. One day, COL Lowenthal asks her to "dress more appropriately" for work at the office. When Ms. Anderson asks COL Lowenthal what she means, COL Lowenthal replies, "Stop wearing

those high heels and wear panty hose.” Ms. Anderson informs COL Lowenthal that she only owns high heels and doesn’t like wearing panty hose.

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Dennis, the executive officer, is always laughing and talking to Ms. Anderson. One day in the presence of Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Gehringer and Ms. Anderson, LTC Dennis remarks that Ms. Anderson dresses exceptionally well and he loves a little eye candy. Ms Anderson smiles and says, “Thank you, sweetie.” CSM Gehringer often hears the conversations between LTC Dennis and Ms. Anderson, and at times he chimes in. One day CSM Gehringer says, “Your husband is one hell of a lucky man,” and Ms. Anderson informs him she is divorced. LTC Dennis overhears Ms. Anderson and asks if she is a “cougar.” Ms. Anderson is offended and lets LTC Dennis know that she doesn’t appreciate the comment. He replies, “Well, stop dressing like one.” When Ms. Anderson informs COL Lowenthal of the comment, she says, “What did you expect? I don’t see anything wrong with what was said.”

1. Identify any instances of inappropriate behavior in this scenario.
2. Do a person’s clothing choices make it acceptable for them to be sexually harassed?
3. How would you resolve the situation?

Case Study 6

Gena Salahi is a 17-year-old dependent Family member, living with her father. Sergeant First Class (SFC) Salahi and Gena reside in family housing on Fort Bragg. Gena is best friends with two other military-dependent girls and they always hang out at the movies and popular shopping areas. Gena and her friends all find the younger Soldiers attractive and have been known to date a few of them.

While at the Post Exchange one day, Gena and her friend Jennifer decide to have lunch in the food court. While the two are carrying their food to the table, Jennifer spills her drink. When she bends over to clean it up, a Soldier comments on the tattoo located on her lower back. He says the tattoo is nice and asks where she got it. She tells him it was from a local tattoo shop. He asks if she has any more “tats,” and she raises her shirt (midway) to expose a tattoo located on her lower abs. The Soldier tells Jennifer that the tattoo on her upper thigh is also nice. Sergeant (SGT) Kline and Private First Class (PFC) Johansson are passing by and start singing, “Tat, tat, tatted up.” Jennifer smiles and continues to talk to the Soldier. When Jennifer and Gena find a seat, SGT Kline walks by and says, “I’d like to put some ink on that,” pointing at Gena. Gena asks, “What do you mean by that?” He responds, “You know what I mean. Stop acting innocent.” When she asks him what unit he is assigned to, he ignores her and walks away. After SGT Kline leaves the food court, another Soldier comes over and tells Gena that he is an MP and asks if the Soldiers were bothering her. Gena tells her father about the incident.

1. Identify any instances of inappropriate behavior in this scenario.
2. What can Gena’s father do to resolve the matter?
3. How would you resolve the situation?