

Communication from Public

Name: Lauren

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Comments for Public Posting: Unfortunately, there have been many instances where I have felt unsafe in public spaces. I once took the train with my family from Santa Monica to Downtown in the summertime. It was hot and we were going to a nice dinner, but wanted to beat the traffic since it was a 6:00 reservation. As we entered the train there were no open seats so we stood by the door. At the next stop a very tall large Caucasian man maybe 6'2" or even 6'5" walked in wearing a shirt that was hanging off his body, and he immediately began harassing me. He walked in and came up to me and screamed, "YOU ARE DISGUSTING. GET OUT OF MY SIGHT. HOW CAN ANYONE STAND TO BE NEAR YOU. YOU REVOLT ME." I had never seen this man before and everyone in the car was uncomfortable or ignored the situation. Unfortunately, I stood there as a 27 year old woman unsure what to do myself. Luckily a few people got up from their seats so I sat down with my sister-in-law a few rows away from the man. She allowed me to scoot inward and take the window seat so I was out of the man's sight line. But the man continued to scream his irritation and upset about my existence regardless. At the next stop the man exited and we were able to relax. It does not matter what I was wearing, that behavior is absolutely indefensible, but as I know some will wonder and still try to blame me for what happened I will explain that I was wear shorts and a long sleeved blouse. Again we were going to a high end dinner in downtown Los Angeles so I was dressed nicely. I have never felt comfortable wearing shorts or a dress or any kind on the train since and I refuse to go on the train alone. How is the train supposed to help our overcrowded traffic ways when half of the population is not safe to use the train without fear of emotional or physical harassment? Additionally, I used to live in the West LA area of the city and would enjoy walks around the neighborhood when I needed fresh air and a break. I started to see the same man more & more often until he was on every walk I took, and on a similar path as me even though I never went on walks at a consistent date, direction or even time of day. I started to feel uncomfortable & uncertain so I stopped my walks. I later ended up having to move out of that apartment because I had a peeping Tom who was repeatedly coming to my window and watching me, and even on one occasion took the screen off of my ground floor window

before he was interrupted by the police arriving. I called the police three times, but every time the man would leave once he knew I saw him watching me. There were no preventative measures done to protect me or the women in my community from this predator. And in turn I had to spend money to move out of an apartment I otherwise loved into a much smaller apartment that had security and gated access that was \$700 more in rent each month. The fact that there are no systems in place to protect the space and wellbeing of people in public spaces is not only disgusting, but also a complete missed opportunity to stop crimes before they get to a more serious level. A man who stares into a woman's window every night is not a model citizen. A man who sees a woman walking by so he runs out and follows her around the neighborhood is not a model citizen. And a man screaming at women on the train is not a model citizen. At worst these men are criminals slowly growing their desire for making women uncomfortable, pushing boundaries and taking what they want with no regard for the well-being of others. At best these are missed learning opportunities. If these men are "confused" then why are we not educating them on how they should be behaving. Why are we protecting people who are damaging the safety, well-being and mental health of our community instead of the innocent? Why am I blamed for stretching with clothing on in my own apartment in the back of the building 50 yards from the street? Why am I blamed for daring to wear shorts on the bus? Why am I blamed for being an attractive young woman in the city of Los Angeles? Am I not allowed to exist? Because when you are blatantly harassed and treated as if you are less than you begin to feel like those who represent you do not believe you are worth protecting, investing in and serving. Please do something. Try something and fail. Try again. Please prove to the women of this city that you care about them and that you want them to not just survive, but thrive.