

# Paleoanthropology Society

## Statement on Sexual Harassment and Assault

April 2016

### I. Preamble A:

The Paleoanthropology Society is committed to providing a safe space, free of threats, harassment or assault, to all of our members regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, religion, marital status, or any other reason unrelated to professional performance. In this document, the concept of Paleoanthropology Society "member" includes both dues-paying and non-paying recipients of Society mailings.

### II. Preamble B:

Experiences of sexual harassment, assault and threats of those behaviors in educational and workplace contexts can shape an individual's ability to complete their training or pursue their career goals.<sup>1</sup> Professional training and research in anthropology often requires many years of preparation, intensive collaboration, and research away from home institutional contexts. Sexual assault and harassment in field research in particular remains a substantial issue with 64% of respondents to a recent survey reporting having experienced sexual harassment and more than 20% reporting having been the victims of sexual assault<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the Paleoanthropology Society provides this Statement on Sexual Harassment and Assault to establish guidelines for appropriate behavior for members of our organization.

### III. Introduction and Scope of Policy:

With this document, the Paleoanthropology Society outlines best practices regarding the definition, prevention, and reporting of sexual harassment and assault for our professional community as well as our expectations for professional behavior of our members.

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<sup>1</sup> Leskinen, E.A., Cortina, L.M., Kabat, D.B. (2011). "Gender Harassment: Broadening our understanding of sex-based harassment at work." *Law and Human Behavior*. 35(1): 25-39; Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C. Eds. (2011). *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Research, Theory and Practice*. Second Edition. Boca Raton: CRC Press.

<sup>2</sup> Clancy, K.B.H., Nelson, R.G., Rutherford, J.R., Hinde, K., "Survey of academic field experiences (SAFE): Trainees report harassment and assault", *PLOS One* 9(7): <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0102>. Over 90% of female and 70% of male study participants were trainees or employees at the time that they were targeted. For the purposes of this survey, sexual harassment was defined as sexual remarks and comments about physical appearance and/or cognitive sex differences and sexual assault as unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature, including touching, physical threats, or rape.

This Statement is intended to provide useful information and best practices; it is not intended to constitute legal advice. In the event of any conflict between this Statement and applicable law or institutional policy, the applicable law or institutional policy prevails. Members and institutions are encouraged to seek their own counsel for advice in any specific situation.

#### **IV. What are sexual harassment, rape, and sexual assault?**

According to the United States Equal Opportunity Commission, sexual harassment includes comments directed at someone because of their sex as well as unwelcomed sexual advances or demands for sexual favors.<sup>3</sup> The Department of Justice defines rape as forced penetration of any body part of another person without that person's consent.<sup>4</sup> This definition of rape acknowledges the sex and gender of the perpetrator and victim is irrelevant, a victim is not required to physically resist, and a person may be unable to provide consent (*e.g.*, due to intoxication, psychological coercion, physical incapacitation, or other physical and mental incapacities). Sexual assault includes actual or attempted physical attacks (*e.g.*, rape) and any sexual contact (including fondling or groping) or behavior without explicit consent of the recipient.<sup>5</sup>

Paleoanthropology Society members are expected to conduct themselves in manner consistent with applicable civil and criminal laws prohibiting harassment, rape, and sexual assault.

As paleoanthropologists, we conduct our professional business in diverse spaces including field settings, conferences, workshops, online, classrooms, and laboratories on colleges and universities throughout the country and abroad. Accordingly, sexual harassment and assault can occur in all of these spaces. The majority of paleoanthropologists work under the auspices of educational institutions or museums. Thus, we are governed not only by local and national criminal and civil law but also by the policies and rules of these institutions, including (in the USA) Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972), 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, and similar legislation in other countries.

#### **V. Where does the Paleoanthropology Society Statement on Sexual Harassment and Assault apply?**

This statement applies to all physical (field, lab, conference locations and home institutions) and online spaces in which paleoanthropologists conduct professional business.

##### **A. "Home"**

At colleges, universities, and other places of research and teaching, we are often involved in collaborative endeavors that enable us to engage with colleagues at all stages of their careers and from many disciplines. While these collaborative projects can produce promising results, they

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<sup>3</sup> USEEOC (n.d.) Sexual Harassment.

<sup>4</sup> See, *e.g.*, Attorney General Eric Holder Announces Revisions to the Uniform Crime Report's Definition of Rape. January 6, 2012. Available at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-eric-holder-announces-revisions-uniform-crime-report-s-definition-rape>

<sup>5</sup> See, *e.g.*, Sexual Assault. Department of Justice. Updated April 2, 2015. <http://www.justice.gov/ovw/sexual-assault>

can also put us at risk for abuses of power. We encourage everyone to be aware of the rules surrounding appropriate behavior and the available resources in cases of abuses of any sort.

### **B. Field Contexts**

Fieldwork is a central component of training and research in paleoanthropology. These research trips often remove us from our home environments, and require us to engage with researchers, staff and community members from areas all around the world. They also require that work relationships are removed from their primary context and are situated in spaces that may have different cultural or professional rules. Due to their centrality in training in our discipline, we view the field as a workplace environment and an extension of our working environments at home. As such, all institutional rules regarding appropriate behavior apply in these fieldwork contexts as does this Paleoanthropology Society statement.

### **C. Social media, email, and other forms of digital socializing and communication**

There are varied reasons for engaging in social media. Activities on social media may be subject to provisions of some or all of the applicable laws discussed above. If using social media professionally (including to network with colleagues or for purposes of public outreach), Paleoanthropology Society members are expected to approach the interface as members would a conference, understanding that there are many colleagues who are “friends” who can see the posts and who would hold the post’s author to a high standard of professional behavior.

Before posting or commenting to a professional audience (even if mixed with non-academic “friends”), Paleoanthropology Society members are expected to consider this information available to the public. Nothing shared online is truly private, and the information shared may last "forever." Social media can serve as a megaphone, amplifying private conversations beyond the originally intended audience. When using social media, Paleoanthropology Society members should consider whether people are likely to interpret the writing in the way it was intended. The same temperament and attitude is also expected of Paleoanthropology Society members for email communication with colleagues (including faculty students and staff).

### **D. Conferences**

The Paleoanthropology Society is dedicated to providing a harassment-free conference experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, ethnicity, religion, or age. Due to their centrality in professional training and networking in our discipline, conferences are clearly an extension of the workplace environment. As such, all institutional rules regarding appropriate behavior apply in these contexts as does this Paleoanthropology Society statement. We will not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form.

## **VI. Suggestions for prevention:**

The Paleoanthropology Society believes that it is the responsibility of each member of our organization to create safe spaces free of discrimination or harassment. There are clear steps that we can take to help to foster a supportive and safe professional community, in person, in the field, at meetings and online.

- All Paleoanthropology Society members and researchers should educate themselves about types of sexual misconduct (harassment, rape, and sexual assault) and commit to not perpetrating these acts.
- Paleoanthropology Society members and researchers who are Principal Investigators are encouraged to create and enforce field-site specific codes of conduct.
- Paleoanthropology Society members and researchers who are Principal Investigators are legally required and strongly encouraged to report all harassment and assault that occurs at their places of research
- Junior scholars are encouraged to research all field research schools and programs before attending, and should make themselves aware of what resources will be available on site.
- Junior scholars are also encouraged to discuss all planned field research experiences with a trusted advisor or peer mentor.
- All researchers are encouraged to request a code of conduct from principal investigators in charge of research sites.
- All researchers should inquire about appropriate reporting mechanisms and university resources, in the case that the Principal Investigator fails to provide this information.
- The Paleoanthropology Society requires that all field schools or research experiences advertised on the Society website write, and make available on demand (1) a code of conduct prohibiting sexual assault and harassment and (2) appropriate reporting mechanisms for those who do experience or witness unwanted sexual contact of any type.

## **VII. Bystander awareness:**

Bystanders are those who observe or are subsequently informed of instances of sexual misconduct. Individuals react differently when witnessing or learning about sexual misconduct. It is important that Paleoanthropology Society members know how to recognize sexual harassment, rape, or assault and consider safe, responsible, and effective ways to react or intervene.

In addition, the Paleoanthropology Society recommends proactive engagement to foster a culture of respect and prevent sexual harassment, rape, and assault. The “It’s On Us Campaign,” which aims to establish a collective, societal ownership of the problem of sexual violence and to empower all of us to engage in shifting the cultural norms toward respect, has a useful toolkit that Paleoanthropology Society members may want to review and use.<sup>6</sup>

The following information is provided to help bystanders:

### **A. Ensure safety, then select the most appropriate approach**

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Create a distraction
- Interject yourself into the conversation
- Use the power of the group, and tell another person about the situation
- Ask the affected individual if he or she is ok

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<sup>6</sup> Available at [http://itsonus.org/assets/files/ItsOnUs\\_CampaignOrganizingTools.pdf](http://itsonus.org/assets/files/ItsOnUs_CampaignOrganizingTools.pdf)

- Speak out and/or tell an authority figure about the situation

### **B. Support the affected individual<sup>7</sup>**

- Encourage the affected individual to report the incident.
- Respect the individual's choice either to report or not to report the incident.
- Advise the affected individual to seek appropriate support.

## **VIII. How to obtain advice if you think you have a grievance:**

The Paleoanthropology Society is not an adjudicating body. We strongly recommend that our members seek out appropriate authorities with which to file claims of sexual harassment and assault. Typically, the line of formal complaint is through the perpetrator's home institution. All members should make themselves aware of the appropriate processes at their home institutions as well as the areas (*i.e.*, legal jurisdictions) where fieldwork, meetings, and other business are conducted.

Our goal is to foster a culture that makes our meetings models for safe and open working environments for all. The lines of formal reporting in all cases remain through the perpetrator's home institution; however, should an incident occur while at a Paleoanthropology Society meeting, the Paleoanthropology Society officers should be considered safe authorities with whom incidents can and should be discussed.

## **IX. Summary:**

Sexual harassment, assault and the threats of such behavior will not be tolerated in any form. The Paleoanthropology Society is committed to providing safe physical and online spaces for all of its members.

## **X. Acknowledgements:**

The officers of the Paleoanthropology Society (John Yellen, President; Alison S. Brooks, Treasurer; Eric Delson, Secretary) endorse this draft statement on sexual harassment and assault, which will be brought to the Paleoanthropology Society membership during the 2016 business meeting for discussion.

The Paleoanthropology Society statement revises and is based on a statement published by the American Association of Physical Anthropologists (AAPA), to whom we are grateful for permission to reuse. The AAPA statement was drafted by the 2014 and 2015 AAPA Ethics Committees (and its Sexual Harassment Statement Subcommittee) and amended by the AAPA Executive Committee in 2015 with input from the AAPA Counsel.

## **XI. Additional Resources:**

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<sup>7</sup> <http://stepupprogram.org/topics/sexual-assault/#actionsteps>; <https://rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-prevention/bystanders-can-help>

Clancy, K.B.H., Nelson, R.G., Rutherford, J.R., Hinde, K., “Survey of academic field experiences (SAFE): Trainees report harassment and assault”, *PLOS One* 9(7): <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0102172>

Muckle, Bob (2014). “On Sexual Harassment and Assault in Archaeology”, The SAA Archaeological Record [http://depts.washington.edu/anthweb/resources/diverse\\_pdfs/archy.rec.nov.2014.sex.harass.pdf](http://depts.washington.edu/anthweb/resources/diverse_pdfs/archy.rec.nov.2014.sex.harass.pdf)

Gewin, Virginia (2015). “Social behaviour: Indecent Advances” *Nature* 519: 251-253. <http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/science/articles/10.1038/nj7542-251a>

“We can Act” – a report developed by the American Philosophical Association Sexual Harassment Ad Hoc Committee <http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/sexualharassmentreport.pdf>

American Association of University Professors  
Sexual harassment policies 2002: <http://www.aaup.org/issues/sexual-harassment/policies-2002>

U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights Publications:  
2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/shguide.html>

April 4, 2011 DCL addressing student on student sexual harassment:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.html>

April 29, 2014 Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf>

Other resources for academics:  
<http://www.aaup.org/issues/sexual-harassment/resources-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment>

Bystander resources:  
<http://nsvrc.org/bystander-intervention-background-and-general-information>

It’s On Us Campaign:  
<http://itsonus.org>

Greendot, etc:  
<https://www.live.thegreendot.com/>