

Bracing for Harm: A First-Person Account of Recurrent Hostility and Informal Dominance by Hispanic Women in Everyday Public Interactions

Abstract

This paper presents a first-person account of daily, recurrent hostile interactions in routine public and service settings. These encounters are characterized by obstruction, withdrawal of normal courtesy, selective enforcement of minor rules, and subtle but persistent dominance behaviors. The experiences are not episodic or hypothetical; they occur frequently enough that the author must psychologically brace before leaving home. While no claim is made regarding collective intent or ideology, the paper documents a consistent pattern in which Hispanic women in public-facing or gatekeeping roles are the primary actors in these interactions, with effects directed toward White women and Black women. The focus of this paper is not motive, but impact; how repeated low-level hostility reshapes daily life, undermines autonomy and dignity, and creates an adversarial public environment.

Positionality and Scope

This paper is written from real-life experience. It does not speculate about inner beliefs, nor does it claim that all members of any ethnic group behave similarly. It documents what happens, how often, and what it does. The scope is deliberately narrow: routine errands, checking out at a store, using a laundromat, requesting basic assistance, interactions that should be neutral and uneventful in a functional civil society.

Daily Life as a Site of Harm

For me, daily public life has become something that requires preparation. Leaving the house is no longer an “American day in the park.” I anticipate friction, obstruction, and hostility, and experience has taught me that these interactions are likely.

These witnessed behaviors are sometimes dramatic, but often small, procedural, and deniable. That is precisely why they are effective.

Common features include:

- Being blocked from exiting or moving through space without reasonable accommodation
- Being refused routine assistance that is later granted only after intervention
- Being subjected to rigid rule enforcement applied inconsistently
- Experiencing a contemptuous or dismissive tone without provocation
- Being slowed, delayed, or made to “go the extra mile” for basic services

In isolation, each incident could be dismissed. In accumulation, they form a pattern that is impossible to ignore.

“I am done— I am done ignoring the daily subjugation, hostility, and racism.”

I have experienced this racism my entire adult life as a traveler, but have yet to acknowledge it. *We are opening the dialogue. This is the season of **G(I)OSH: Grounded In Our Shared Humanity:***

Illustrative Encounters

In one routine checkout scenario, the physical layout and staff positioning blocked both sides of an exit. Rather than allowing a reasonable pass-through, I was required to walk around and ask again for the ability to check out through a blocked entryway. It did not feel as though this was about safety or necessity; it felt enforced as a matter of control.

In another setting, I requested small bills, an ordinary accommodation. I was told this was impossible and that only a larger bill could be provided. Without the intervention of a White female manager, I would likely not have been able to complete a basic task such as doing laundry. The assistance was not unavailable; it was withheld until authority shifted.

These interactions are not rare. They represent day-to-day imbalances between Hispanic females and myself as a White female.

As I write this, I am angered by the sheer fact that Whites are the only lower-casted race in liberal academics. There is no excuse for this lack of humanity in higher education. It has become very clear that the goal is to lower White Americans.

Who Is Present in These Interactions

Across settings, a consistent feature is that the gatekeeping role is occupied by Hispanic women. This is a real observation, not an accusation of universality, as many Hispanic women are beautiful, dynamic, nonconfrontational, and kind. It is simply who is present, who controls access, and who enacts the behaviors described. However, these interactions are not seldom; they are day-to-day and occur by the masses.

The effects of these behaviors are not limited to White women. Black women in similar contexts also encounter elevated friction, discourtesy, or obstruction. This suggests that the dynamic operates through in-group versus out-group signaling, rather than targeting a single race alone. I also want to express that I have endured these experiences by other races as well.

What unites those affected is not shared identity, but shared exclusion from the controlling in-group.

Dominance Without Overt Aggression

What makes these interactions particularly corrosive is their subtlety. There are no slurs. There is no explicit confrontation. Instead, there is:

- Delay
- Denial
- Obstruction
- Withholding
- Tone

These function as informal dominance rituals, ways of asserting control while maintaining plausible deniability. The message is communicated through action rather than words, you are not entitled to ease; you must defer; your presence is conditional.

Psychological and Behavioral Consequences

The cumulative effect is significant:

- I brace myself before routine errands
- I experience anticipatory stress in ordinary settings
- I alter behavior to avoid confrontation
- I expend energy managing interactions that should be effortless

This is social erosion. When everyday life requires armor, something is deeply wrong with the social environment.

Why This Cannot Be Dismissed as “Perception”

These experiences are:

- Repeated
- Patterned
- Contextually consistent
- Behaviorally specific

They involve concrete actions that either occur or do not. To frame them as mere perception is to ignore the material reality of blocked access, denied assistance, and enforced inconvenience.

What This Paper Does—and Does Not—Claim

This paper does not claim:

- That all Hispanic women behave this way
- That hostility is inherent
- That there is a unified ideology

This paper does claim:

- That these interactions are real
- That they occur daily
- That they are harmful
- That they are patterned
- That they disproportionately affect out-group women

Silencing such accounts in the name of avoiding discomfort does not promote equal justice; it preserves harm.

Conclusion

Public life should not feel adversarial. Routine interactions should not require emotional preparation. Yet for some of us, they do.

This paper stands as documentation—a public record.

If these dynamics are uncomfortable to confront, that discomfort should not be borne by those who experience them daily. It should be borne by institutions and communities willing to examine how informal power is exercised, and how easily harm hides in the ordinary.
