



Harassment at Uni

Hi

I'm writing this because I saw your twitter post asking if people had been told to change their behaviour after harassment or abuse. I don't know if this is what you meant but it's something that has stayed with me for over 10 years.

In Freshers' Week at uni I went to my first big night out at the union. I was a shy, sheltered and quite naive 17 year old and had never really been to many parties with school friends or out clubbing etc before. Early on in the evening an older (about 4 years) guy asked me to dance and then basically half-followed, half-dragged me around with him for the rest of the night. I tried to go back to my friends but he wouldn't let me, had never even been kissed before and didn't want to kiss him so would turn my cheek when he tried to do so. In the end I had lost track of all my friends so said I wanted to go home, he wouldn't let me get a taxi and insisted on walking me home, tried (and failed) to kiss me again, and asked to come in so we could exchange phone numbers. I knew this was a bad idea but he acted offended that I would think he would "do anything" so I let him. I made him leave after I had given him my number and nothing else happened but I was really shaken and upset.

When I told friends and family about it they were sympathetic but all their advice was "why didn't you give him a fake number?" (I was too honest to lie!), why didn't you take him to someone else's door (whose, I didn't know where any of my friends were), why did you let him come in?, ultimately "you should be more careful, men are only after one thing". All the people I knew at the party assumed I was happy to be with him.

I just know it really affected me and I pulled the shutters down with most guys after that.

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