CRIME, SOCIAL CONTROL AND SPATIAL CONSTRAINT: A STUDY OF WOMEN'S FEAR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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EX BIBL UNIV. EDINBURGH

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of PhD of the University of Edinburgh.

Both the composition of the thesis and the research on which it is based are entirely my own work.

Signed ..... Date 20-12-93

ABSTRACT

This thesis evaluates and advances theories of systematic violence as a social control of vulnerable sections of the population, using original research carried out in Edinburgh in 1992 into women's fear of sexual and physical attack as an illustration. Analysis centres around the notion that the spatial patterns of fear reflect and reinforce broad power relations. A wide-ranging literature review examines current understanding and identifies gaps in research and theoretical analysis. After a critique of previous research, the choice and implementation of the research methodology is justified. The findings are then presented, drawn from 389 postal questionnaires and 45 follow-up in depth interviews.

The body of the thesis has two broad objectives. First, to seek greater understanding of women's fear of crime. Secondly, to integrate and extend the scope and nature of geographical, criminological and feminist theories of power relations and violence beyond simple considerations of gender. Sexual violence and harassment, and 'fear', are defined and assessed on the basis of the perceptions and experiences of the respondents. Attention is given to the extent and impact of fear in private space, the workplace and social settings as well as in public places.

Various causal factors suggested by previous research are examined, including the extent of violence, social and economic factors, the built environment, formal social controls, socialisation, information sources and harassment. In contrast to criminologists' suggestions it is shown that the extent of violence against women can not explain the level and distribution of women's fear, the exception being fear of private space violence which is often shaped by experience. In contrast to geographers' claims about fear in public places, it is also demonstrated that misinformation about the location of violence is not responsible for misplaced fear. The research finds strong support for suggestions that routine harassment is instrumental in determining patterns of fear and vulnerability. Its role maintaining patterns of vulnerability and in policing identities is examined in difference places, and it is argued that space is central to interpretations of, reactions to and the effects of harassing behaviour.

Existing theories are integrated and expanded throughout these discussions. The main thesis concerning women's fear is developed to consider how other causes of social vulnerability intensify fear of crime. Patterns of fear among women of different class and age backgrounds are related to experiences of danger in different spaces. The ways in which crime socially controls other disadvantaged groups, particularly children, people with disabilities, people of colour and gay men and lesbians, are also drawn into theory. It is argued that abuse in private space is often as or more pertinent to these discussions than the usual focus, public space, and it is suggested how considerations of power relations might be broadened to reflect people's experiences more accurately.

Finally, a range of recent policies are evaluated in the light of the findings, and recommendations are made for future research, theory and practice.

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This is in memory of my grandmother, Flossie May Payne.

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2. Pain, R. H. (1993) Women's fear of sexual violence: explaining the spatial paradox. In Jones, H. (ed) Crime and the urban environment: the Scottish experience Aldershot: Avebury, 55-68

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So far I have rearranged my life to protect myself from the evils of this world. What I should do is formulate a plan to rearrange the world and make it safe and fair. Perfect! I can't wait. This useful endeavour will certainly keep me occupied as I pass the time in my luxurious cell.

(Carol Leigh 'The continuing saga of Scarlet Harlot II' in Delacoste and Alexander 1987:42)

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION:
CRIME AS A SOCIAL CONTROL

A. CRIME, POWER AND SOCIAL CONTROL: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH AIMS

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades, research has shown that fear of crime is a significant social problem (Balkin 1979; Conklin 1975; Lewis and Salem 1986; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Smith 1983), and it has emerged repeatedly that this is particularly so for women (Anderson et al 1990a; Baumer 1978; Box et al 1988; Crawford et al 1990; Garofalo 1978; Gordon et al 1980; Gottfredson 1984; Hough and Mayhew 1983, 1985; Mayhew et al 1989; Stanko 1987b; Warr 1984). In recent years there has been a growth in research and theory seeking to explain the relationship between gender and fear of crime (Gardner 1990; Gordon and Riger 1989; Junger 1987; McLaughlin et al 1990; Painter 1992; Sacco 1990; Stanko 1990a; Valentine 1989a). This thesis and the research which forms its basis arise directly from this body of work and the specific questions raised within it.

Theoretical as well as empirical discontinuities exist around the subject of women's fear of crime. In the review which follows, I identify literature relevant to women's fear of crime from three disciplines: geography, criminology and feminist theory. Due to the different and sometimes narrow scope of interest of each approach, the findings do not always fit comfortably together, nor has a unified theoretical framework been developed. This thesis attempts to broaden as well as unify theories of women's fear. Theoretical analysis has tended to be concerned with women's fear of sexual violence from men; there has been no closely connected structural analysis of the effect of crime on children, for example, no related conceptualisation of older people's experiences nor those of other vulnerable social groups.

Alongside these broad empirical and theoretical considerations, there remain practical imperatives for the present study. The relevance of the topic is more immediate than ever. Local surveys have recently indicated that levels of fear among women in British cities are rising (Anderson et al 1990; Crawford et al

1990), and concern about women's and children's safety from recent highly publicised attacks is contributing to the 'moral panic' which is said, increasingly, to characterise British social life (Cohen 1973; Parton 1985). At the level of individual experience, fear of violence has a significant impact, imposing a range of spatial and social constraints on women's lives and having implications for quality of life, freedom and opportunity (Gordon and Riger 1989; Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Stanko 1990a; Valentine 1989b). In addition, perceptions and concerns about crime have a bearing on women's and children's exposure to the risk of violence, as I will demonstrate. Specific research on women's fear continues to be valuable in that it offers the opportunity to gather information on the extent and effects of physical and sexual violence and harassment against women, which have remained mostly hidden to mainstream criminological research (Stanko 1988b). Finally, the last few years have seen the development and implementation of specific policies by central and local governments aimed at reducing the newly discovered 'problem' of women's fear. Accordingly, there is a need for up to date research into the social and environmental causes of fear in order to judge whether these will be effective.

My broad objectives in this introductory section are to identify the theoretical and empirical gaps existing in this body of literature, and to highlight the ways in which these are tackled in my research. I want first to locate my research topic, women's fear of crime, by reviewing the relevant literatures from human geography, criminology, and feminist social science. Each of these disciplines has given consideration to the relationship between crime, power and social relations with respective shades of emphasis. In this discussion I identify some broad research gaps and argue that, when drawn together, these literatures can offer an appropriate theoretical framework for analysis. I go on to examine the current state of knowledge about women's fear of crime, identifying the main findings, achievements and difficulties of the research to date and raising specific questions which I attempt to answer in my own work. I then outline what a geographical perspective can offer to understanding of women's fear, and suggest that analysis of ways in which power relations affect fear of crime requires refinement. Finally, I summarise the specific aims of the research.

2. A framework for analysis: crime, fear and social control

a) Human geography: from spatial pattern to structure

What can human geography offer to a framework for the analysis of fear of violence? The effects of crime on individuals' spatial experiences only came to be seen as significant in geography with the work of Smith (1982), despite interest in crime having existed in the discipline since the 1960s. Early research had examined, for example, the role of space in patterns of offending and victimisation, the implication of environmental factors in crime, and the spatial impact of laws and the distribution of justice (eg Davidson 1981; Harries and Brunn 1978; Herbert 1982). The scale of analysis was generally at areal or neighbourhood level, setting a precedent for a good deal of the later work on fear of crime too.

To some extent, the development of paradigms in geography and criminology have mirrored one another; much criminological research on the effects of crime has similarly used the neighbourhood as a unit of analysis. The value of working at this scale is outlined by Reiss (1986); its employment has produced much useful work on fear of crime. In seeking to explain levels of fear, analyses have pointed to local environmental conditions which indicate that social control is weak, such as levels of visible incivility, police presence and environmental decay (eg Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Skogan 1986), and to local social conditions such as the erosion of formal community ties and increasing social isolation (Conklin 1975; Kail and Kleinman 1985; Lewis and Salem 1986; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Smith 1983). However, for reasons which I will go on to discuss, neighbourhood level explanations can not account for high levels of fear of crime among women, which tend to cut across local areal boundaries and often bear little resemblance to aggregate patterns of fear of crime.

The development of 'radical' perspectives in geography in the late 1970s, however, also led to more complex considerations of crime and fear of crime in geography at alternative levels of analysis. Figure 1.1 reflects Herbert's (1982) conceptualisation of how various geographical and social layers might be linked to each other in a spatial analysis of crime.

Figure 1.1 offers a simple framework for explaining the root causes of crime (ie from the level of social formation) as well as for description of its distribution and effects, and thus provides a link between spatial analysis and the structural analysis

of women's fear in other disciplines which I will go on to discuss. During the 1980s geographers' considerations of crime became increasingly concerned with the impact of structure on spatial patterns, and since this time it is generally acknowledged that:

> The research task is not that of proving the existence of spatial patterns but rather of examining their significance and of understanding the processes which produce them.
>
> (Evans et al 1992:2)

Figure 1.1
A conceptual framework for a geography of crime

Level 1 (Production)	**SOCIAL FORMATION**		
	[ideology, values, traditions]		[power and resources]
Level 2 (Distribution)	**ALLOCATIVE PROCESSES**		
	[Resource allocation: urban managers differential access-inequalities]		[Socio-legal processes police, judiciary, social services labelling-enforcement-sanctions]
Level 3 (Consumption)	**SPACE**		
	[Patterns (crime areas)]	[Processes (spatial behaviours)]	[Responses (sub-cultures, meaning of place)]

Source: Herbert (1982) p.26

Geographers' explanations of fear of crime have increasingly sought to make links with processes of neighbourhood change, for example, and have focused on individuals' general feelings of insecurity and belonging in a broader context as well as their specific concerns about crime (Smith 1989; see, for example, the collection by Jones 1993). Spatial analysis still remains central to these considerations, and social geographers have taken explicit account of individuals' relation to power and resources, linking patterns of inequality in space and society in an attempt to explain the variations in the extent and effects of fear between different social groups. It has been suggested that those who feel a lack of integration into their neighbourhoods, isolation, or a lack of social acceptance; those who have little control over resources; and those who are marginalised and experience a sense of powerlessness within society are most likely to fear crime

(Kail and Kleinman, 1985; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Smith 1986, 1989; Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988b). General feelings of uncontrollability may become focused on specific fears about crime, and are consequently manifested in spatial perceptions and behaviour:

> In short, fear of crime may be conceptualised as an expression of the sense of powerlessness and uncertainty that accompanies much of urban life.
>
> (Smith 1989: 198)

Although gender differences are referred to in these discussions, the link between higher levels of fear of crime among women and the general inequalities which women experience in public and private life have not been explicitly drawn in to analysis. Yet there are clear parallels: Smith (1984b, 1986, 1987b, 1989), for example, highlights the ways in which the 'structured inequality of British society', transected by race and class, influences the distribution of fear (Smith 1986:177). The capacity of different groups to control space (and here space is embodied with symbolic as well as physical meaning) influences the outcome of fear. Fear is seen in geographers' structural analyses as having a role in perpetuating inequality as well as indicating social and political vulnerability, as the response to fear of crime of powerless groups may reproduce vulnerability. As a simple example, if people of colour stay indoors for fear of racist attack, then their white oppressors gain more control of public space. Hence:

> The unintended consequences of informal reactions to crime include the reproduction of patterns of dominance, subordination and resistance that are expressed in the national political economy.
>
> (Smith 1986:177)

In addition to recognition that broad social and spatial structures influence fear, there has been a move, ostensibly in the opposite direction, towards explanations at the level of the individual which take account of the ways in which people react to and are affected by different layers of power; this reflects a broader trend in social analysis (eg Giddens 1991). Recent geographical analysis of survey data, for example, has highlighted the need to look at the differences between and within households to fully understand how powerlessness affects individuals' relation to fear of crime (Smith 1989), while the various ways in which spatial structure affects individuals' perceptions about crime have been explored in environmental psychology (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988b). This work has demonstrated that

feelings of unsafety are highly situated; variations in fear are greatly dependent on particular places and locations (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988b).

These general analyses of fear of crime provide a fitting framework for consideration of the effect of gender. Space has particular salience to women's experiences of fear, as I will go on to outline, yet despite social geographers' interest in structural analysis, consideration of the role of space in women's vulnerability to crime and its effects has only begun recently with the work of Valentine (1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1992a).

b) Criminology: deconstructing fear of crime

Recent trends in criminological work of fear of crime relate to the notions emerging from human geographers' analyses, in particular helping to understand how 'structured inequalities' in society affect vulnerability to crime and fear. Criminologists have described the broad implications of fear of crime for the quality of life of vulnerable members of society (eg Crawford et al 1990; Gordon and Riger 1989; Stanko 1990a), emphasising the importance of the meanings behind patterns of fear and their implications for the social and political position of vulnerable members of society. Examination of the unequal distribution of fear of crime in recent years has focused on individuals' relation to power, mainly centring on older people (eg Mawby 1988; Painter 1989; see Chapter 6) and on women (eg Painter 1992; Stanko 1988b). For example, it has been suggested that in relation to women's fear of crime:

> Perhaps we should direct our inquiry to the reality of 'risk' and the long-term consequences of what it means to be universally vulnerable, a subordinate, in a male-dominated society.
>
> (Stanko, 1987b:134)

Much of this work can be linked to a broader movement within the discipline to reconceptualise hitherto taken for granted notions of fear of crime, risk, danger and vulnerability (eg see Kinsey and Anderson 1992; Mawby 1988; Stanko 1990a; Young 1988). This has accompanied the deconstruction of some aspects of traditional criminological theory and methodology, particularly by feminist and realist challenges from within the discipline (eg see Genn 1988; Jones et al 1986; Matthews and Young 1992; Young 1986, 1988; Gelsthorpe and Morris 1990; Sparks 1992; Stanko 1998a; see Chapter 2). I return to the issue of reconceptualising fear of crime, risk and vulnerability frequently in later chapters.

Even some of the most recent analyses of fear of crime have been criticised, however, for failing to address adequately exactly how power affects individuals' risk and fear of violence (Stanko and Hobdell 1993). For it is specific risks of violence, criminologists have argued, rather than generalised concern about property and personal crime, which shape fear and its impact most profoundly (Warr 1984; Gordon and Riger 1989; Stanko 1985, 1987b, 1990a). Hence a distinction needs to be made between what I want to refer to as *generic* crime, the undifferentiated focus of much research, and *systematic* forms of violence. I use this latter term to describe discriminatory violence aimed at socially and politically vulnerable groups (examples are women, children, people with disabilities, gay men and lesbians) which has the consequence of substantially increasing their risk of crime in comparison to the general population, heightening the effects of crime upon them, and compounding their vulnerability. Therefore, as the most pressing aspect of fear of crime, I have chosen to focus on systematic violence in this thesis. Various parallels can be drawn between the various forms of systematic violence, both in theoretical terms and from empirical research (Chapter 6); in this sense and as I will be highlighting, my central analysis of sexual violence is intended to serve as an example of how vulnerable groups are controlled by the use and threat of systematic violence.

c) Feminist theories: gender, space and violence

A third body of literature also has clear relevance to a framework of analysis for women's fear of crime. Feminist theories have encompassed both male violence and the impact of gender inequalities on women's use of space.

i) Feminism and violence

Feminist theories of violence have largely been concerned with male violence against women and children (Kelly 1991). This body of theory provides a well-developed structural basis for analysing gender and fear of crime, having been in existence for over two decades: resistance to feminist ideas and challenges in criminology and geography have ensured that they have only been considered relevant to explaining women's fear of crime recently (eg Stanko 1985; Valentine 1989a). Sexual and physical aggression is conceptualised in feminist theory as a cause and a consequence of men's control over women's lives (Brownmiller 1975). The behavioural constraints imposed by women's fear, are seen in feminist analyses as restricting women's opportunities and keeping them in places and roles appropriate to traditional notions about gender difference (Griffin 1986). I discuss

the implications and applications of this body of theory in Chapter 3, along with feminist socialisation theory which has been implicated in the role of violence in social control. Feminist theory has also made an important contribution to reassessing the meaning of crime, in particular highlighting the relationship between major and minor abuses of women (Chapter 2).

ii) Feminism and space

Feminist theories of violence as a social control of women can be linked with existing feminist perspectives in criminology and geography. The 1970s saw feminist challenges to many of the natural and social sciences (see Spender 1981); while feminist challenges to criminology have stressed and countered the discipline's blindness to issues of gender and crime (see Gelsthorpe and Morris 1990), feminist geography has bridged the gap between gender relations and spatial perspectives on society (see Hanson and Monk 1982; Women and Geography Study Group 1984). Feminist geography became established in the early 1980s and can be defined as follows:

> The examination of the ways in which socio-economic, political and environmental processes create, reproduce and transform not only the places we live, but also the social relations between men and women in these places and how, in turn, gender relations also have an impact on these processes and their manifestations. That is, feminist geography is concerned with understanding the interrelations between socially constructed gender relations and socially constructed environments.
>
> (Little, Peake and Richardson 1988:1-2)

Early contributions to the discipline were principally concerned with making women's lives and activities more visible. Later analysis involved challenging the origins of geographical knowledge, reflecting feminist challenges to social science elsewhere (Harding 1987). Areas of research have included the structure and design of the built environment and the spatial organisation of cities (Boys 1984, Matrix 1984, Bowlby et al 1982a, 1982b, 1984; Saegert 1980); women's limited access to resources and services (Tivers 1985); restrictions on mobility (Pickup 1988); relations with the state (Bondi and Peake 1988); the 'gendering' of space in urban areas, and the cultural and ideological association of appropriate behaviour for the sexes with certain places (Mazey and Lee 1983; McDowell 1983). An outline of the diversity of feminist geography work can be found in Bondi (1990b) and a comprehensive review in McDowell (1993). Resembling feminist analyses of the role of male violence, the general conclusion is that:

> The division of urban space both reflects and influences the sexual divison of labour, women's role in the family, and the separation of home life from work.
>
> (McDowell 1983:62).

Feminist geography, then, provides the third dimension of a framework for examining the effects of fear of violence on women. It provides valuable radical and structural interpretations of social and environmental phenomena, as well as spatial analysis. Taking a radical feminist approach, Valentine (1989a, 1989b, 1991, 1992a) has begun exploration of the impact of women's fear on their geographies. Focusing on women's restricted use of public space, she concludes that fear constitutes a 'spatial expression of patriarchy' (Valentine 1989b:315). My contribution to this area of inquiry is to follow up and critically evaluate her work.

d) Summary

My aim, then, is to contribute to the development of theories of crime as a social control in a way which reconciles the three bodies of literature I have outlined here, and to resolve some of the questions raised by feminist and realist challenges. Although the literatures from geography, criminology and feminist social science have not to date been explicitly linked, they complement each other well. Each leaves certain gaps; social geographers have produced valuable work on the social control of space, although their discussions of power tend to be at a high level, while increasing attention has been given by criminologists to the meanings behind fear of crime for individuals and the way in which power structures transect each other. Criminologists have also drawn an important distinction between the effects of what I have called generic fear of crime and systematic violence, but have included no consideration of space in their analyses which, as I go on to argue in looking at explanations offered for women's fear, is central to understanding it.

3. Explanations for women's fear: a review of the empirical evidence

Many explanations for women's fear have been put forward over the last fifteen years. They can, perhaps, best be ordered into those seeking to explain each of a number of paradoxes, or problems in resolving women's fear with women's experience as victims, which have emerged from research. In a review of the literature, below, I identify the three key paradoxes with which my work seeks to engage, and the explanations which have been offered for them in order to locate the questions from which my own research arises.

a) The paradox between levels of fear and levels of risk

The earliest explanations of women's fear were based on the ostensible paradox that high levels of fear of crime among women contradict their actual risks of victimisation (Balkin 1979; Gordon et al 1980; Hough and Mayhew 1983). Evidence of this paradox seemed particularly clear from the first two sweeps of the British Crime Survey (Hough and Mayhew 1983, 1985), leading to the supposition that women's fear must be irrational. Explanations concentrated on what were seen to be inflated perceptions of risk, women's social and physical vulnerability in comparison to men, and the 'special' nature of the crime of rape (Balkin 1979; Gordon et al 1980; Riger et al 1978; Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Warr 1985). This 'vulnerability' perspective has since been criticised for implying that women are inherently weak and passive 'born victims', and for ignoring structural explanations of violence which focus upon men (Stanko 1985). The argument is that this paradox is not, in fact, a real one, but is produced by the unrepresentative way that criminologists have defined and measured crime against women (Stanko 1988a, 1988b; see Chapter 2).

In contrast to the national crime surveys of Britain and North America, a growing number of feminist studies through the 1980s explored violence against women in terms of women's experiences and meanings. These have shown that sexual and physical attacks on women are far more commonplace and routine than previous research suggested (eg Hall 1985; Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Radford 1987; Russell 1982). Local crime surveys have been carried out since which use more sensitive methods than previous national surveys, and have shown that, if minor forms of intimidation and harassment which are more common still are also taken into account, high levels of fear of attack among women are justified by the actual extent of victimisation (Anderson et al 1990; Crawford et al 1990; Jones et al 1986; Stanko 1987b; Painter 1992; Young 1988). I aim in this research to confirm this justification by using contrasting research tools.

b) The spatial paradox

However, a new mismatch became apparent from the feminist research described above. There may not be an inherent paradox between actual levels of risk and levels of fear (insofar as these can be measured); but research has suggested that there is a mismatch between the location where most physical and sexual violence occurs and the location in which most women fear violence. While the risks of violence are greater in private space, the majority of women express more concern

about being attacked in public space (see for example Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Pain 1989; Valentine 1989a, 1989b). This had not previously been identified in mainstream research on fear of crime, because of the tendency for crime surveys to focus only on risk and fear in public places (Stanko 1988a). Yet the marked spatial patterns of women's fear call into question the suggestion that rates of victimisation are enough to explain it.

Explanations have been sought to resolve this spatial paradox in women's perceptions about danger. In particular, radical feminists have argued that there is a conspiracy to misinform women about the main location of danger, through the institutions of the family, the education system and the media, and through social contact, in order to keep women 'in their place': at home, where exposure to risk is actually greater (eg Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Valentine 1992a). This ensures that the social control of women through violence, which is central to feminist analyses, is maintained simply by the threat of attack. I aim to evaluate this argument by examining women's perceptions about sexual and physical danger in more depth (Chapter 4).

c) The paradox between experience of violence and experiences of fear

The third paradox arises from an inherent problem with the accepted explanation for the first: the idea that high levels of concern about violence among women exist because sexual violence is common. Stanko, for example, concludes that:

> In effect, women's feelings of fear may relate to their tacit understanding of the likelihood of experiencing male violence and the lack of protection they receive from those around them.
>
> (Stanko 1987b:131)

Three questions can be raised in relation to making this link (in addition those posed by the spatial paradox). First, if it is true that high levels of violence lead to high levels of fear one might expect men to be equally afraid in light of the commonness of violence against them (Sacco 1990). The fact is that men's fear of physical attack is poorly documented (Stanko and Hobdell 1993). It seems unlikely, however, from such research that exists that the majority of men find their lives are constrained by violence to the same extent as women's are.

Second, if fear is due to risk, one might expect the patterns of fear within the female population to mirror the patterns of direct experience of male violent and

aggressive behaviour (Sacco 1990). It is widely documented that the majority of women are affected by fear; but have as many women experienced sexual violence? It has been suggested that this is the case (Kelly 1987). I examine this argument and present some empirical data in Chapter 2. Location is also of importance here, as it has been suggested that women's fear of crime reflects hidden violence against women (Stanko 1988b), in other words the fact that a great deal of unreported attacks take place in the home. Have most women experienced men they know as dangerous; does this explain their fear of violence?

Third, is it simply women's 'tacit understanding of the likelihood of experiencing male violence' which makes them fearful? Are most women aware of the nature of the social and spatial extent of violence, and if so do they necessarily identify with these risks? The existence of the spatial paradox between perceptions of danger and actual risk suggests otherwise; overridingly, women's images of sexual and physical danger are of random attacks by strangers outside the home (Valentine 1989a). The meaning of a 'tacit understanding' of male violence also goes somewhat deeper, however; it pertains too to 'what it means to be universally vulnerable, a subordinate, in a male-dominated society' (Stanko 1987b:134). In other words, on a parallel with Smith's (1986) analysis of fear of crime, just as social inequality affects patterns of vulnerability, vulnerability exacerbates women's inequality.

Explanations of women's fear have also focused on widespread sexual harassment, as a reminder to women of their social and physical vulnerability (Junger 1987; Painter 1992; Stanko 1987b, 1988b). My aim is to elaborate upon and refine this argument. This aspect of sexual harassment received little in depth attention in a large general literature. Using empirical evidence gathered by using different research tools, I will seek to establish why, when and where harassment carries meanings about danger, or is equated with sexual violence in women's minds, along with the issue of how women interpret separate events. Geographers have not considered sexual harassment in their work on women's use of space, and I explore the effect of place, space, time, situation and the perspectives of the individuals involved on the meanings and effects of harassment. This has implications for women's fear of crime. Based on women's experiences and opinions, I explore whether harassment involves more complex issues than feminist theories (or, indeed, competing theories) have acknowledged.

4. The place of space

As I have indicated, an examination of space is central to my analysis, and the thesis centres on the argument that the social construction of space has a major role in mediating the impact of crime. Criminology has, on the whole, been negligent of the roles of place and spatial perspectives in crime (Evans et al 1992), yet it has a key role in describing and explaining women's perceptions and fears about crime, and its impact on their lives. In particular, the ideological distinction between public and private space (a concept I discuss in Chapter 4) is crucial to the construction of space and notions about it.

At the same time, however, it is important not to overplay the role of space, and to acknowledge that women's experiences of violence and harassment are not dissected by spatial boundaries (Painter 1992). Geographers have failed to recognise the implications of this; Valentine's (1989b) work, for example, is valuable in highlighting the role of spatial analysis, yet it assumes the universal existence of a spatial paradox between fear and risk and makes little of the effects of violence, fear and intimidating behaviour on women's experiences of private space (or, indeed, the actual risks women face in public space). The work of Gardner (1988, 1989, 1990) also makes a significant contribution in crystallising women's experiences of identity and control in public places. It is left to early and largely non-empirical feminist theory, however, to inform our understanding of how the threat of violence might act to socially control women in private space. It is important that fear and the impact of crime in private space receives more specific research attention. The vast majority of policies aimed at reducing fear of crime focus only on public space (Stanko 1988b; see Chapter 7).

A spatial perspective in analysis of violence and social control also facilitates consideration of the environmental as well as the social factors which underpin fear of crime. There has been little research which has comprehensively explored both of these. While social explanations have been popular in North America, research has often concentrated on environmental factors in Britain and the Netherlands, in line with the dominant scientific paradigms existing in each country (Bernard 1992). Alongside the use of different methodological tools, the broader focus I wish to engage enables consideration of as many relevant aspects as possible (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988a; see Section B).

5. Expanding analysis of power relations

Although I intend to work from the standpoint that it is the structurally vulnerable position of women in society which lies at the root of their fear of violence, feminist analyses to date clearly leave certain questions unanswered. There is a need, for example, to clarify the relationship between women, fear of violence and social class. I examine the suggestion that the quality of life and equality of opportunity of middle class women are less hampered by fear, due to the advantages bestowed by their class position. Do improvements in the social and economic status of some women which continue to occur free them of the sharpest traditional constraint, the fear of violence? Have the successes of the women's movement in bringing the issue of private violence to the attention of the media, the public and policy makers effected more understanding and confidence among women? Likewise, the effects of intersecting axes such as age, race, and disability on women's experiences of fear of crime are not clear.

As well as expanding on considerations of sexual violence as a social control across space, I want to make explicit links to other forms of systematic violence. There is a need for geography and feminist theory to broaden analyses of power structures and their intersections (Pain 1991). Human geography has recently begun to integrate issues specifically affecting children, people with disabilities and gay men and lesbians into its research agenda (Bell 1991; Golledge 1993; James 1990; Valentine 1993a), while the intersections of racism, patriarchy and gender difference have been the subject of interest in feminist geography for a number of years (Foord and Gregson 1986; Jackson 1985; Johnson 1987; McDowell 1986; Smith 1990). Research on the spatial experiences of older people is established in geography (Rowles 1978) and criminology although, as I argue in Chapter 6, academic work has had a tendency to reflect negative stereotypes about them.

What significance do age, disability, race and sexual orientation have upon fear of violence and its spatial impact? The effect of race and ethnicity on women's concerns about sexual violence have been considered (eg Hall 1985; MacKinnon 1979; Stanko 1990a), and the impact of sexual orientation on lesbians' and gay men's fear of crime has also been noted (Stanko 1990a). I aim to extend recent theories about vulnerability to draw together a comprehensive framework in which the experiences, fears and effects of systematic violence against children, older people, gay men and lesbians, people of colour and people with disabilities may be understood (Chapter 6). I examine notions about the safety of private and public

space and their possible importance in determining the spatial experiences of members of these groups who feel at risk (or whom others feel are at risk) from violence.

I also want to tackle the complexity of power relations within this theoretical framework and, in an effort to represent the diversity of experience, deal with the exceptions to the broad predictive patterns with which social theorists are usually concerned. For example, criminologists have recently emphasised that:

> A realist criminology must start from the actual subgroups in which people live their lives, rather than from the broad categories which conceal wide variations within them.
>
> (Young 1988:171)

Hence I want to consider the impact of individual and contrasting life experiences and relations with power on variations in fear of violence, to build upon simple conceptualisations of power.

Finally, I have decided to restrict empirical work to women's experiences of violence rather than men's. Although this might seem to conflict with the broader discussion of power relations I outlined above, this is due to my specific interest on the spatial dimensions of fear and on structural analysis. While I recognise that the construct of masculinity has an impact on the differential vulnerability of men (Stanko and Hobdell 1993), and hence it is requires research and policy attention, I have excluded it in the context of this discussion for two reasons. I would argue, firstly, that while the construct of masculinity disadvantages some men and polices their lives, it is also part of a structure of dominance from which many others benefit: despite high levels of assault, men can not be considered to be 'universally vulnerable' in the same way that many women are. Secondly, the usual spatial distribution of violence against men alone suggests that fear and its effects are not as pervasive as those imposed by the threat with which women live, and I would contend that it does not have as profound an effect on their spatial and social lives. Clearly the exception to this regards the experiences of men who feel at risk from discriminatory attack such as racist or homophobic violence, and therefore I include men in my general discussion of systematic violence in Chapter 6 where I also discuss some of general issues raised by men's fear.

6. Summary of research aims

a) To contribute to the empirical understanding of women's fear of crime

There is a continuing need for research on women's fear of violence in different locations and at different times. For example, much research on fear of crime has concentrated on inner city areas and peripheral council estates. There is a need to compare the experiences of a representative cross-section of women. My study therefore aims to span a range of socio-economic groups in different parts of the city, so that full appraisal can be given to environmental and social factors. Existing information on women's fear either tends to come from large scale, quantitative surveys where gender is not the principal interest (such as the local crime surveys), or from feminist research which has employed qualitative methods alone. I question the use of only one data-gathering tool in Section B of this chapter. As well as providing the first large scale British questionnaire survey of women's fear, I aim to validate and expand upon the data with qualitative research. My research is also aimed at being experientially sensitive, and at representing as closely as possible the full scope of experiences, opinions and responses of women in the survey. The conceptualisation of sexual violence and harassment used in the thesis, for example, is based upon that of the women in the survey and, for reasons I explain, differs in some respects from that of previous feminist research (Chapters 2 and 5). I also highlight reactions to harassment and sexual danger other than fear and detrimental effects (Chapters 3 and 5), in an effort to challenge the common stereotype of helpless victims of fear in victimology, and to present more positive images of the 'vulnerable'.

b) To explore variations in the extent and effects of fear across space

I aim to explore the extent of fear of violence and harassment in private space and in intermediate spaces such as the workplace and social settings as well as in public space (Chapters 3 and 5). Similarly I aim to examine the effects of concern about violence and harassment on women in different places. As well as looking at the effects of stranger rape, I will consider how domestic violence, marital and date rape, child abuse and harassment might socially control women and children and limit opportunities for equality.

c) To contribute to geographical, criminological and feminist theory

In fulfilling aims (a) and (b), I will draw together the three bodies of literature I have discussed in this introductory Section. I aim to contribute to the discipline of human geography by extending spatial analysis of fear of crime. I will contribute to

criminological discussion by evaluating and refining conceptualisations of risk and vulnerability, broadening consideration of the meaning of 'fear' and the scope of its effects, and highlighting the role of space in maintaining patterns of dominance. I also aim to use empirical evidence to evaluate feminist theories such as the notion of a continuum of sexual violence (Chapter 2 and 5), violence as a social control and socialisation theory (Chapter 3), and the public/private division of space (Chapter 4).

d) To draw different forms of systematic violence into social control theory

I aim to illuminate some of the differences, similarities and intersections between forms of systematic violence (Chapter 6), in particular by drawing together literatures on race and ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, disability and fear of crime. With reference to empirical evidence I aim to crystallise the effect of social class on women's experiences of fear, and to explore the nature of older women's relationship with fear of crime and the effect of disability on vulnerability. I examine the constraints imposed on children by their parents' fears about violence, and the implications of these for their vulnerability as children and future adults. In each case I seek to explore the role of notions about and the construction of space.

e) To seek explanations for fear

I aim to resolve the various paradoxes arising in research on women's fear to date which I have outlined, through an in depth examination of adult women's perceptions about danger and how they are dealt with (Chapters 3 and 4). I compare the effects of social and environmental factors on women's fear. I concentrate on the effect of socialisation processes on female vulnerability, the importance of which has been indicated recently by Stanko (1990a) and Valentine (1992a), but which has received relatively little in depth attention in empirical research (Sacco 1990). I also explore how parents use the concept of sexual vulnerability to justify and explain their control of children (Chapter 4).

I aim to explore how women conceptualise sexual harassment and to measure its extent and its effects on women's lives (Chapter 5). I introduce a geography of sexual harassment, exploring the effect of location, place and situation on women's evaluation and the outcome of events. I follow up suggestions that sexual harassment acts as a precursor of sexual violence, consider how this might operate

as a way in which men control different spaces, and seek to examine how far harassment is implicated in fear of violence among other groups.

f) To consider the implications of the research findings for practice

One motivation of research is to produce knowledge which might be practical and utilisable. I discuss the implications of my findings for policy, research and the development of theory in the future (Chapter 7). I aim to evaluate recent policy initiatives in the light of the findings, and to emphasise the difficulties in the relationship between research, social policy and social change. I discuss the contention that systematic violence, harassment and the high levels of fear which are associated remain institutionalised. My recommendations for individual and collective practice and policy seek to focus on ways in which vulnerable groups can deal positively with fear.

B. METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

In this section, I describe the process of choosing the methodology of the research and tackling the problems which arose. I outline the criteria affecting the choice of methods, my decision to use both quantitative and qualitative methods, and the advantages and limitations of the chosen methods for this particular project. I describe how the sample was drawn, comment on the response rates and the way in which the data have been used, and discuss my attempt to deal with the problem of calculating a social class variable for the respondents. A fuller description of how the research was carried out, along with an evaluation, can be found in Appendix B, while in Chapter 7 I comment on the implications of my implementation of methodology for future research.

2. Choice of methods

a) Criteria

There were various considerations to be taken into account in choosing methods. Primarily, the methods used had to meet the objectives of the research (see Section A). The data collected were required to be reasonably representative, to be exploratory as well as descriptive and to allow generalisation about form and theorisation about meaning. As well as academic considerations, it was hoped that the research would hold wider relevance, for example to issues of policy, and so criteria relating to broader acceptance of the findings also came into play. The overall aim was to make a case which had the maximum chance of impact on all sides.

The research was also bound by practical constraints, especially financial limitations on fieldwork, and the fact that I was the only person who could spend time on data collection and analysis. These criteria suggest that a social survey which achieves a high response rate without compromising good standards of research would be the best means of data collection. The financial constraints had one further implication. Although I had originally planned to carry out two separate, smaller surveys aimed at Edinburgh's ethnic and gay and lesbian communities as it was realised that the main survey would be unlikely to include them in sufficient numbers, neither the time nor the resources available for the PhD research made this feasible.

Ethical considerations also influenced the detail of how the research methods were chosen, implemented and interpreted. These mainly involve the reconciliation of the operational and academic requirements of the research with the attempt to make the process as non-exploitative, accountable and accessible as possible. Feminist researchers in particular have been concerned with these goals in countering the 'quick and dirty' elitist and sexist research of much social science (Jayaratne 1983; see eg McRobbie 1982; Mies 1983): with challenging traditional methods of knowledge production as well as conventional areas of study (Harding 1987). Thus various principles of 'feminist research' have been laid down, including the rejection of the idea of value-free research, the challenging of hierarchical relationships in research, and the implementation of 'bottom-up' research aimed at political and social change (Mies 1983). Among feminists different views on research methods can be found (Maynard 1990), and it has been questioned whether there is in fact an identifiable set of feminist research methods or principles (Clegg 1985; Hammersley 1992). It is also clear that many of these principles have not been attained in much gender research and, indeed, are probably not wholly attainable in the current academic environment and political climate. They nonetheless stand as ideals worth working towards and, however they are labelled, many of these guidelines are those which should be included in the policy of all research aiming at good quality regardless of its standpoint (Cain 1990; Gelsthorpe 1990). I have made efforts to make my research accessible, accountable and non-exploitative as far as possible in data collection, analysis and the use of results (Appendix B). These considerations also came into play in choosing the research methods.

b) Qualitative and quantitative methods

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods has a long history (Mitchell 1983), and disagreement about the superiority of one over the other for social research is as strong as ever (Hammersley 1993). The distinction has been taken to involve far more than mere data collection; it has been attributed with opposing epistemological positions based on competing claims about the production of warrantable knowledge (Henwood and Pidgeon 1992). Within feminist research, and particularly research on women's experiences of sexual violence, it has been argued that qualitative methods are the most appropriate means of research (eg Hall 1985; Hanmer and Saunders, 1984).

Past research on women's fear of violence has been carried out using quantitative methodology (eg Riger and Gordon 1981; Warr 1985) and qualitative methodology (eg Stanko 1990a; Valentine 1989b). While the former, earlier studies provided valuable descriptive information about women's fear, the latter have provided the most depth and understanding to date, and it has been suggested that qualitative methodology is the only way to achieve in depth and experientially sensitive research on this topic (Valentine 1989b).

i) The value of qualitative research

Because fear of crime involves complex syntheses of perceptions, feelings and consciousness, at least some elements of qualitative research were required. Some of the effects of fear may not be immediately visible to the respondent herself. A purely quantitative survey also poses problems with variations in the naming of violent events and harassment (Chapter 2). It has been demonstrated, for example, that there is a tendency for women to minimise and neutralise incidents of male aggression (Kelly and Radford 1990), and the research methodology had to take account of this.

Qualitative research also allows more insight into causes and explanations than quantitative methods, the results of which tend to be generalised and theoretical (Eyles 1986); it offers the possibility of a more complete picture. If it is done well, it can uncover what people mean as well as what they report, explore different causal factors, offer the opportunity for the research agenda to be flexible, and highlight reasons behind findings which do not fit in with general trends (Mitchell 1983; Silverman 1986).

However, while it can be extremely informative, qualitative research often leaves some questions about the transferability of results to the general population. As Mitchell (1983) notes, qualitative research is not intended to be interpreted in this way, but even so, this aspect somewhat limits its usefulness as a single research tool. For example, Valentine's (1989b) research on women's feelings of safety in public places was based on 80 interviews, for which women were selected after knocking on 407 doors. This response rate is far lower than quantitative surveys tend to achieve and must cast some degree of doubt on the representativeness of those who responded, and the transferability of the findings. As I have outlined, some degree of generalisability to the wider population was considered important to

the research, particularly as one aim was to contribute to and influence policy-making.

ii) The value of quantitative research

This, then, is one of the main values of quantitative research: it offers the most representative view of a particular topic at a point in time. As well as allowing the possibility of generalisation, broad trends and correlations can be identified from quantitative surveys, and a range of intervening social and physical environmental factors can be examined. Quantitative research is not beyond being experientially sensitive or facilitating a certain depth of analysis, and it can offer the chance of exploring many causal factors; the key issue is that appropriate questions are asked at the point of data collection.

In response to the idea of there being a prescription for certain methods and topics in gender research has come a counter argument that any methodology may and should be chosen appropriately to the specific criteria of the project. It has been suggested that quantitative research can in some cases provide a more ethical and more effective means of gathering data on experiences of gender inequality in some cases (Hunt 1986; Jayaratne 1983; Kelly 1990). Quantitative methods also have a role in gaining public acceptance of feminist research. Jayaratne (1983) suggests that much sexist and elitist research has gained from an aura of acceptability by using quantitative methods, and that gender research can benefit from this too. One of the difficulties in acceptance of gender research is widely held suspicions about its legitimacy and credibility; the view that it is biased, ideological, less scholarly and objective than other research (Epstein 1990). While these claims ultimately need to be dismissed they also present immediate problems in the acceptance of research which the careful use of quantitative methodology linked with alternative methods might help to bypass.

iii) The value of a dual methodology

There is no reason, therefore, why the two apparently opposing positions can not be used together and complement each other well (Clegg 1985; Eyles 1986). While statistical data can offer indices, for example of the extent and distribution of fear, qualitative data can help to understand what these indices mean. For example, British Crime Survey data, one of the most commonly used sources for analysis of fear of crime in Britain, has played a useful role in highlighting links between fear and broad social categories and possible neighbourhood and environmental causal

factors (see eg Box et al 1988). However, it offers no scope for the in depth analysis of social explanations or the meanings people attach to crime.

Indeed a convincing case has been argued for using at least two contrasting methodological tools in researching people's perceptions about crime, owing to the complexity of the subject (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988a). A mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods gives a more complete picture of the social and physical factors operating: it allows a 'finer-grained understanding of the way in which environment and experience interact' (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1988a). Examination of as many relevant dimensions of a problem as possible can enhance the quality of research.

The choice of two methods also relates to the intended outcome of the research. In a discussion of the motivations behind knowledge production, Habermas (1972) suggests that those whose interest lies in the ability to make predictive statements with policy or practical implications tend to apply cause/effect (quantitative) methods. On the other hand if a researcher seeks to understand the meaning and significance of the human condition, s/he will use interpretative (qualitative) methods. As I have outlined, the aims of this research involve both of these objectives.

The use of both methodologies also resolves some of the particular constraints on this research. While quantitative methods offer a costly but quick means of data collection, qualitative research is relatively cheap but time consuming. In this practical sense the two methodologies are complementary in using separate resources, and it is possible for one person to carry them out in the same time period.

In the light of all these considerations, I decided to investigate the topic using both quantitative and qualitative research tools: a postal questionnaire survey and follow-up in depth interviews. Below, I outline the particular advantages and limitations of each.

c) <u>The postal questionnaire survey</u>

i) Advantages

A postal survey enables a large sample to be researched and a high degree of geographical dispersion to be achieved. It offers a high chance of reaching a

representative sample of a general population. Gordon and Riger's (1989) survey of women's fear, for example, would have missed women without telephones, while Hall's (1985) method of distributing questionnaires on the street and among specialist groups inevitably incurred some bias from self-selection (Segal 1990). Postal surveys, on the other hand, offer a high likelihood of locating a selected person. Door to door or telephone contact may miss people if they are out at the time of day of the attempted contact, or are unwilling to answer the door or speak to strangers. Warr (1985) found in a postal survey that 18% of the respondents would not have opened their door because of fear of crime, while Valentine (1989b) experienced difficulty in including older women in her door to door research because many would not answer the door to her.

In addition, I would suggest that postal surveys may produce more accurate information than quantitative research by other methods. They allow respondents unpressured time to think before answering. They also offer anonymity, which may be more likely to evoke honest answers than those thought to be socially desirable, and allow more direct and less 'innocuous' questions to be asked. The absence of an interviewer also means that this source of potential distortion and subversion is avoided (Dillman 1978). Structured face to face surveys are not conducive to openness where sensitive subjects are involved, yet the British Crime Surveys have consistently used this method despite recognition of its shortfalls in researching violence (Worral and Pease 1986; Stanko 1988b). In the recent Edinburgh Crime Survey the authors did not attempt to measure sexual violence, acknowledging the inadequacy of face to face surveys for this purpose (Anderson et al 1990a). Telephone surveys may have the same problems: Gordon et al (1981) used telephone surveys for collecting data in an early investigation of women's fear, but this is an inadequate method for extracting all but the most superficial information (Valentine, 1989b). When the same researchers conducted follow up interviews with the same women, the reported rate of rape increased from 2% to 11%.

Postal surveys also provide a relatively ethical choice for quantitative data collection. They offer privacy and anonymity and choice about whether and how to complete the questionnaire unpressured by the presence of an interviewer (although, in the interests of high response rates, accompanying letters often try to employ various forms of persuasion). Finally, the administrative requirements in terms of personnel are relatively low, and the cost of this method is also relatively low compared, for example, to telephone surveys.

ii) Limitations

Postal questionnaire surveys can not be fully representative, as the available sources of names and addresses do not include everyone. Full representation is also only possible if everyone completes correctly and returns their questionnaire, but response is inevitably selective; some people are more likely to return questionnaires than others and there is no way of finding out who the non-respondents are in order to gauge the degree of bias. Inevitably, the range of topics and questions which can be introduced to a postal survey and the depth of analysis are limited, as postal questionnaires have to be kept interesting and fairly brief (Dillman 1978). They offer only limited success with open ended questions and tedious questions, and make it more difficult to control the sequence of questions which the respondent answers. There is also some evidence that the formality and brevity of the questionnaire, along with the wording and context of questions may have some effect on respondents' answers (Molenaar 1991).

However, some of these limitations are less relevant in this context as the postal questionnaire is used in conjunction with in depth interviews, which are generally advantageous where the postal survey loses out. One final point is that the very careful construction of the questionnaire can also get over some of its shortcomings, and thus a great deal of time was given to questionnaire design and piloting. Details of this process are given in Appendix B.

d) <u>In depth interviews</u>

i) Advantages

As I mentioned above, certain features of the subject matter of women's fear mean that qualitative research is necessary for a full exploration of it. In particular many of the effects of fear may need teasing out (Valentine 1989b). Interviews can provide detailed case study information, the depth of which quantitative methods can rarely match. Importantly, they also provide the chance for the researcher to assess and interpret what is said. Face to face, informal conversation ideally puts people at ease and can be conducive to honesty and openness. Hence unstructured interviews have been a very effective tool in revealing the extent and impact of sexual violence (eg Kelly 1987; Russell 1982; Stanko 1990a).

It has also been argued that this means of research provides more opportunity to meet ethical considerations. In theory, in depth interviews democratise the research process and are less exploitative than other methods, as a two-way encounter

representing normal social interaction through which the subject should be able to participate in shaping the research. For these reasons it has been described as particular useful for investigating sensitive gender issues (Graham 1983; Oakley 1981).

ii) Limitations

Again, some of the limitations of conducting research via in depth interviews are negated by the concurrent use of a postal survey. For example, interview samples are prone to being fairly small and unrepresentative, but this is not a disadvantage unless extrapolation to the general population is made from the data. Interviews are more time-consuming to set up, carry out and analyse. They are also more difficult to administer than questionnaires: good interviewers need the ability to relate to respondents and channel conversation, as well as an awareness of the impact of the interview process (Briggs 1986).

Although in depth interviews can certainly be effective in gaining personal information, this is not necessarily as ethical a process as some researchers have suggested. The respondent rarely has much control in practice over the information-gathering process, and people's natural feelings about privacy and their desire for choice in divulging information may be swayed or overcome by skilful persuasion from interviewers. Kelly (1990) suggests that even if interviews are successful in deeper data-gathering than is possible by other methods, they can be more exploitative than quantitative research; where sensitive issues are concerned, interviews can be invasive and cause lasting distress. The potential for exploitation of the trust which can develop in interviews is no less than in traditional methods (Finch 1984).

Established criteria exist for conducting and analysing qualitative research in order to equal the rigour of good quantitative research (see for example Henwood and Pidgeon 1992; Silverman 1986). The main cause of doubt about qualitative research, however, stems from the failure to realise that it seeks to achieve different aims. Case studies are highly particular; hence, it is important that qualitative data is analysed and presented in context of the situation and actors involved (Mitchell 1983). I give more details about the ways interviews were arranged, carried out and analysed in Appendix B.

e) Summary

In summary, the two methods were chosen in the belief that they provide the best means of meeting the academic aims and the practical and ethical considerations of the research. The fact that the two methodologies are linked and involve the same respondents is central to the overall research strategy. It was planned that the process of filling out the questionnaire alone and in their own time would give women the chance to prepare their thoughts and feelings before the interview. Many women said, for example, that the questionnaire had reawakened childhood memories. Most had discussed the issues raised with other people after filling out the questionnaire, and this too had helped them to develop and articulate some of the experiences which they subsequently discussed in the interview. In depth interviews alone, which introduce topics 'cold' and rarely last more than a couple of hours, would not have allowed time for this.

As well as being complementary, there are possible sources of conflict between the two methodologies; what, for example, would be the significance of a respondent giving contradictory answers through the two media? By tackling questions like this, it was hoped that the use of the two methodologies side by side might add something to the qualitative/quantitative debate as well as to the quality and outcome of the research.

2. How the research was carried out

a) Sampling strategy for the postal questionnaire survey

The aim was to include women with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible in the survey. To achieve this, three areas of Edinburgh were selected for sampling which contrast in terms of their social, economic and physical environments, but which together are reasonably representative of the city as a whole. Edinburgh is well placed for this; it has been described as having the highest degree of spatial and social segregation in Britain (McCrone and Elliott 1989). Selection of the areas proceeded after studying the available social and economic data for Edinburgh wards and observing different built environments in the city by day and night. The wards which were finally chosen are North West Corstorphine, an affluent middle class commuter suburb; Haymarket, a heterogeneous inner city area; and Pilton, a disadvantaged peripheral council scheme (see Map 1.2). Further demographic information about these areas is given in Appendix A, and a general description in Section C.

Respondents were sampled randomly from electoral registers in each area. This was considered the best means of collecting names and addresses of women for the survey for a number of reasons. First, in order to maximise the chance of a high response rate, it was important to identify and contact individual women by name rather than whole households. While the Postal Address File, an alternative source, has the advantage of listing every address in Britain, it does not include names. Second, at the time of the research electoral registers were reasonably current. Third, it was hoped that using it as a sampling source would circumvent the biases posed by handing out questionnaires on the street, door to door, or at meetings of certain groups: these methods reduce the chances of achieving a representative final sample.

It should be noted, however, that there is no ideal source for sampling a representative portion of the general population. The main disadvantage of the electoral register, and one which worsened during the period of research, is that the number of people registering has decreased. Before the introduction of the Poll Tax, it was commonly estimated that 4% of private households were missing, and particularly those comprising people under 18, people who are unemployed, members of ethnic minorities and those in temporary accommodation (McLaughlin et al 1990). During the research period electoral registers were used as the basis of Poll Tax billing, and an official study in June 1991 estimated that more than a million voters had disappeared nationally from electoral registers since the introduction of the Poll Tax (The Guardian, 23.7.91).

Before the main research was carried out, a pilot study was implemented. As I mentioned above, the appearance and content of the questionnaire has an important role in determining the response to a postal survey, and the pilot study was aimed at helping to plan the design and implementation of the questionnaire survey. I comment on the size and success of the pilot study and the lessons which were learnt from it in Appendix B.

b) Selection for interview

Women were self-selected for follow-up interviews by answering a final question on the postal questionnaire which asked if they were interested in further participation in the research. The plan was to interview all of the women who responded to this question, rather than to be selective, and most of those who answered were duly interviewed. However, some of those who initially volunteered

were not subsequently interviewed, either because they did not respond to a letter inviting them to interview, or because of the limits on the time or financial resources available for the research. It was felt that this turned out to be a reasonably good way to achieve a mixed group of interviewees, however, and also that the interviews benefited from the fact that the women had thought over the issues raised in the questionnaire beforehand. The questionnaire was also used by myself to help identify areas worth particular attention in the interview, as the range of potential topics was so broad. One drawback with this method is the danger of the questionnaire setting the agenda in advance and stifling topics which otherwise might have been brought up, but I made efforts to ensure this did not happen, and in the event it rarely appeared that interviews were structured or delimited by the respondent's questionnaire answers.

c) Response rates

Six hundred women were sent questionnaires by the main postal survey, 200 from each study area. The overall rate of 72.4% was considered to be a success (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2
Response rates in the postal questionnaire survey*

Study area	Number of responses	Response rate (%)
Corstorphine	146	77.2
Haymarket	122	71.3
Pilton	121	68.3
Overall	389	72.4

*** Appendix B includes more detail on the calculation of response rates.**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992

As I mentioned above, one problem in using a postal survey is that it is rarely possible to gauge the nature of the non-response, ie the demographic characteristics of those who did not return a questionnaire. Importantly, in this case, it is unclear whether those women who have been victims of violence, or those who are fearful of crime, are more or less likely to participate. The level of reported violence and fear (Chapters 2 and 3), however, may suggest that if there is a bias it is more likely to be towards those who are concerned about the issues raised. I discuss the potential over-representation of members of certain social groups in Appendix B; on the whole, the respondents appear to be fairly reflective of the general population of Edinburgh (see also the demographic data for the respondents in Appendix A).

Forty three separate in-depth interviews were carried out, including 16 with women in Corstorphine, 15 in Haymarket and 12 in Pilton. In two of these interviews another adult female was present and joined in, and so the interview material constitutes the views and experiences of 45 women in all.

d) Using the data

The questionnaire data are used to produce basic information on the extent and effects of fear of sexual violence and to reveal relationships between variables. Where there appears to be a correlation between data, the chi-squared test for significance has been carried out. This test is based on the premise that if a sample has been drawn randomly, its attributes will usually be similar to those of the general population from which it was drawn. A few random samples will yield atypical results. For example, where $p<0.05$ this means that there is only a one in twenty (or five in 100) chance that the relationship observed in the sample does not exist in the population from which the sample is drawn. Hence where $p<0.05$, the relationship is taken to be marked and significant. However, controlling factors were routinely checked for and a range of explanations considered for relationships.

The interview material is used to illustrate and explore the meaning of general points which emerge from the questionnaire data, and to explore in greater depth the extent, effect and causes of fear of sexual violence. A list of the interviewees and some of their socio-demographic characteristics can be found in Appendix A for reference purposes. All the names of the women have been changed in order to fulfil the promise of anonymity. In Appendix B I describe in detail how and why the qualitative data was selected for use in the thesis.

The shortcomings of these means of data collection, and implications for their future use, are outlined in Appendix B and Chapter 7 and also referred to, where relevant, throughout the text.

3. Measuring women's social class

The need arose during the project to find some means of classifying residents by social class, as it has appeared to prove an important indicator in some fear of crime studies. Rather than make assumptions about women living in the three contrasting areas from existing official data such as the 1991 Census, it was considered that it would be more accurate to measure each individual's social class.

Factors such as income, education, mobility, lifestyle and attitude may all affect fear of crime and it was planned that these would be studied separately, but there was also a requirement for some composite measure of social class to use alongside these.

Social class is typically calculated based on individuals' occupations, and in Britain the OPCS Registrar General's classifications are usually used to achieve this. However, this raises two problems for the current research. First, using occupation alone as a measure of social class is too narrow. The OPCS occupational groupings have been criticised for a long time over various anomalies and inaccuracies (eg Goldthorpe and Hope 1974); they are too broad and simplistic for use in a relatively small scale study. Secondly, and moreover, the classification system is inappropriate for women's occupations. Below, I summarise the main problems in using aggregate data as a measure of women's social class.

The census and similar demographic surveys usually represent men as heads of households and base household social class on men's social class. This practice has been challenged by feminist research which emphasises that with independent jobs, different pay, status and conditions of employment, women's social class is independent to their male partners' (West 1978). Where women work within the home, it should not be assumed that they share their husbands' class position as he may act as the gatekeeper to their personal income and standard of living. Demographic data from the questionnaires shows, for example, that many women in Corstorphine do not have the high personal incomes which would be expected of residents in the area (Appendix A). Women are lower paid than men on average: full time female non-manual workers in Britain earn on average 55% of men's salaries and female manual workers 69% of men's wages (Equal Opportunities Commission 1992). Women are also more likely to do part-time work: 86% of part time workers are women (Equal Opportunities Commission 1992). Where women are in full-time work, their jobs are more likely to be undervalued, deskilled and attributed lower status (Walby 1986).

When women's occupations are classified by traditional measures the system fails to distinguish adequately between them. Women's work is often misallocated because the system is geared around men's work and attributes more value to it (Murgatroyd 1984). A particular problem has been classifying many service-sector jobs which are predominantly done by women and do not fall easily into distinct categories.

While modern secretaries, for example, commonly do vocational training for up to a year, and so should be considered as skilled workers, they are often paid less than unskilled male labourers; hence some white collar jobs have become proletarianised simply because women now do the bulk of the work (West 1978). Indeed, gender itself is central to social stratification (Murgatroyd 1984), and future scales of classification for aggregate data should account for this. In the current research, however, all that was sought was a scale for measuring women's social class.

Despite these problems geographers, in common with other social scientists, have commonly used 'men's class' for 'social class' (eg Harris 1984; Harvey 1975; Ley 1983). This has profound implications for the reliability of analysis yet is scarcely acknowledged (Pratt and Hanson 1988). In my research, the problems identified above were tackled by two means. First, women's occupations were ranked using a modified classification scale, and second, the variable 'social class' was calculated by including other factors alongside women's occupation.

The occupational scale used is a composite of two scales presenting alternatives to the traditional OPCS groupings. One, the recent Irish classification scale (Central Statistics Office Classification of Occupations, Republic of Ireland 1988) has been praised for offering a more accurate picture of the class system (Drudy 1991). The other, Murgatroyd's (1984) Women's Social Groups, is a classification of social groups exclusive to women ranked on an empirical basis of social similarity using knowledge about social background from research where applicable (see Murgatroyd 1984). The classification of occupations used in my research is based on Murgatroyd's five main groups but cuts out the subclasses (see Table 1.3).

Occupation was classified on this scale for every respondent where sufficient information had been given, using women's occupations as they described them on the questionnaire. In the pilot study, respondents had been asked to define their own occupational class themselves, but this proved to be unsuccessful as the majority simply described their jobs as 'professional'.

Once occupation had been classed in this way, the social class variable was measured using a points scale combining personal income, educational level and occupation to produce four basic social classes. More details are given in Appendix B, along with comments on the successes, shortcomings and future modification of this system.

Table 1.3
Classification of women's occupations used in the research

Group	Details	Examples
1	Professional	Doctors, solicitors, teachers
2	Employers, managers and intermediate workers	Business owners, managers, executives
3	White collar, in charge of others	Supervisors, officers
4	Personal service and skilled manual	Secretaries, receptionists (not in charge of others) also skilled manual
5	Low-skilled manual	Factory workers, cleaners, barmaids

It is recognised that it would be at best an enormous task, and at worst impossible, to construct a scale which gets around all of the problems mentioned here or takes account of all the social, economic and cultural factors which contribute to social class. Moreover there is no consensus as to what social class is; there can be no objective measure of prestige and class may be dynamic throughout an individuals' life. The method used raises obvious problems, for example how to deal with women who have never worked, who are students or retired, and so on. More details on how these have been tackled are given in Appendix B.

The aim of the project here was simply to find the most valid scale for a social class classification of this small number of women. The quest is based on the generalised assumption that there is a system of advantage engendered by various factors which may profoundly affect experiences of security, one example of which is fear of crime. In fact, some of the results of this research justify seeking a social class variable, as I discuss in Appendix B.

C. STUDY CONTEXT

1. Edinburgh, 1992

The research was carried out in Edinburgh, a city of over 420,000 residents (General Register Office Scotland 1991) situated in south east Scotland (see Map 1.1). Although I would contend that the main findings would not differ greatly had the research taken place in any other large British city (geographical area proves to have little effect on reports of fear in Chapter 3), certain aspects of the immediate social and physical environment clearly have some bearing on the outcome of the research.

Edinburgh suffers many of the social and economic problems facing British urban areas at this time, but is a city which displays particular contrasts. While much of the city centre itself is an affluent commercial and residential district, its suburbs are sharply delineated into distinctive socio-economic areas. It is possible to live in Edinburgh for years without becoming aware of the extent of the city's poverty, much of which is concentrated in peripheral housing schemes which are geographically close to but socially distant from more affluent areas. Edinburgh's middle class suburbs are also highly concentrated and comprise some of the wealthiest areas in Britain (McCrone and Elliott 1989). The urban structure of the city differs from that of many other British cities, as several middle class areas are located in or close to the city centre, while many of the working class areas are on the periphery. It has been suggested that this structure is of some relevance to patterns of crime and fear of crime in the city (Anderson et al 1990a; Kinsey 1993), and this was one consideration in the research.

Crime and violence have been increasingly visible problems in Edinburgh over the last decade, as has been the case in most parts of Britain although, in contrast to many people's perceptions, crime rates are generally lower in Scotland than in England and Wales. Scots are also more likely to report crime to the police (Kinsey and Anderson 1992). However, Edinburgh experienced a considerable increase in recorded crime between 1986 and 1991. In 1991 alone, reports of assault and robbery in the city rose by 21%, thefts of motor vehicles by 18%, thefts from motor vehicles by 20% and housebreaking by 9% (Safer Edinburgh Project 1992). A local crime survey carried out in 1989 found levels of fear of crime to be high, especially in the city centre and outlying housing schemes (Anderson et al 1990a). 1992, however, saw a reduction in reports of all these crimes - it is unclear

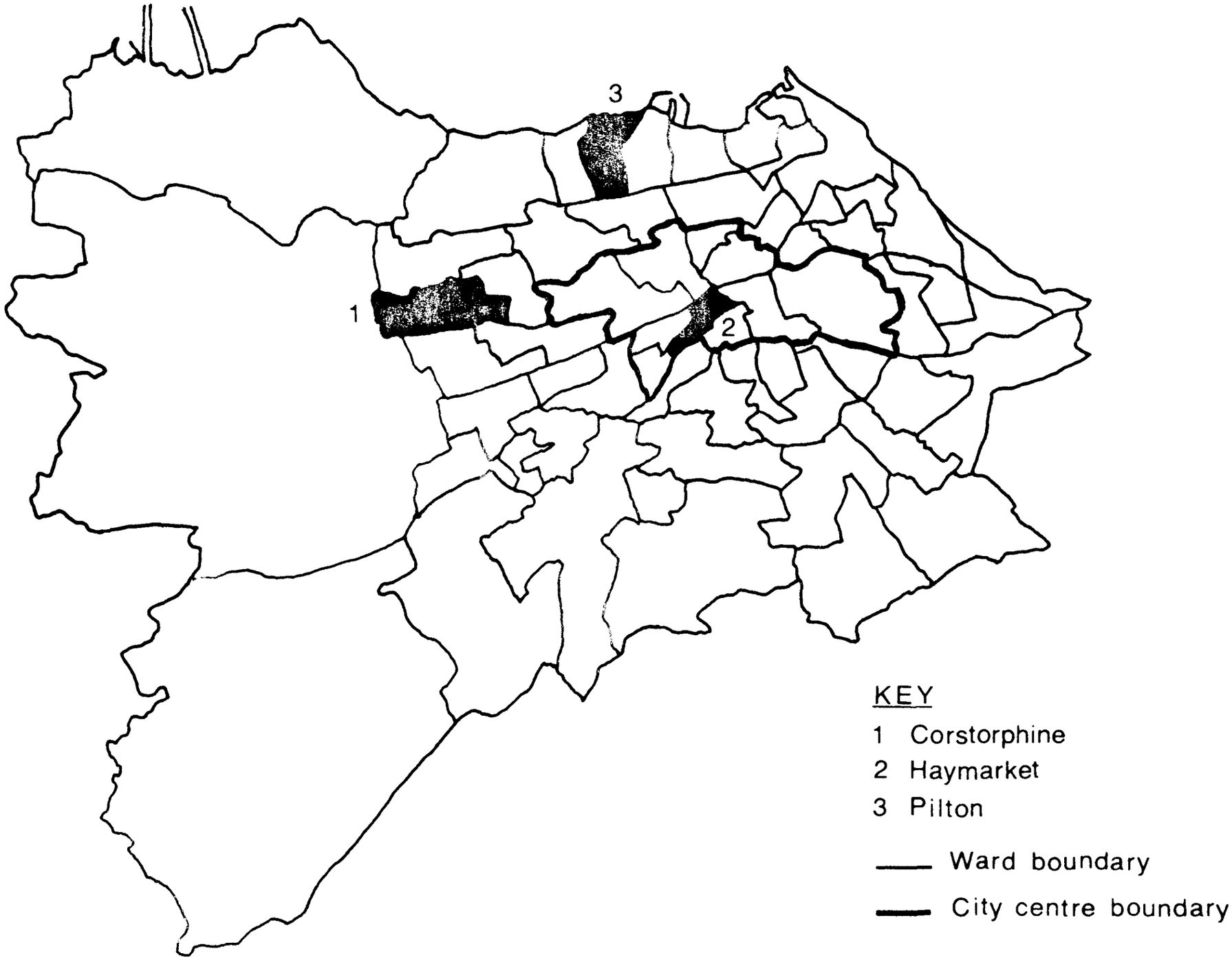
whether this was because crime had reached a ceiling or whether it was due to the implementation of crime prevention schemes (Safer Edinburgh Project 1993).

Comprehensive police statistics are not available for the smaller areas which provide the focus for this research. However, the Edinburgh Crime Survey showed Corstorphine to have one of the lowest crime rates (Anderson et al 1990a), while the Pilton and Haymarket localities areas have relatively high rates (Safer Edinburgh Project 1993).

Available statistics on sexual violence for the city are unrepresentative due to the problem of under-reporting (Chapter 2), but there was a relative increase in reports during 1991 and 1992. The rate of reported rape rose by 43% in the City of Edinburgh to 43 incidents in 1991, and a further 21% in 1992 to 52 incidents (Safer Edinburgh Project 1992, 1993). This rise might be related to certain measures which have been taken to encourage women to report attacks (Chapter 7). Twenty-two assaults with intent to ravish and 156 indecent assaults were also recorded in 1992. These figures are undoubtedly of little significance in themselves; sexual violence is seriously under-reported here as elsewhere. However, the publicisation of this apparent increase gives a different impression, and this has ramifications for the perceptions about violence of women living in the city.

It is noteworthy that the beginning of the fieldwork for the research in January 1992 coincided with a series of reported attacks and attempted attacks on women and girls in public places in Edinburgh (see local newspaper clippings in Appendix E). The local press reported each incident with increasing drama, and were subsequently more likely to give news space to sexual crimes, particularly if they fitted the stereotype of random attacks by strangers in public places. A positive side to this also developed as heightened awareness among journalists and editors on the paper led to an autumn campaign devoted to women's safety issues, to which I was able to contribute. The overriding message of this campaign was that private violence is the greatest danger facing women and children. Nonetheless, during the period of interviewing, the issue of public space rape was brought to the fore of women's minds by local television and press reports, with some of the reported attacks actually taking place in the wards of Corstorphine and Haymarket.

Map 11 Britain: location of Edinburgh


3
1
2
KEY
1 Corstorphine
2 Haymarket
3 Pilton
Ward boundary
City centre boundary

2. Study areas

Map 1.2 shows the location of the three study areas selected for the research, and Plates 1 - 20 illustrate some of the differences in their built environments. The following descriptions of the study areas are based on official ward data, demographic information from my own survey, and my impressions after visiting the areas over a period of months and talking to residents there.

a) Physical, social and economic characteristics

North West Corstophine (Plates 15 - 20) is the outermost quarter of Corstorphine, a large middle class residential suburb to the west of the city. It is largely comprised of bungalows (52% of all housing) and semi-detached dwellings (City of Edinburgh District Council 1991c). There are few shops, business premises or pubs breaking up the streets of houses and gardens. The age of housing decreases from the Victorian development in Corstorphine village centre in the east to the new estates of East Craigs and West Craigs to the west. Beyond these lie open countryside. Married couples with children and older people make up a high proportion of the population. Unemployment is low - 2.8% compared with 8.7% for Edinburgh District as a whole (City of Edinburgh District Council 1991c).

Haymarket is in the south west of the city centre (Plates 8 - 14). Its north-western border lies on the boundary between Edinburgh's New and Old Towns, and here there are some very smart Georgian streets. The rest of the ward comprises older, narrower and less carefully planned streets. The vast majority of the housing is made up of pre-20th century traditional four-storey tenement flats, the date of which is unknown (City of Edinburgh District Council 1991a). Unlike the smarter parts of Edinburgh, Haymarket retains few complete residential streets; instead the physical environment is varied and the housing is broken up by a number of works, garages, offices, government buildings, shops, carparks and, at present, construction sites. Lothian Road cuts through the east of the ward, around which many restaurants, pubs, clubs and cinemas are clustered. Haymarket is busy and noisy, and due to its central location and plentiful rented accomodation it attracts many students and single people. Unemployment is high at 19.5% of the workforce (City of Edinburgh District Council 1991a).

Pilton is one of Scotland's notorious council schemes, lying to the north of the city bordering the Firth of Forth (Plates 1 - 7). Although poverty in Edinburgh is not exclusive to the schemes, it tends to be highly concentrated in them. Pilton is largely made up of tenements and tenement maisonettes built after 1960 (City of

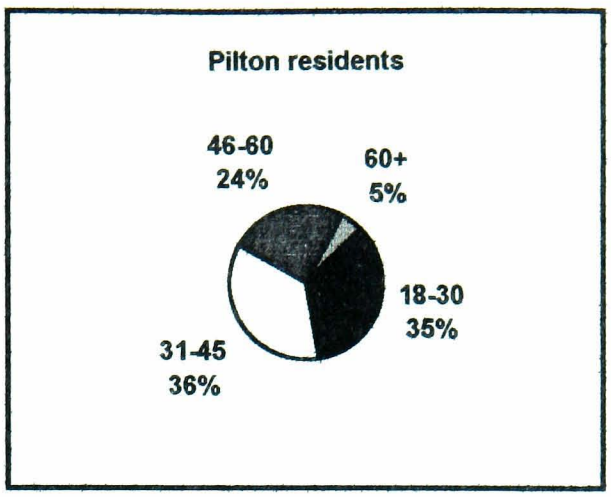
Edinburgh District Council 1991b). The area has a reputation for environmental decay, high rates of crime and drug abuse and unemployment (15.7% in 1991), but residents' experiences of the area vary markedly. Pilton is visibly more run down to the north, and particularly on the estate known as West Granton, a polarisation which has intensified since a good deal of the housing stock in the south of the ward has been sold off. Here much of the housing is in reasonable condition and the residents I have spoken to like living there. New developments of semi-detached housing aimed at owner-occupiers were being built here at the time of the research. By contrast residents in West Granton, comprising some of the most rundown housing in Edinburgh, were unhappy living there: typical of the worst British council estates, it is 'difficult to let, difficult to live in and difficult to get out of' (Jones and Short 1993). The scheme is due for demolition over the next decade.

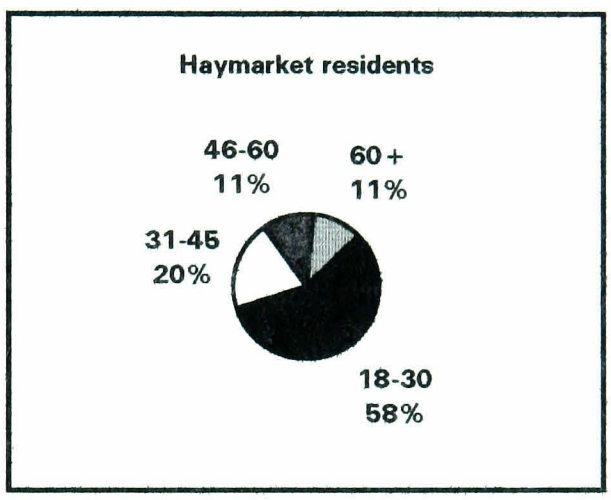
b) Survey respondents in each area

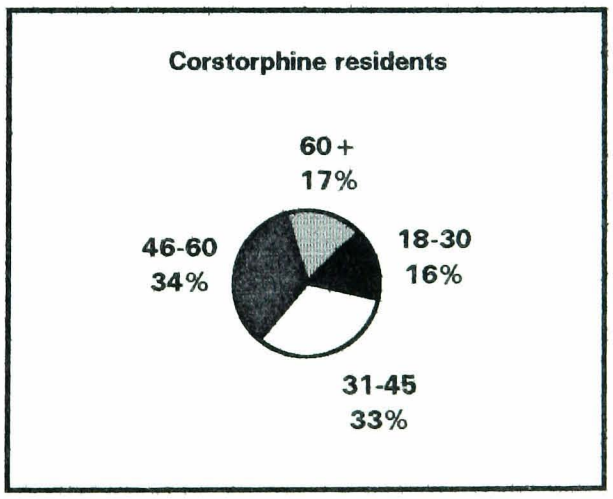
Figures 1.4 - 1.8, showing some socio-demographic characteristics of the women who took part in the survey, give an indication of the differences in the social make-up of the three areas.

The respondents in Corstorphine tend to be older than those in Pilton and Haymarket, the majority of women in the latter area being under thirty (Figure 1.4). As might be expected, the majority of respondents in Pilton are in the two lowest social classes, SC1 and SC2. Haymarket, rather than Corstorphine, has the highest proportion of women in the higher social classes SC3 and SC4 (Figure 1.5), relating to the number of young professional women living in the ward. While most of the respondents in Haymarket are relatively new to the area, the women in Pilton and especially those in Corstorphine tend to have lived there for a long time (Figure 1.6). Finally, while almost all of the respondents in Corstorphine live in owner-occupied properties, mostly houses, women in Haymarket and Pilton are as likely to rent their flats as to own them (Figures 1.7 and 1.8).

Figure 1.4
Age groups of the survey respondents in each area



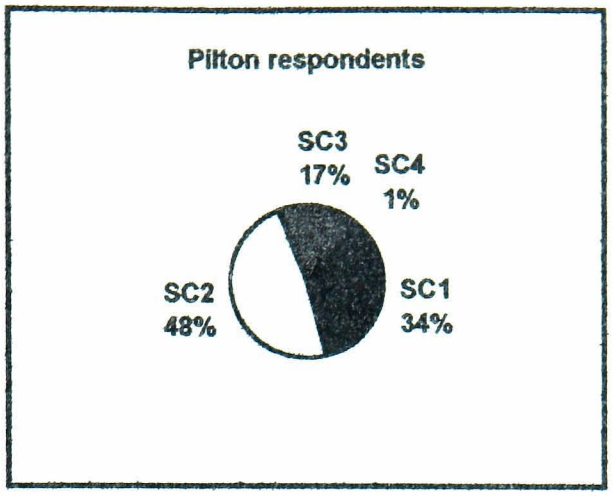


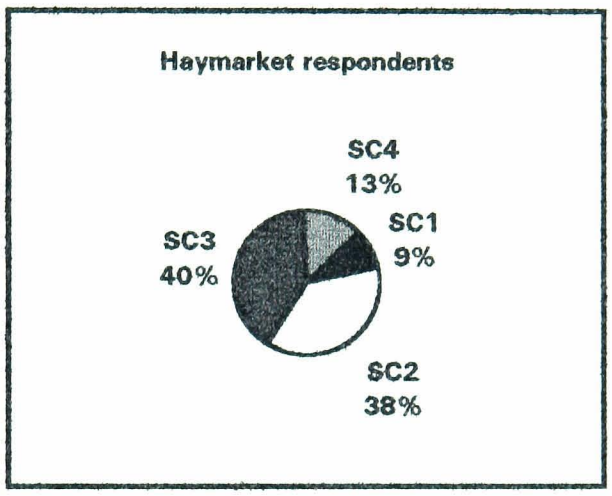


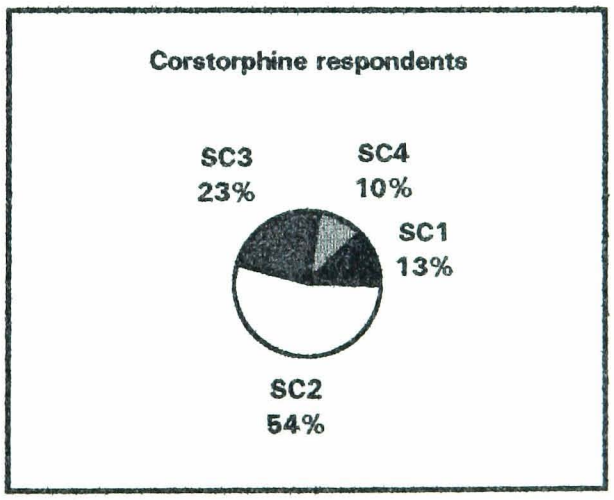
n.b. Further and more detailed demographic information about the survey respondents can be found in Appendix B.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.6

Figure 1.5
Social class of the survey respondents in each area







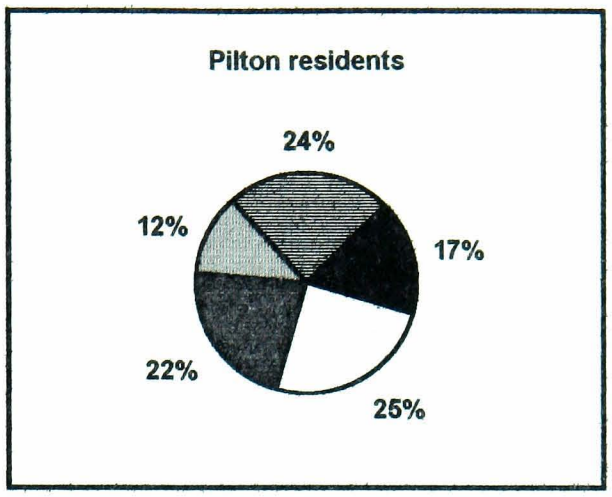
n.b. Further and more detailed demographic information about the survey respondents can be found in Appendix B.

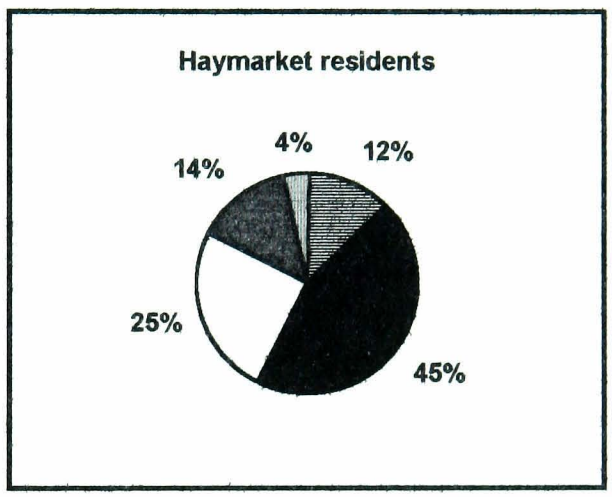
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.15

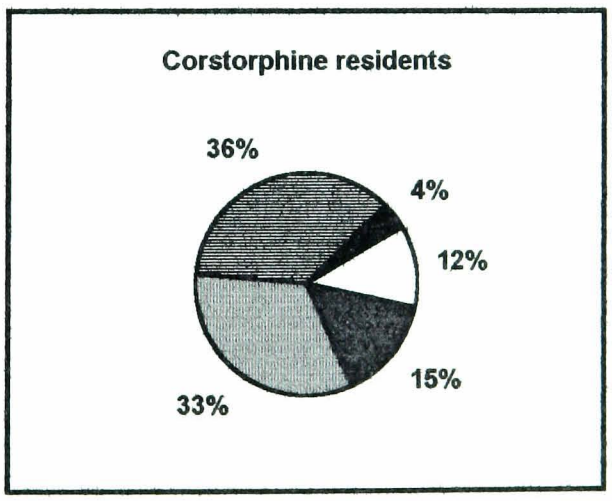
Figure 1.6
Length of residence of the survey respondents in each area

Key

■ 0 - 2 years □ 3 - 5 years ■ 6 - 11 years ■ 11 - 20 years □ 20 + years







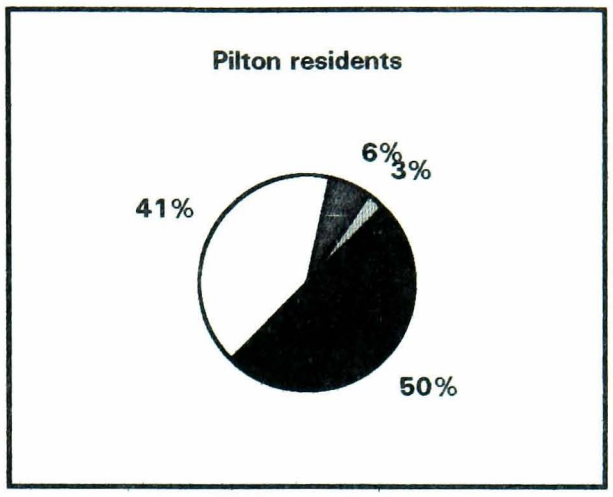
n.b. Further and more detailed demographic information about the survey respondents can be found in Appendix B.

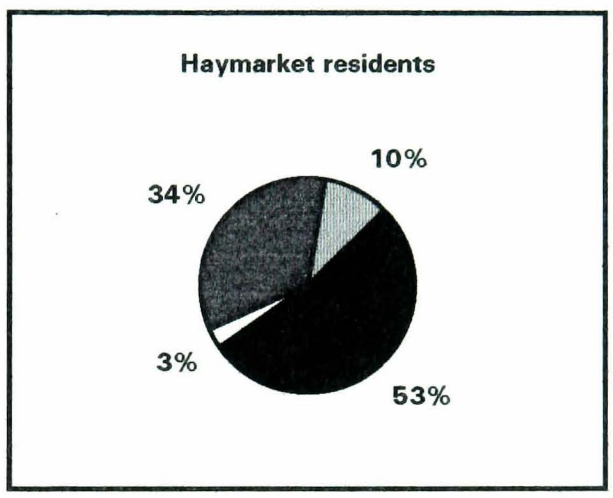
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.1

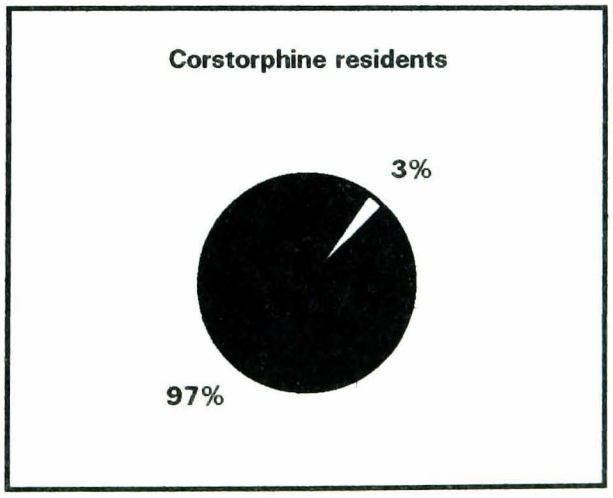
Figure 1.7
Housing tenure of the survey respondents in each area

Key

Owner occupancy | Council rent | Private rent | Other



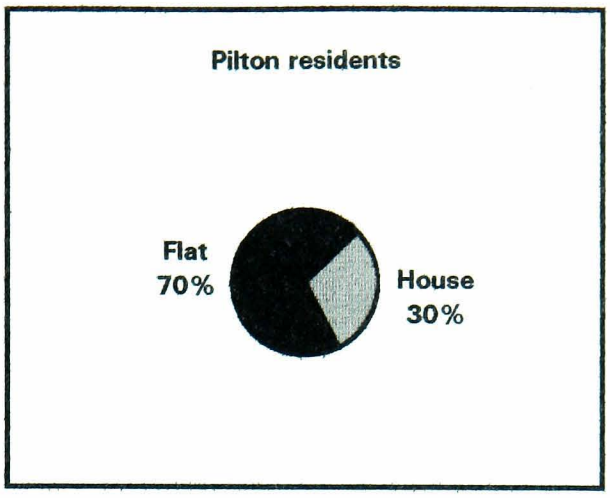


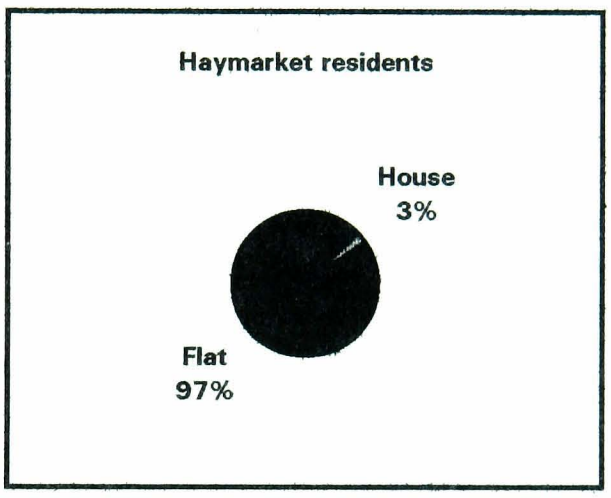


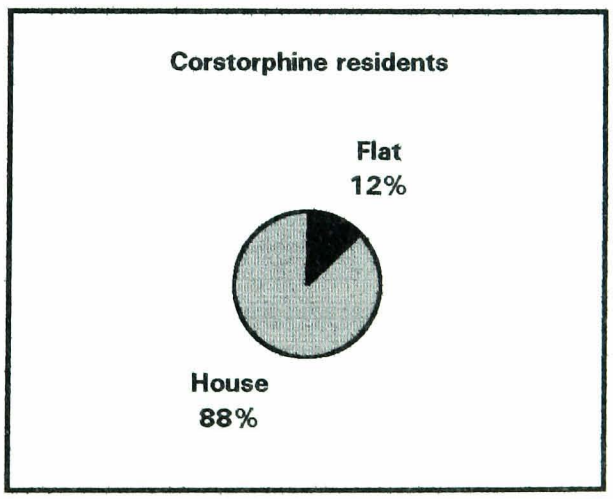
n.b. Further and more detailed demographic information about the survey respondents can be found in Appendix B.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.4

Figure 1.8
Type of dwelling of the survey respondents in each area







n.b. Further and more detailed demographic information about the survey respondents can be found in Appendix B.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.2

Chapter 2

THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH: VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT AGAINST WOMEN

I think there is a lot of violence happening inside. I mean I know it, I believe it, I've been through it.

Ulrike, Haymarket (survivor of domestic violence)

In general I think that it happens a lot. And I would think that every married woman has been raped. I would put it as high as everyone.

Valerie, Corstorphine (survivor of marital rape)

It seems to be most men think it must be much worse to be raped by a stranger than raped by your husband or lover, and they can't understand that no it's a hundred times worse the other way round.

Elaine, Haymarket (survivor of rape by her partner)

It can be damaging in a lot more ways than what people think. It's like an invasion of your body obviously, and you just cannae trust anybody. And obviously I've never been able to trust anybody long enough. And I joke about it, "och aye I've been three times married, I just like the wedding cakes, you know". But that's just me. Because I have to make a joke out of it. Because I don't want everyone to know how I feel deep down inside.

Barbara, Pilton (survivor of child sexual abuse)

INTRODUCTION

As these quotes indicate, past experience of sexual violence is not unusual among the women in the survey. Before going on to examine the extent, effects and causes of women's fear in later Chapters, I want to set out the actual risks of physical and sexual violence and harassment. This is not an easy task, both for methodological reasons and because definitions of sexual violence and harassment vary. Hence in Section A I first describe how I have come to definitions of violence and harassment on which to base my analysis. Importantly, this is based on the viewpoints and experiences of the women I interviewed rather than on official definitions or on existing conceptualisations in the literature. Accordingly, I evaluate some common feminist concepts of sexual violence.

In Section B I go on to evaluate the extent and nature of the risks of sexual and physical attack which women in Edinburgh face. It is not possible to set out 'objective' risks, and this is not my aim. Instead, I want to lay out the background to my research by suggesting how common violence and harassment are, using a range of sources including my own study. This also necessitates pointing out some

of the methodological problems with traditional data sources, with recent research, and with my own work. In conclusion I point to the implications of this discussion for women's fear.

A. DEFINING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

1. Feminist versus traditional definitions

The meanings attached to sexual violence and harassment are more fluid and have been subject to a greater number of nuances in interpretation that those of any other type of crime. One reason for this is that, as I go on to argue in Chapter 3, sexual violence is grounded in a system of sexual dominance. Therefore, as Hanmer and Saunders (1984) have suggested, the 'official' meanings of sexual violence in the past and present tend to be narrow and reflect the concerns of power holders. In law, for example, rape is defined only as penile-vaginal penetration, and is considered in practice to be a more serious crime if the women involved is a virgin or married to someone else, a vestige of the time when women were the property of their fathers and husbands (Brownmiller 1975). Rape in private situations has been highlighted by research and the media only recently, and husbands have only just lost their immunity from prosecution; hence in terms of state responses, sexual violence has been largely seen as something that happens in public space.

The meanings of sexual violence as revised by feminists and, they have argued, those which actually reflect women's experiences, are much broader and take explicit account of the structural bases of sexual violence. Male violence has come to be seen as a unitary phenomenon, symptomatic of a patriarchal society and having a role in maintaining men's power in different arenas (Edwards 1987). Violence against women is thus viewed as the expression of male power in a broader sense; no clear distinctions are drawn between violent events and the general condition of women in society. Feminist research has broadened the definition of sexual violence to include any type of rape by any person, sexual assault, wife-beating, father and daughter incest, indecent exposure and sexual harassment (Walby 1989).

The conceptualisation I use here lies somewhere between these two positions. On a theoretical and, to some degree, an experiential level, it is central to understanding that the 'big' events and the 'little' events are considered to be part of the same process of oppression, as feminists have argued (Griffin 1971; Stanko 1985; Wise and Stanley 1987). Problems can arise, however, when ambiguous distinctions or no distinctions are drawn within this framework. Some of these concerns are methodological or operational, some about the acceptance and utility of research

findings, and others about remaining true to the feelings and experiences of women themselves. I want to go on to evaluate some influential feminist arguments and locate my own position by looking at two of the main tenets in recent writing on sexual violence: the continuums of incidence and experience.

2. The continuum of sexual violence

The close relationship between violence and harassment, or the continuum of male violence, has been central to feminist conceptualisations (Kelly 1987; Stanko 1985; Wise and Stanley 1987). Kelly's idea of a 'continuum of sexual violence' evolved from interviews she carried out covering various experiences of aggressive male behaviour in women's lives which suggested that many women recognise similarities between the rarer sexual crimes, such as rape, and the everyday abuses of women. Kelly argues that various incidents ranging from leering, verbal harassment and unwanted touching to physical attack share common bases, merge into one another and are not ultimately distinguishable.

a) The continuum of incidence

The first aspect of this, the 'continuum of incidence', describes the fact that extreme violent incidents such as rape are the least common, while leering and flashing are more frequent examples of incidents that are nonetheless closely linked. From this, Kelly concludes that 'all women experience sexual violence at some point in their lives' (Kelly 1987:59), while acknowledging that the dimensions of time and space and individual situations and relationships mean that its impact varies. She therefore states that the degree of seriousness of these incidents does not necessarily run along the continuum:

> All forms of sexual violence are serious and have effects: the 'more or less' aspect of the continuum refers only to incidence.
>
> (Kelly 1987:49)

b) The continuum of experience

The second aspect of this idea is the 'continuum of experience' of violence. Feminist discourse has focused on the relationship between heterosexual relationships and violence against women: 'the basic elements of rape are involved in all heterosexual relationships' (Griffin 1971:29). To illustrate this, Kelly (1987) points out that while 50% of her interviewees had been raped, 63% had experienced coercive sex (although, as she acknowledges, many of the participants were selected because of these experiences).

The link has been developed in Rich's critique of 'compulsory heterosexuality' (Rich 1981), and the idea that rape is a product of commonplace and culturally embedded notions about masculinity, femininity and sexuality (Brownmiller 1975; Coveney et al 1984; Griffin 1971, 1986). From this rose the premise that there is potential for rape in every heterosexual relationship (Jackson 1978). These earlier analyses gained ground in one respect as evidence mounted that most sexual violence takes place within close relationships. Domestic violence has been similarly described as an extension of husbands' social and economic power to the physical control of their wives (see Bograd and Yllo 1987; Dobash and Dobash 1980, 1992). Commentators on sexual harassment, too, point out the hazy margin between harassment and ordinary social interaction amongst men and women (MacKinnon 1979), and that it stems from inequalities in social relations between men and women (Fain and Anderton 1987).

c) An evaluation

My research gives some support to the basic idea of continuum of violence. In Section B I go on to demonstrate that there is indeed a continuum of incidence in women's experiences of violence and harassment, and from the interviews I carried out it is clear that many women recognise the parallels between violence and harassment in so far as they may both be expressions of men's power. Moreover, harassment is sometimes seen as a precursor to violence (Chapter 5).

However, my research also challenges some aspects of feminist theory, particularly the emphasis on the unitary nature of violence and harassment. It has highlighted several shortcomings of the arguments outlined above, as follows. First, I would argue that there is a need to maintain a distinction between the more extreme violent events and the more minor abuses such as harassment. My interviews suggest that most women hold distinct definitions of violence and harassment, and perceive clear cut boundaries between various forms of violence and harassment. Contrary to previous suggestions, I found that these distinctions follow through to the evaluation of experiences (see eg Stanko 1985:10). Women do not always experience harassment as 'little rapes' (Griffin 1971), but may give to different experiences a range of contrasting meanings. Moreover, classifying and drawing boundaries between incidents is an important way in which women negotiate the safety of a situation and the response needed: in Chapter 5 I explore some of the common criteria and processes by which women evaluate the seriousness of incidents of harassment. The disparity between this finding and Kelly's assertion

that her interviewees see margins between harassment and violence as far hazier may exist because her method of selecting participants was more likely to include better educated women and members of women's groups (see Kelly 1987:46-7).

Secondly, I would contend that not only is this distinction existent in most women's minds, it is important to maintain in it analysis and the presentation of findings. Contrary to Kelly's suggestion, the accounts of violence and harassment reported to the survey show a strong tendency for seriousness to rise as incidence falls. Violence such as rape or battering is far more damaging than harassment, both in the short term and in the long term. This is another reason for differentiating between them, if serious incidents are not to be trivialised and the trivial made too serious. I comment on some of the operational ramifications of this in Section B.

Thirdly, therefore, if an operational distinction is maintained between harassment and violence, it does not hold that women all experience sexual violence at some point in their lives. This is also very clear from my research and, in fact, the disparities in women's experiences point to the main shortcoming of the concept of a continuum. Some women's lives are untouched by aggression save for the most minor, impersonal forms. Some women, by contrast, have experienced almost lifelong violence. Many women have not experienced any aggression from men they know well and, clearly, not all male/female relationships are innately unequal in the way that has been implied. It seems to be the case that often those who have suffered one form of violence are more at risk from others (Genn 1988; Young 1988), reflecting the self-evident point that there are all sorts of crucial differences between women which mediate their experiences.

To aid understanding of sexual violence, it is important to emphasise the differences in women's experiences as well as the similarities. Segal (1990) suggests that feminists have been somewhat unwilling to examine why some men exert power through violence and some do not, despite the common social context of male dominance. As she comments, all men are no more potential rapists than potential drug abusers: most are neither. Several women I interviewed mentioned, somewhat indignantly, that 'all men are potential rapists' is 'the feminist view on rape', whereas today it represents just one view in a multiplicity (Edwards 1987). Not surprisingly, many women find the implication that all heterosexual

relationships are oppressive insulting: if all men are offenders, all women are victims.

Feminist conceptualisations of violence are tackling the problem of explicitly accounting for the complexity of forms that power can take, for example with the recognition that some women as well as men commit sexual abuse (Kelly 1991), or that battering occurs within some lesbian relationships (Renzetti 1988; Schilit et al 1991). I would also suggest that while it is important to maintain that various forms of violence and harassment may share the same basis, it needs to be stressed that male violence is not equally harmful. Individual situations, personalities and relationships all have a sizeable impact on any given event. Segal (1990) draws a distinction in experiences of violence across space, stating that physically coercive sex between intimates is not as harmful as the 'brutal, injurious events of stranger rape' (Segal 1990:248). However, I would refute this spatial distinction as several women told me that they felt being raped by a partner is a worse experience than being raped by a stranger.

Yet there are clearly very different means and ends through which men assert their power by using sexual aggression, as two particular case studies demonstrate. Valerie and Diana are both fairly affluent professional women from Corstorphine who both consider themselves to have suffered marital rape. Valerie feels her experience is common to most married women; rather than being physically violent, her husband uses emotional blackmail. In Valerie's words:

> "If you don't then I'm going to wake the children up and I'm going to have a screaming match and the neighbours are going to come out into the street and the child is going to be terribly emotionally affected by this."
>
> Valerie, Corstorphine

She is not financially dependent on her husband, loves him and would never consider leaving him. Diana, on the other hand, suffered very violent abuse by her husband during a short marriage and she divorced him after one very brutal rape in which she was held at knife point for several hours. In both cases the violent events force an element of control on these women's lives, as I discuss in Chapter 3, but to very different degrees. Their experiences show how widely the severity as well as the effects of violence can vary. Men's motivations, and the way that the abuse of power functions within relationships, are not cut and dry. The recognition of how much sexual violence can vary, its role in power struggles as well as in the

execution of power, has implications for preventive strategies (Chapter 7) but also, in this context, for the extent, meaning and diversity of female vulnerability and fear.

3. Conceptualising sexual violence in this research

The conceptualisation of sexual violence and harassment used here is built around the ways in which the women in my survey commonly perceive male abuse. As I have suggested, some aspects of the idea of a continuum are useful theoretically and operationally, some less so. Comprehensive clear and tidy definitions of sexual violence are not possible as violent events may merge with harassment, and harassment with what passes for acceptable social interaction. However, for the purposes of this thesis, I define sexual violence as aggressive behaviour ranging from physical molestation upwards, and harassment as behaviour which usually does not involve physical contact but is threatening or worrying and may be sexualised, malicious or both (see Chapter 5). Apart from there being general consensus on this frame of reference among the women I spoke to, it allows close consideration of how the minor, common threats affect concern about the serious, rarer attacks (Chapter 5).

B. THE EXTENT OF RISK: RATES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

1. Introduction

Some measure of risk is relevant to any discussion of fear of crime. Fear of crime is often discussed as a homogenous phenomenon, and of this 'generic' fear of crime it has been said that levels of fear and actual rates of crime do not necessarily coincide (Donnelly 1989; Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Smith 1989). In assuming it fits the mould of generic fear of crime, the same has been implied of women's fear of sexual attack (eg Hough and Mayhew 1983; Pyle 1980), leading to the conclusion that women's fear is unrealistic or irrational. More recently, this line of argument has been countered, as I outlined in Chapter 1. Below, I assess what is known about the spatial and social patterns of sexual violence and harassment, including what is indicated by my research.

2. Difficulties with data sources

a) Official crime statistics

It is now widely accepted that official statistics for sexual attacks can not be taken as anything like representative. There are many valid reasons for not reporting sexual attacks to the police including embarassment, fear of stigma, reprisals or having to relive the trauma, and lack of faith in the police or legal system. The fact that most attacks on women are carried out by known men exacerbates these concerns. Table 5.2 (Appendix D) shows that many women in the current survey said that they would not report sexual offences for various reasons; however, it still appears that many are overestimating their likely response to a violent event (Chapter 4). Police statistics are generally considered to represent 10% or less of the actual extent of rape (Johnson 1980; Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre 1988). For instance, 52 rapes were reported to Lothian and Borders Police in 1992 (Safer Edinburgh Project 1993), prompting the local news headline 'One rape each week in City' (Evening News 4.12.92). Although this was intended to shock, extrapolating from these figures suggests that the chances of the average woman living in Edinburgh being raped are very small - less than one in 4,500. As official sources now recognise, reported sexual violence represents only the tip of the iceberg.

b) Crime surveys

Since the early 1980s the British Crime Survey (BCS) has been carried out nationally with the intention of picking up on the 'dark figure' of unreported

offences and offering a more comprehensive picture of crime (Mayhew and Hough 1988). The BCS has not made specific efforts to improve upon information on violence against women and, indeed, has not managed to do so. One (attempted) rape was reported to the 1982 BCS out of a sample of 11,000 (Hough and Mayhew 1983), while in the third sweep 15 women, or 0.2% of those included, reported a sexual offence (Mayhew 1989). As the authors have always acknowledged, it is certain that this seriously under-represents the extent of violence experienced by the women surveyed. This particular failure of the BCS has evoked criticisms which can be summarised as follows.

First, methodological failings have been pointed out, particularly the insensitivity of the survey method employed by the BCS. The fact that interviewing was carried out face to face by people who were not trained in handling sensitive issues is likely to have discouraged many women from reporting violence (Hanmer and Saunders 1984).

Secondly, the BCS's categories of offences are based on a conventional version of crime which often does not match people's experiences (Walkate 1989). This is particularly true of violence against women, but also of other crimes, notably racist assault and harassment: incidents which are not criminal in law may be equally or more upsetting than officially-defined crimes (Stanko 1987b; Young 1988). In addition, the use of narrow legal definitions, for example of rape, fails to reflect the full spectrum of the experience and therefore offer respondents relevant choices (Box 1983). The assumption that all victims are equal and experience crime equally has led to an emphasis on the quantitative rather than the subjective aspects of crime (Young 1988).

A third and related point is that the BCS method of measuring victimisation assumes the salience of crime; that it is experienced and remembered as discreet events set apart from ordinary everyday life. In contrast much crime is experienced as a process:

> Some sections of the population are so over-exposed to...[criminal] behaviour that it becomes part of their everyday reality and escapes their memory in the interview situation.
> (Jones et al 1986:63)

People who suffer ongoing, multiple abuse on a day to day basis and particularly from people who live close by (again, sexual and racist abuse are prominent

examples) may not construct the behaviour as criminal (Genn 1988; Stanko 1988b). Thus it may not be reported, or its full impact may not be reflected in reporting. The temporal parameters set by crime surveys are also inadequate: crime experienced over the past year is insufficient to explain current concerns and attitudes (Young 1988).

Local crime surveys with improved methodologies and broader definitions of criminal behaviour have revealed higher rates of violence against women, but still suffer from under-reporting (eg Crawford et al 1990; Jones et al 1986; Kinsey 1984). These failings are significant not only because of their methodological implications for the current research, but also because the BCS results have had a considerable impact on thinking amongst police officials, policy makers and other crime prevention practitioners (Chapter 7). As I go on to discuss, the ostensibly low risks which crime surveys have implied have also shaped many theoretical assumptions about women's fear of crime (Chapter 3). A particular concern has been that the extent of private violence has remained hidden until very recently (Stanko 1988b), a gaping vacuum in information which led Hanmer and Saunders to contend in the early eighties:

> The interests of existing power-holders, largely men, are being served by knowing as little as possible about violence to women.
>
> (Hanmer and Saunders 1984:11)

c) Feminist research

A number of feminist investigations into sexual violence studies have been carried out over the last decade with the aim of countering the deficiencies in the official means of collecting data. By using more sensitive methodologies these have uncovered high levels of rape, child sexual abuse and other forms of violence, indicated that fear is widespread among women and highlighted the fact that sexual violence most often takes place in the home (eg Dobash and Dobash 1980, 1992; Hall 1985; Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Radford 1987; Russell 1982, 1984; Stanko 1985). However, this body of research is not without methodological difficulties either. Some studies have been criticised for having unrepresentative samples (Segal 1990). Many have not set out to extrapolate about 'objective' risk in the manner of crime surveys, however, but rather to comment more broadly on the frequency and nature of women's experiences of violence.

One problem with some of the statistics which have come from these studies is that definitions of terms such as 'sexual assault' and 'sexual harassment' vary. Hall (1985), for example, clumps together as forms of 'sexual assault' experiences as disparate as rape and indecent exposure, while Hanmer and Saunders, who state that over half of their respondents have had a 'violent experience' in the last year, include in this term 'behaviour they perceived as threatening, violent or sexually harassing' (Hanmer and Saunders 1984:32). The differences in experience which this encompasses adds weight to my argument in Section A for drawing clear distinctions. Generalising about sexual violence can be counterproductive, resulting in misleading statistics which are then too easily ignored (Segal 1990), as well as inaccurately representing women's experiences.

d) The current research

In view of these various pitfalls, careful attention was paid to methodology in the current research (Chapter 1 and Appendix B). It had been decided at the outset not to ask respondents directly about their own experiences of sexual violence in the research. I felt that the current project could not hope to do this justice; it would constitute a research project in its own right. Neither did I want to jeopardise the success of a survey mainly seeking to look at women's fear by including direct questions which respondents might find distasteful or upsetting. It turned out that I was being unduly cautious, as a considerable amount of information about sexual violence was gathered through volunteered accounts scribbled on questionnaires and offered in interviews. This in itself gives an indication of the commonness of sexual violence, as well as the willingness of many women to share their experiences in research which uses appropriate methods.

The information gathered in my research does not stand as an objective reflection of risk. It does provide a strong indication of the commonness of sexual violence, however, as well as having a role in explaining fear among women in the survey. The measured levels of sexual harassment are not intended to be taken as representative of the general population either, but instead are used to contribute to a broader picture of victimisation and vulnerability which interviews subsequently padded out and, importantly, to allow analysis with other factors (Chapter 5).

3. The commonness of sexual violence

a) Violence against adult women

A growing number of feminist studies (see above) demonstrate that male violence against women is endemic. For example, studies using appropriate and sensitive methods have suggested that more than one in ten adult women have been raped (Painter 1991; Russell and Howell 1983), while domestic violence is generally estimated to affect between one in four and one in ten families (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Strauss et al 1980). In the Islington Crime Survey, the rate of non-sexual physical assault against women was found to be 40% higher than that against men (Jones et al 1986). Attacks are far more common in private situations, and those involved usually know each other well (Hall 1985; Painter 1991; Russell 1982; Stanko 1988b). Even in the 1988 BCS which, as the authors acknowledge, underestimates the extent of violence against women, only 9% of the attacks reported against women had occurred in public places (Kinsey and Anderson 1992). Contrary to what is suggested by official statistics, it is likely that the rate of violence against women is as high or higher than that against men (Young 1988).

Table 2.1

Incidents of sexual violence reported to the survey

Incident	**Respondents reporting incident (n and % out of 389)**	
Sexual abuse before age 16 (Reported in question 3.7b)	86	22.1
Sexual abuse before age 16 (Reported elsewhere)*	10	2.6
Rape after age 16*	6	1.5
Sexual assault after age 16*	2	0.5
Domestic violence*	10	2.6
Attempted sexual attack*	4	1.0
Unspecified sexual attack*	16	4.1
Total incidents reported	134	
Respondents reporting at least one incident	114	29.3

*** These figures refer to separate reported incidents volunteered by survey respondents on their questionnaires or in interview. Because many reports were volunteered they almost certainly underestimate the sexual and physical violence experienced by women in the survey.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, questionnaire and interview material

In my research, 114 women (29% of all respondents) report 134 incidents of male violence (Table 2.1). This response is far higher than expected in view of the aims of the survey: many reports came unsolicited. Many of these women had been sexually abused as children, but six cases of rape in adulthood and ten cases of domestic violence were also reported along with several cases of attempted sexual violence, completed sexual assault, and sexually violent incidents the nature of which is not specified. As these reports of violence in adulthood were volunteered, it seems probable that the actual amount of violence experienced amongst those surveyed was higher than they alone suggest.

b) Sexual abuse in childhood

The survey reveals high levels of child sexual abuse. Eighty six women (22.1%) report being touched up or fondled before the age of 16 in a question on childhood sexual harassment, while ten note elsewhere that they were victims of rape or sexual abuse when they were young. This level reflects the mean estimate from various studies of child sexual abuse which suggest that around one in four or one in five girls are sexually abused (Baker and Duncan 1985; Mitchell 1985; Kelly 1988).

Again, the definition of child sexual abuse varies, and aggregate statistics hide considerable variations in experiences and their effects. From details offered by some of the respondents who ticked the category 'touched up/fondled' it is clear that situations they refer to range from those where children have their own genitals touched, to those in which they are forced to touch an adult's, to rape. Fifty of the 86 respondents had been abused by someone known to them; in 26 cases it was a close relative, in most cases the respondent's father. A brief and isolated incident involving a stranger might not be expected to have as profound an effect on a child and future adult as abuse by a relative, which in many cases was described as going on over a period of time. Unlike other sources, however, the statistic of 22.1% does not include incidents of harassment such as indecent exposure, being followed, or being pressed up against which, on their own, have less severe consequences.

c) Sexual harassment

In some ways, assessing the extent of sexual harassment is more problematic than the investigation of sexual violence. Although it is a less sensitive topic, many women still feel that it carries a taboo, and the fluidity of definitions and in the

evaluation of incidents have meant that although there have been many studies of sexual harassment there are inherent difficulties in estimating its prevalence. The term 'sexual harassment' itself carries different meanings for different people (Thomas and Kitzinger 1990), and hence its direct use in fieldwork can bias results (Grahame 1985).

In the questionnaire the term 'sexual harassment' was avoided, and a list of incidents was given: respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced each of these and what their feelings were towards them. Inevitably, the incidents presented had to be fairly unambiguous forms of behaviour (Table 2.2). However, follow-up interviews covered more subtle behaviours and discussion progressed to how the line is drawn between the acceptable and the offensive, as well as individual interpretations of the term 'sexual harassment'. This approach circumvented some, but not all, of the problems involved. A fuller discussion of methodological and definitional issues is given in Chapter 6. My aim here is simply to indicate the extent of the less serious forms of unwanted male behaviour.

Table 2.2
Incidents of sexual harassment reported to the survey

Incident	**% of respondents who record this happening at least once (n = 365)**	**% of respondents who record that this has happened more than once (n = 365)**
Flashed at	33.5	8.8
Followed	49.8	24.2
Touched up	38.3	22.1
Leered at	64.8	57.0
Being whistled at	89.5	87.3
Unwanted sexual comments	76.4	69.6
Obscene phone call	55.2	38.8

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey, 1992, Question 3.1

As Table 2.2 indicates, experiences of sexual harassment (all of these incidents are unanimously given this label by interviewees, except for 'being whistled at') are commonplace for women (Anderson et al 1990a; Crawford et al 1990; Junger 1990; MacKinnon 1979; Russell 1984; Stanko 1985). Although most previous analyses have concentrated on sexual harassment in the workplace, the incidents reported here were as likely to have occurred elsewhere (Chapter 5). Many

women had experienced a variety of incidents over time; almost two thirds of the women surveyed could remember experiencing some form of sexual harassment before the age of 16 (Table 2.3). Recent research suggests that children today continue to be at high risk from sexual and non-sexual harassment (Anderson et al 1990b).

Table 2.3

Reported incidents of sexual harassment which occurred before the age of 16

Incidents of sexual harassment before the age of 16	**% of respondents who remember this happening at least once (n = 389)**
Flashed at	20.1
Offered a lift/approached	24.7
Followed	22.4
Someone sat or stood too close for comfort	17.7
Other*	4.9
At least one of these	63.2

*** Other incidents specified here by respondents were 7 cases of obscene suggestions or advances, 10 cases of sexual abuse, 1 case of being followed by a man in a car, 1 case of a salesman trying to force his way into the child's house.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey, 1992, Question 3.7

CONCLUSION

In Chapter 2 I have laid out the background to my research findings by indicating that all of the forms of abuse of women are widespread. My own findings about the extent of sexual violence and harassment no doubt represent an incomplete picture, but nonetheless they suggest that at least a third of women have experienced physical sexual violence and that the majority have been sexually harassed. I have argued that there is a need to maintain an operational if not a theoretical distinction between experiences of violence and harassment, in order to remain true to women's feelings and experiences, and to aid understanding of the differences in the ways in which men's power is asserted as well as the broad similarities. The findings about the extent of harassment in childhood and adulthood also have implications for the development of feelings of vulnerability and other effects of harassment on women (Chapter 5).

The main implication of these findings at this stage is that women's fear of violence is well-founded. The findings therefore cast further doubt on the

assumption that there is a paradox between levels of fear and levels of violence (the first paradox I introduced in Chapter 1). I have not referred to the social or spatial patterns of experiences of violence and harassment among women in the survey. I explore these in Chapter 3, after looking at the spatial and social distribution of women's fear of these events. This complicates the idea that a simple relationship exists between rates of violence and levels of fear, an issue I will be discussing at the end of Chapter 3. First, I go on to examine the levels of fear of sexual and physical violence among the women in the survey.

Chapter 3
WOMEN'S FEAR OF VIOLENCE:
A SPATIAL AND SOCIAL CONSTRAINT

What would make you feel safer?
All the rogues being shot, like [laughs]. No you can't do that because there would be nobody left would there. I don't know. I don't think there is anything that would be kind of any safer. Nah, nah. Apart from maybe being in a wee fortress kind of thing.

Jeanette, Pilton

INTRODUCTION

In the last Chapter I established that the risks of physical and sexual violence against women are high. In Section A of this Chapter, I examine the extent of fear of violence among the women in the survey, and thereby assess whether the extent of violence is enough to explain fear. This involves looking at the specific nature of women's concerns; at the distribution of fear with regard to different spaces and situations and among women of various social and economic backgrounds. In so doing I aim to evaluate criminologists' recent arguments that women's fear of crime is well-justified by risk, and geographers' claims that there is a distinct spatial paradox between risk and fear.

I go on to consider the effects of fear upon the women in my research in Section B. Rather than restricting analysis to public places, I include an exploration of the effects of fear on women's working and private lives, and their social and leisure activities. I also examine responses to crime other than the behavioural, to gauge how far violence can be held to hamper women's well-being and their opportunities for participating in public and private life on an equal basis with men. Again, I compare the experiences of and constraints imposed on women from different social and economic backgrounds. I include in this analysis an examination of the effects on women of their fears for their children.

In Section C I introduce feminist theories of the role of violence and fear of violence. I want to evaluate these in the light of my research findings and the current state of knowledge about violence. In particular I want to examine whether fear of violence can be said to constitute a social control of women. Many of the key feminist notions about violence were conceived in the 1970s, and I want to

question whether they still provide an adequate and relevant framework of reference, and if they do not, what modifications are required.

A. THE SOCIAL AND SPATIAL PATTERNS OF WOMEN'S FEAR

1. Women and 'fear of crime'

In the past, 'fear of crime' has too often been treated as an unproblematic term, and there has been little conceptual analysis of it (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1998b). While increasingly popular with the media, the phrase 'fear of crime', dating from the 1970s when research began, has been the subject of some questioning within academic circles. Some have pointed out that there exists a range of reactions to crime, of which fear is only one. Many people do not report 'fear' as a response to crime in surveys so much as other feelings like 'anger' or 'shock' (Kinsey and Anderson 1992), which seemingly leads to the conclusion that fear of crime is not such a problem in general after all:

> Rather than fear, the most common reaction to victimisation is anger and irritation at the inconvenience it causes. It is also clear, however, that for certain sections of the population crime presents substantial problems and has significant implications for the quality of their lives.
>
> (Kinsey and Anderson 1992:54)

This illustrates how 'fear', which does indeed affect certain people more than others, has been partitioned off from other concerns about crime. However, the 'certain sections of the population' (this phrase usually alludes to women and older people) for whom crime is a substantial problem actually make up a majority of the population, and for this reason I question their marginalisation in fear of crime research. I extend this case in Chapter 6 when I consider that there are considerable numbers of people in other 'sections of the population' whose lives are also affected by fear of crime disproportionately highly if compared to an average. Hence, discussion of the average, or generic, fear of crime has little real meaning. The distinction between crime and systematic violence (Chapter 1) is again pertinent, as 'fear' applies to fear of sexual attack and other forms of systematic violence far more than to other types of crime which are, by nature, less likely to induce 'fear' (Gordon and Riger 1989; Warr 1985).

There are also problems with the way in which fear has been investigated. Kinsey and Anderson (above) are referring to BCS data, in which respondents are asked to choose a reaction from a list which best describes their feelings. There is no qualitative or subjective data to back this up and to suggest what labels such as 'fear' actually mean. Neither is there any recognition of the fact that respondents'

definitions of 'fear' may vary widely, or that male respondents may be rather less likely than women to select a label which challenges an image of male invulnerability (Crawford et al 1990).

I want to suggest here, in common with other feminist analysts of fear of crime, that 'fear' needs to be broadly interpreted in order to adequately describe women's reactions to crime. 'Fear' has never been a very appropriate word, although it is one which has stuck. 'Fear' tends to conjure up an immediate and short lived dread which someone might feel, for example, when followed by a shadowy figure along a dark street, or when directly threatened with violence from an acquaintance. On this basis fear is indeed a relatively rare feeling. However, in recent attempts to reconceptualise aspects of the fear of crime (Chapter 1) it has been stressed that fear, and risk itself, is not necessarily fixed in space, time or context but often can be more usefully defined as an ongoing, lower key anxiety; for example the concern which leads to anticipating potential shadowy figures on dark streets or encounters with the acquaintance, and planning evasive strategies.

Particularly in the context of women's experiences of male violence and threatening behaviour, 'fear of crime' ought to be taken to refer to more of a pervading state of alertness than a momentary terror (Painter 1992; Stanko 1987b). This condition forms the basis of the feminist social control theories which I will introduce in Section C. This state of anxiety has proven hard to pick up on in even the most recent crime surveys which use structured interviews, while research using in-depth, free flowing interviews such as Valentine's (1989b) have been more illuminating. Hence the questionnaires used in my research which ask about 'worrying about sexual attack' and 'how your fear affects you' (Appendix C) are backed up with subjective and evaluative data from interviews.

The responses implemented in reaction to crime can effectively circumvent fear, and this may provide another reason as to why some respondents in surveys mention only 'anger' in response to crime. Again, it is therefore crucial to take an in depth look at the effects of fear. Many such responses, as I go on to describe, become so ordinary in people's day to day lives that their presence may be ignored after a while, but their lack of visibility does not mean that they are not placing significant limitations on activities and well being. The broad spectrum of consequences of fear of sexual attack affecting the women in my survey is outlined

later in the chapter. In the rest of this Section I aim to demonstrate that, for women, fear is a common reaction to crime and a widespread problem.

2. The extent of fear

You're never safe at any time. If somebody wants to go out and attack a woman, they'll do it.

Barbara, Pilton.

I think without a shadow of a doubt, you know, I'd rather be killed than raped, you know, stabbed than raped.

Jane, Corstorphine

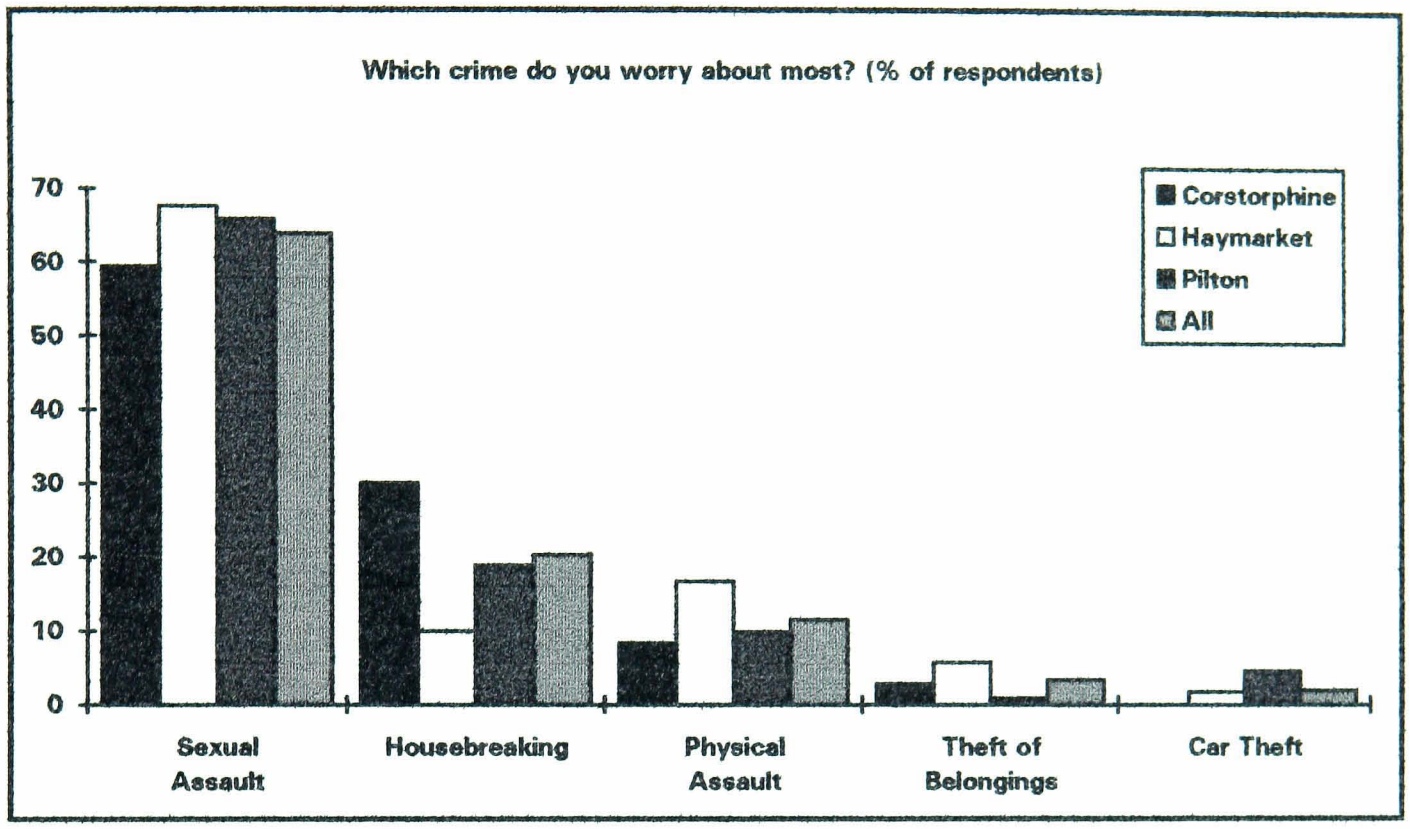
It is well established that women's fear of crime is more widespread, more intense, and has more serious consequences than men's, and that the difference is largely accounted for by fear of rape and other forms of sexual violence (Riger and Gordon 1981; Stanko 1987b; Warr 1985). My research suggests that fear of sexual violence among women in Edinburgh is greater on all three of these counts than has shown up elsewhere in British studies, perhaps owing to the value of the combined qualitative and quantitative methodology. In the Edinburgh Crime Survey, for example, 45% of women in Central Edinburgh said that they were 'very or fairly worried' about sexual attack (Anderson et al 1990a), while in a Stirling survey 27% of women said that they were concerned about sexual assault in public places, and 14% were concerned about it in the home (McLaughlin et al 1990). My research highlights the existence of still more concern among women.

To demonstrate the centrality of sexual violence in women's concerns about crime, Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of women choosing sexual assault as their 'most-feared crime' in comparison to other offences. Sexual assault is by far the most worrying: 63.9% of all the women in the survey say it is the crime they fear the most.

Who worries most? Most studies of fear of crime suggest that older people are worse affected by fear of crime than younger people (eg Kennedy and Silverman 1985; Warr 1984), although I will present some evidence which challenges this in Chapter 6. Less remarkably, older women are considerably less likely to say that sexual assault is the crime they are most concerned about than younger women: one quarter of those over 60 say this compared with three quarters of those aged between 18 and 30. Many of the older women in the survey do not feel they are at

high risk of sexual attack, and are more concerned about housebreaking. (The survey did, however, make a significant finding about fear of attack in the home among a minority of older women and the implications of this are discussed in Chapter 6.)

Figure 3.1
Which crime do you worry about most?*



*** A corresponding Table (3.1) can be found in Appendix D**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 1.6

Previous research has found that household type is one of the most important variables affecting fear of crime, with women living alone generally being the most worried (Smith 1989), but the married women in my survey express no less concern about sexual or physical violence than the single women. Focusing on violence alone in research tends to displace general patterns of fear, partly because fear of violence is so pervasive, and the fact that it occurs in private and public space dispels the idea that one man can offer protection from all men. However, fear is significantly more widespread among women who are divorced or separated - those who have lived with a man but are now likely to be alone - than among married or single women.

On the whole, there are far fewer differences in reporting fear of sexual violence by social, demographic or economic factors than has been consistently found with

regard to other crimes. Social class, as I will go on to demonstrate, has a significant bearing on the distribution of fear across space, but no effect on the intensity of fear which each woman is likely to feel. As gender is the most significant predictor of fear of crime (Balkin 1979; Dubow et al 1979; Maxfield 1984), and as sexual violence is by far the greatest concern amongst the most fearful gender, it seems reasonable to state that sexual violence accounts for a sizeable measure of all fear of crime. Therefore, rather than stating that rates of fear of crime are low except among certain groups, it is more accurate to suggest simply that rates of fear of crime are high, except (although this is still open to some debate) among men.

3. The spatial patterns of fear

a) The salience of space

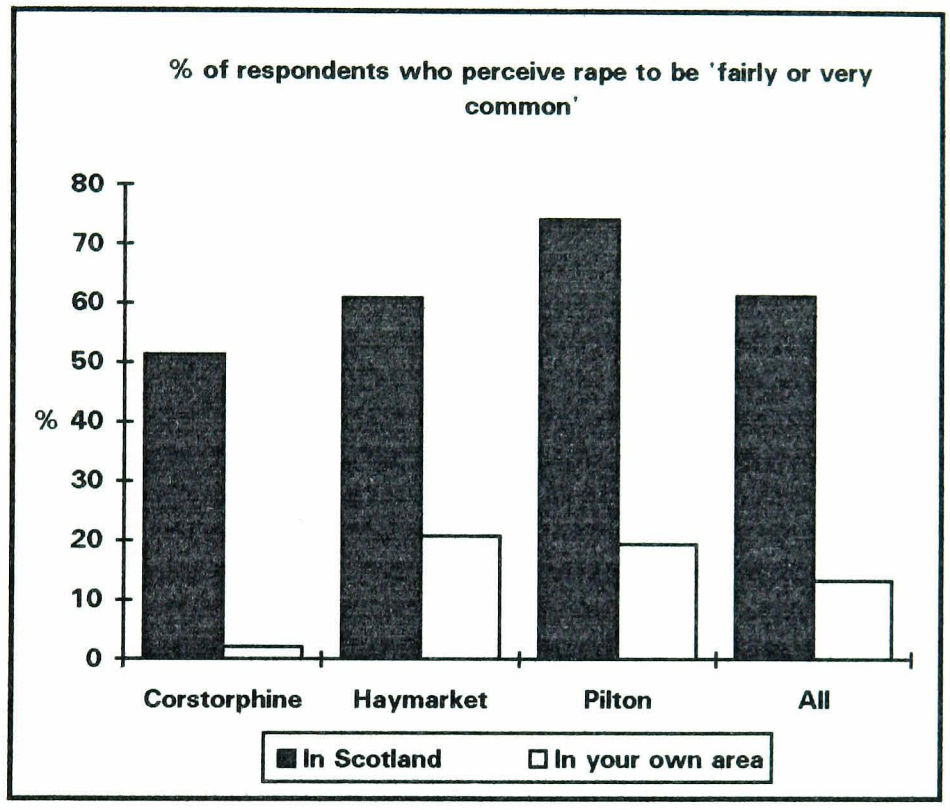
The spatial patterns of women's fear provide one of its most marked characteristics. Figure 3.1 shows that there is little geographical difference in the extent of fear of sexual attack by area; the fact that there are more older women in the Corstorphine sample accounts for the lower figure there. Fear of sexual violence does not appear to be concentrated in local hotspots within cities in the way that fear of other crimes may be (see eg Anderson et al 1990a; Kinsey et al 1984), but is so widespread that it cuts across geographic boundaries.

This contradicts the findings of North American research in which it has been suggested that the neighbourhood women live in has a considerable bearing on their feelings of safety (Gordon and Riger 1989; Stanko 1990). In such research 'safe' areas are often said to be perceived by women as white, middle class, affluent neighbourhoods. By contrast, my research in Edinburgh found little evidence that neighbourhood has much effect, despite having purposefully located the study in three contrasting areas. First, as Figure 3.1 shows, women in each area are as likely to say that sexual violence is the crime which worries them most. Secondly, women in all areas perceive a large disparity between rates of rape in their own locality than in the country as a whole (Table 3.2). Thirdly, and despite this last finding, all of the women regularly employ some form of coping strategy to deal with the risk of sexual attack, again with no difference in the extent of their use by area (Section C).

I would suggest, therefore, that Edinburgh neighbourhoods themselves have little significant bearing on women's fear of sexual attack, although its urban structure

has been linked with rates of generic fear of crime (Kinsey 1993). As I go on to explain in Chapter 4, the visible built and social environments of these areas themselves have some bearing on women's fear, but relatively little when compared with other influences. Fear of sexual violence is essentially socially constructed and can be related directly to women's position in society. My focus on space in this analysis, therefore, is not on particular places themselves but on the broader spatial divisions of many women's lives; on the symbolic connotations of space rather than its concrete structure.

Figure 3.2
Perceptions about the commonness of rape in Scotland and in respondents' own area*



*** A corresponding Table (3.2) can be found in Appendix D**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 1.1, 1.2

In particular, it has been suggested that public and private space are important parameters for the discussion of women's fear (Valentine 1989b). The salience of space lies in the fact that most sexual violence takes place in private (Chapter 2). Violent events must be located in the context of the condition of women's lives; women often have economic and emotional ties to their abuser and may be additionally constrained by gender roles, particularly childcare. This has implications for avoiding and escaping from violence which have been discussed elsewhere (eg Binney 1981; Dobash and Dobash 1980). It also has implications for the patterns of fear, which I now want to turn to.

b) The spatial paradox

On first sight, it appears that the range of spaces with which women associate anxiety about attack is very narrow. In particular, many women draw a basic distinction between public and private space in talking about the sorts of places and situations which are frightening and hence the location of their fear. The following quotes exemplify places typically seen as threatening.

It would generally be at night time, anywhere. Um or areas of the high rise flats like Wester Hailes.

Olivia, Corstorphine

Well roundabout here obviously it's the Meadows, there's no way I would cross the Meadows either early in the morning or late at night. Um, basically isolated places where there's not a lot of people around. Anywhere that's unlit.

Yvonne, Haymarket

Well I suppose just an area where I didn't know it too well, and perhaps there weren't many other people around. And it was dark.

Edith, Pilton

When asked for images of a frightening place, most women describe somewhere dark, lonely and unfamiliar; in other words, images of fear at this level are firmly rooted in public space. Table 3.3 similarly illustrates the powerful influence of these indicators on general feelings of safety: while 98.1% of the women in the survey say that they always feel safe with company at home during the day, only 9% say that they always feel safe outside on their own at night. This confirms previous findings that night time, being alone and being outside the home are all influential cues of danger (Valentine 1989b; Warr 1990).

Table 3.3
Feelings of safety in different situations

Situation	% of respondents who 'always feel safe' (n = 377)
With company at home in the day	98.1
With company at home at night	91.8
With company outside in the day	90.5
Alone at home in the day	87.8
Alone outside during the day	69.1
With company outside at night	50.9
Alone at home at night	47.2
Alone outside at night	8.8

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 1.7

Table 3.4

The location of women's fear of sexual violence

Incident	**% of respondents who report being 'very or fairly worried' about... (n = 380)**
Rape outside by a stranger	68.7
Rape in your home by a stranger	45.2
Rape outside by someone you know	27.7
Rape in your home by someone you know	25.2

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.1

Table 3.5

The location of women's fear of physical violence

Incident	**% of respondents who report being 'Very or fairly worried' about... (n = 380)**
Being beaten up outside by a stranger	59.0
Being beaten up in your home by a stranger	42.0
Being beaten up outside by someone you know	21.5
Being beaten up in your home by someone you know	23.4

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.1

Women are more likely to worry about being raped or beaten up by a stranger outside than in any other situation (Tables 3.4 and 3.5). Yet, in contrast, the vast majority of sexual attacks take place in private space (Chapter 2). Hence it appears that there is a considerable mismatch between the location of risk and the location of most women's fear, which has been noted in previous research (Hanmer and Saunders 1984) and has provided the focus for recent work on women's fear within geography (Valentine 1989a, 1989b, 1992a). In a Reading study, Valentine found that constraints are placed on women's mobility daily by their fear of attack in public places, and concluded that this inhibited use of space constitutes a 'spatial expression of patriarchy' (Valentine 1989:315). My research supports these findings, as I go on to demonstrate in Section C. However, this simple distinction between public and private space requires some qualification.

First, it pays to be hesitant in playing off risk and fear against one another. Objective risks (which, as I intimated in Chapter 2, one can never be sure of) and

fear, which is subjective, are not comparable (Young 1988). Women's fear is related to other forms of intimidating behaviour as well as violence (see Chapter 5), as well as to other sources of powerlessness in women's lives (Stanko 1987b). There is also an issue of consciousness: might women be more likely to report fear which has the most visible and obvious effects - in public space - to research?

Secondly, however, a significant finding in my research is that although the 'spatial paradox' can be seen to exist, it is not as universal a contrast as has been suggested in the past. The fact that at least a quarter of all respondents say they are 'very or fairly worried' about a sexual or physical attack in private space is significant. As Valentine notes, encounters with men in public space are 'unpredictable, potentially uncontrollable and hence threatening', and this is one reason why fear gravitates around public space for some women. But she goes on to say that in private space encounters are 'predictable' and so 'domestic assault is not perceived as fearful in the same way' (Valentine 1989:174). The figures given in Tables 3.4 and 3.5, as well as interviews with women who have suffered domestic violence, suggest that this is not the case. I go on to discuss why this large minority of women are worried about being attacked by men they know towards the end of this Section.

More recent research has also found that fears attached to private places are fairly common. A Stirling study into women and crime found that 14% of respondents were concerned about sexual assault in the home (McLaughlin et al 1990), while in the second Islington Crime Survey 47% of female respondents said they were fearful of crime in their homes (Crawford et al, 1990). Although, as the authors stress, it is unclear how many of this latter number are fearful of violent partners and how many of strangers breaking in, it clearly demonstrates that the home is no sanctuary from fear of violence. Just as there is no clear cut spatial distinction between experiences of violence against women (Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Painter 1992), fearfulness is not unique to the public or the private domain.

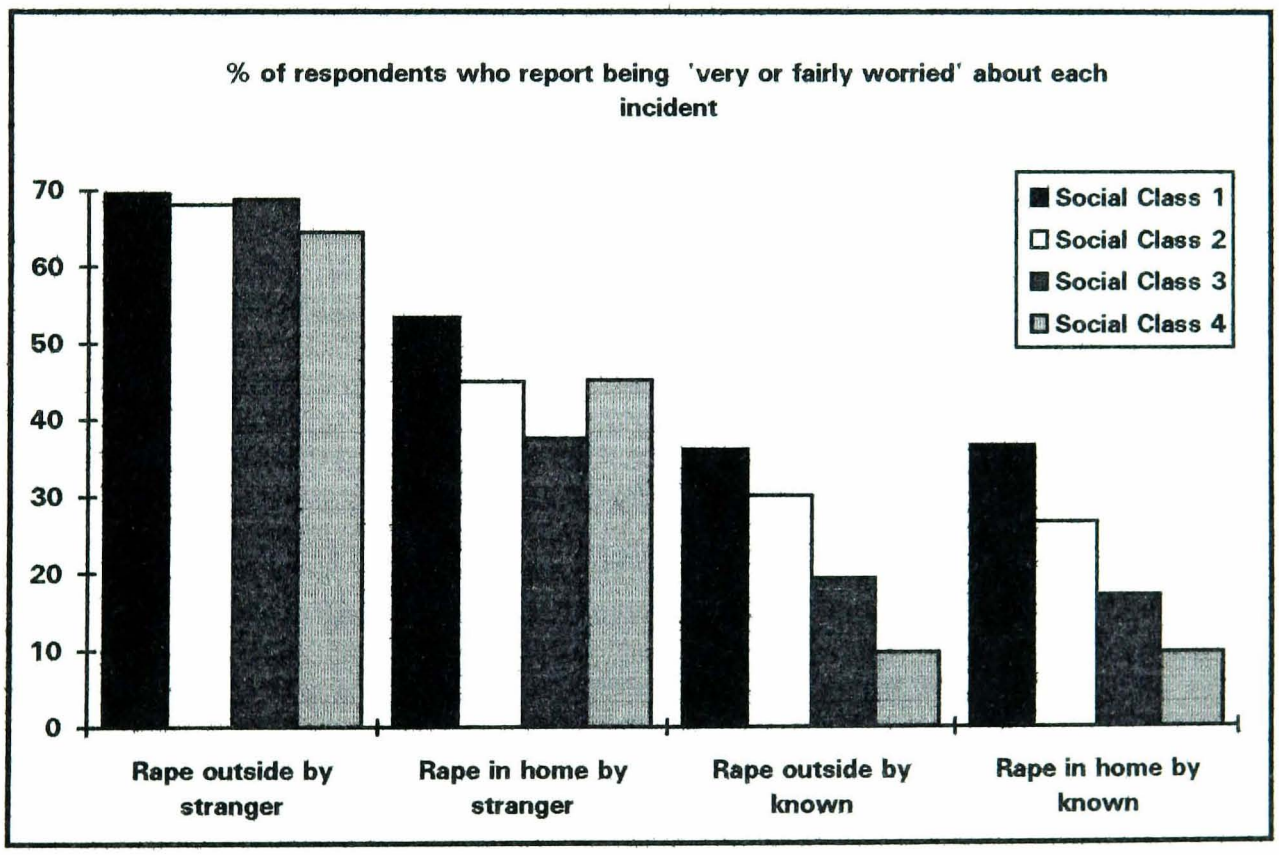
I now want to make a significant modification to considerations of fear in public and private space. The assumption seems to have been that women's experiences of fear in different spaces are not mediated by other factors. I want to go on to examine the effect of social class on the spatial distribution of fear.

4. Social class and the distribution of fear

Women's social class has been said to affect their fear of sexual violence. On the one hand it has been said that class increases women's likelihood of fearing sexual violence (eg Gordon et al 1980), while on the other it has been suggested that fear of sexual violence affects all women but that those with particular advantages by virtue of class, income and education are able to bypass its potentially harmful effects on lifestyle more easily (Stanko 1990a; Painter 1992; Valentine 1989b). My research confirms that social class is influential in how women deal with danger, but shows that this does not necessarily have the effect of reducing fear, as I go on to discuss in Section B. Rather than social class affecting the degree of concern women experience, it has a strong bearing on the places, situations and people which women fear - and in particular its distribution between the public and the private which I identified above.

Figure 3.6

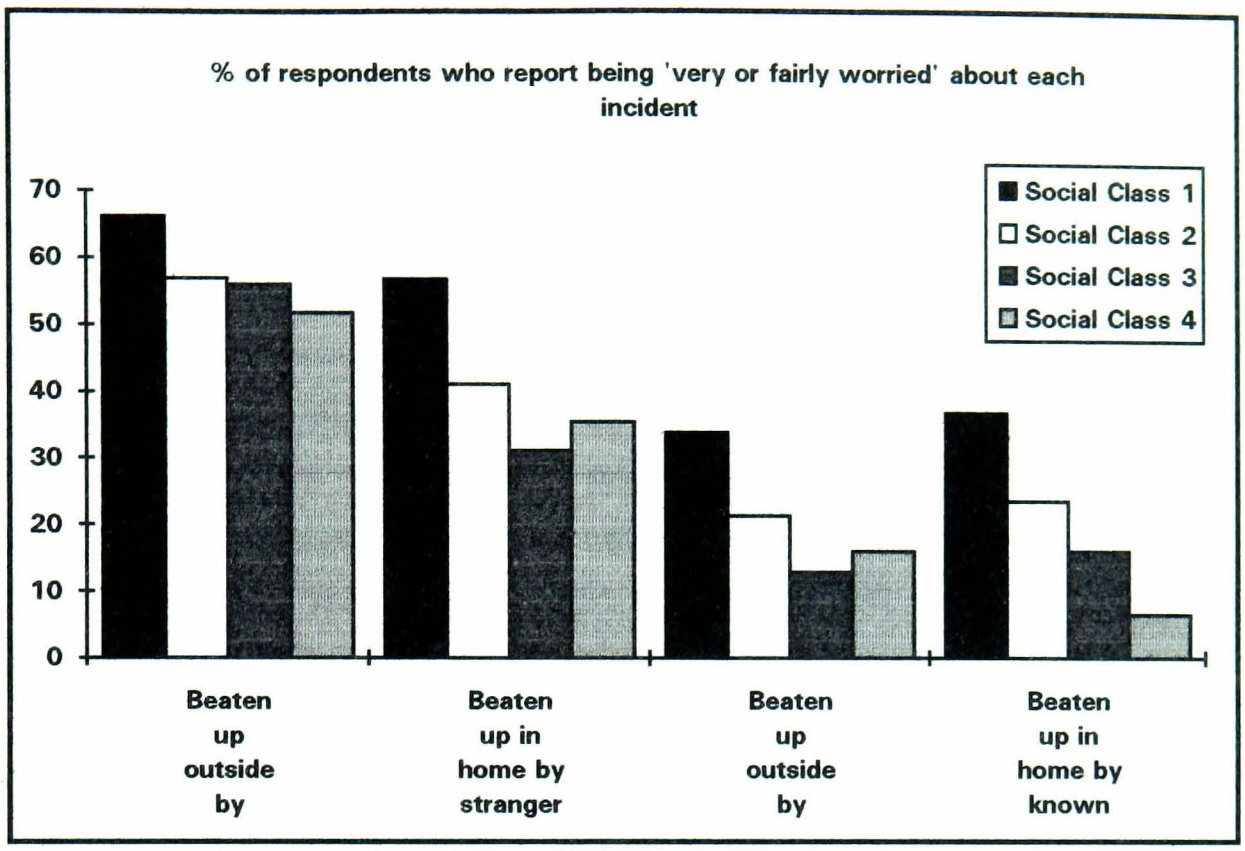
The spatial distribution of fear of rape among women in different social classes*



*** A corresponding Table (3.6) can be found in Appendix D.**
SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 6.15

Figure 3.7

The spatial distribution of fear of physical violence among women in different social classes*



*** A corresponding Table (3.7) can be found in Appendix D.**
SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 6.15

While women of different social classes are equally worried about being attacked by a stranger outside, concern about becoming a victim of private violence is closely and significantly linked to social class (Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Women in the lower social classes are significantly more concerned about incidents of rape which involve known assailants, both in the home ($p < 0.001$) and outside ($p < 0.05$) than women in the higher social classes (Table 3.6 in Appendix D). More than three times as many women in SC1, the lowest social class, worry about being raped by someone they know as women in SC4, the highest. The relationship is most significant with fear of rape in the home by a known man. A similar pattern can be seen for fear of physical violence (Figure 3.7): women in lower social classes, particularly SC1, are significantly more likely to be worried about the three incidents which involve the home or a known man (Table 3.7 in Appendix C).

Why should this be? One explanation might be that higher rates of fear of violence in private space are caused by a greater likelihood of having experienced some form of violence in private space. Research has shown that experience of violence is

more likely to increase fear subsequently than any other type of crime (Van der Wurff and Stringer 1989), and that the ostensibly 'safer' a rape situation (ie the closer it is to private space), the more fear women feel afterwards (Schepple and Bart 1983). Certainly, the women in the survey who have been attacked by men known to them feel that this has made them far more fearful in all situations where they encounter men.

In my research the incidents of rape and domestic violence reported to the survey, almost all of which were committed by known men, are almost all from middle class women, which might seem also to contradict the suggestion that women in lower social classes are more prone to private violence. However, these reports are voluntary and the greater tendency of middle class people to categorise violence as discreet events and report it to surveys has been noted elsewhere (Hough 1986; Sparks 1981).

Elsewhere there is mixed evidence for the link between class and violence against women. Official statistics suggest that working class women suffer more rape (Segal 1990), and a number of analysts have linked class and domestic violence (eg Gelles 1979; Strauss 1980). However, violence against women in lower social classes is more likely to be visible; incidents of private violence reported to the police or which come to the attention of welfare groups are more likely to involve women who have no independent means of support and therefore nowhere else to turn (Dobash and Dobash 1992; Pahl 1985). It has been suggested that 'the realities of male violence and the sociological language of class seem totally divergent' (Hanmer and Maynard 1987:11). Survivors of domestic violence who are financially independent might simply have more chance of getting away from the situation early on, and in this respect the prospect of violence in a relationship may be less fearful for middle class women. The fact that women in SC1 and SC2 tend to believe that domestic violence is more common in their own area than women in SC3 and SC4 (evidence suggests that it is more visible in Pilton) may also contribute to the greater likelihood of personally fearing private violence (Chapter 4).

Recently research has suggested that working class women suffer more of all types of crime, both in public and in private space (Jones et al 1986; Crawford et al 1990). An investigation of wife rape also indicates that working class women are considerably more likely than middle class women to be sexually attacked in both

public space and in private space (Painter 1991). Hence it is possible that the relatively high rates of fear of private space violence among working class women are explained by personal or second-hand experience.

The findings show that social class effectively explains a large part of the spatial paradox. Although there is no difference among women of different social classes in the intensity of fear of public space violence or in the crime which women fear the most, the focus of middle class women's fears tends to be much narrower. Fear and, perhaps, experiences of violence are more pervasive for women in lower social classes. I go on now to examine the constraints which are imposed by women's fear of violence, and in returning to the question of social class will demonstrate that it also has some bearing on how women react to and negotiate their fearfulness.

B: FEAR AS A SPATIAL CONSTRAINT

1. Introduction

Sexual violence is unique in the effect that the fear it invokes has on the majority of women's lives whether they have been victimised or not. Fear of crime almost always manifests itself in some form of reaction, but women's responses to the threat of sexual violence principally involve social and lifestyle precautions which characterise their fear as distinct from men's (Gordon et al 1980; Stanko 1987b; Valentine 1989b; Warr 1985). These constraints are shaped by the particularly traumatic nature of the crime and by generally held attitudes towards it which, it has been argued, permeate the reactions of official bodies towards victims (Hall 1985; Radford 1987). In Section C I present a theoretical framework for these constraints by looking at the feminist literature on violence as a social control. Much of this theory was developed before empirical evidence had been gathered with which it could be evaluated. My aim in this section is to undertake a comprehensive examination of the effects of fear on the lives of the women in my research, and in so doing I want to extend the analysis of spatial constraint to areas which have seldom been considered in the past.

2. Classifying coping strategies

How might the extent of the constraints which are imposed by fear be delimited? Most analyses of people's responses to fear of crime have tended only to consider behavioural constraints as significant effects of crime and, typically seeing the threat overridingly coming from outside the immediate household, restricted consideration to public places. They have also tended to draw a distinction between avoidance and self protective behaviours (eg Dubow et al 1979); the former might involve staying in at night, and the latter carrying something which could be used as a weapon, for example. This classification was extended to women's fear of rape by Riger and Gordon (1981), who divide their respondents' behavioural adaptations into 'isolation tactics' (avoiding exposure to perceived danger) and 'street savvy tactics' (being prepared for danger).

In many ways this simple, reductionist distinction misrepresents the full extent of the effects of fear of violence on women's lives. Valentine (1989b) makes several apposite points. First, she criticises criminologists for their aspatial analysis, arguing that women's coping strategies are greatly determined by space and time reflecting their perceptions of danger. Secondly, she notes that many behavioural

adaptations are very subtle, tending to involve the way in which public space is negotiated more generally rather than clear cut, obvious precautions such as avoiding particular places or carrying alarms. She suggests that 'coping strategies' describes more accurately the adaptations women make to their lifestyles in the ongoing process of dealing with fear. Valentine goes on to categorise these coping strategies into three self-explanatory types: time/space avoidance strategies, environmental awareness strategies and physical defence strategies.

It is clear from my research that, as Valentine suggests, women commonly employ certain strategies in certain places and at certain times in response to perceptions about space and danger, and I expand upon this below. Space is indeed critical to particular beliefs about and reactions to danger. However, my research also provides strong support for the suggestion that women are not just affected by fear of sexual and physical attack in public places (eg Stanko 1990a), but that coping strategies are, firstly, often far more subtle than has generally been recognised and, secondly, far more pervasive across the various domains of women's lives.

This very pervasiveness suggests that there is little reason in attempting to categorise the effects of fear. However, it is worth pointing out that the effects of fear of crime on individuals are at least threefold. Crime has emotional consequences, of which fear is one example; behavioural consequences, which may stem from the latter; and psychological consequences, particularly concerning the perceptions about identity and status of many of those who feel at risk of violence. Any of these three may be present without the others, but obviously the more of these effects crime has on an individual, the more damaging they are.

Along with interpretative problems with the term 'fear' (Section A), this depth of constraint is why the effects of fear have not always been easy to unravel. Studies such as crime surveys have often only uncovered the most obvious and self evident reactions to fear, particularly behavioural responses. The typical survey yardstick for fear of crime concerns feelings of safety out on the streets at night; this is clearly inadequate and has done little more than scratch the surface of the complex processes involved in feelings, perceptions and adaptations to crime. Research employing more in depth methods of inquiry has demonstrated that awareness and communication of the full effects of crime sometimes need to be teased out over time (Valentine 1989b).

In this survey, the aim was to find out as much as possible about the effects of fear of sexual violence by using the two research tools, self-report questionnaires and in depth interviews, and by focusing broadly on a variety of spatial and social situations. Women's feelings about what they do to reduce risk, as well as the things that they do, were discussed. In some cases, what emerged in interview shows that fear affects respondents rather more than their questionnaire answers had suggested. Hence the statistics presented in this Chapter give a broad picture of the effects of sexual violence on lifestyle and behaviour, but may well underestimate the full extent. The emotional and psychological effects of fear emerged from interview material and the significance of these is discussed further towards the end of the Section.

3. The constraints imposed by fear of sexual violence

a) Constraints in public places

The constraints imposed by fear of crime on women's use of public space have been well documented (Riger and Gordon 1981; Stanko 1990a; Valentine 1989b; Warr 1985); these are the most conspicuous effects of fear, both to women themselves and to researchers. My research provides further support that coping strategies in public places are extensive among women of contrasting backgrounds, and I want to outline the nature of these here before going on to some of the less commonly recognised effects of women's fearfulness on their lives.

Although crime surveys and the media have tended to concentrate on extreme examples of avoidance behaviour, adding to an image of women as passive in the face of fear, coping strategies which women use when they are out and about are far more common. Fewer than one in ten of the women in the survey say that they actually stay in because of their fear of being sexually attacked in public places (Table 3.8). Most women make an effort to get on with their everyday lives and activities, and this often involves trying to elude fear itself.

I have avoided going out because I was too scared but usually if I'm frightened of something I force myself to do it. To overcome the fear basically.

Karen, Pilton

I mean I try not to curb my lifestyle at all cos I'm like - I refuse to, sort of, you know, curb my lifestyle in case something happens. It's kinda like, you know, refusing to cross the road in case you get knocked over.

Jane, Corstorphine

Despite this fairly widespread attitude of resistance expressed by women in interviews some of the most easily identifiable everyday effects of fear of sexual attack on behaviour are very common (Table 3.8). The majority of women are aware of regularly making choices on a day to day basis which they hope will reduce the likelihood of victimisation. In addition, three quarters of the respondents feel their social lives are affected by fear of sexual attack, over half feel their leisure activities are curtailed and one in four say that their working lives are affected (Table 3.9).

Table 3.8
Behavioural responses to fear of sexual violence

Behavioural response	**% of respondents who say they do this 'always or sometimes' because of fear of sexual attack (n = 389)**
Watchful when walking	84.6
Avoid certain streets/areas	83.8
Regularly choose certain types of transport	84.8
Regularly avoid certain types of transport	70.7
Don't answer the door	35.7
Don't go out alone	35.0
Put off routine calls	10.8
Don't go out	8.9

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 5.1, 5.3, 5.4

Table 3.9
Lifestyle effects of fear of sexual violence

	% of respondents (n = 389)
Fear of sexual attacks affects social life	76.9
Fear of sexual attack affects leisure activities	53.6
Fear of sexual attack affects working life	41.6

Source: Safety In Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 5.6, 5.8, 5.10

What sort of precautions are involved, and what impact do they have on women's opportunities for quality of life and equality of opportunity? Table 3.8 shows that the fear of sexual attack in public places has a marked effect on women's conscious transport decisions, which are already subject to gender role constraints such as

restricted disposable income and access to cars, and childcare and housework responsibilities (Pickup 1988; see Table 3.10 in Appendix D for more details). For the women who have access to a car, fear of public space often means the development of a high degree of dependence on using it. I discuss whether this means that more affluent women can effectively circumvent their fear of attack later in this Section.

I prefer to take a car, I really don't like being out at night. I would not be happy having to travel on buses, and getting off them, and walking home because it's up a cul-de-sac.

Rosalind, Corstorphine

If I was going out with some of my friends either I would go to their house first and then we would get a taxi somewhere, um or most of my friends own cars, again, so we would probably use cars to go out in the evening.

Alex, Haymarket

If I go out to post a letter at night I get in the car to go down to the post-box. Or up to Safeways. Er, I'd never dream of walking out at night. I wouldn't do it. I don't even cross the park to baby-sit. You know, we're in the baby-sitting circle and it's about a hundred yards across the park and I don't do that now, I go round in the car.

Myra, Corstorphine

The majority of women have also developed strategies which they employ while outside on their own. The most conspicuous example is the avoidance of certain places (Table 3.8). The local geographies of many women are modified by what they know and perceive about sexual attack (Valentine 1989a), and all of the women I interviewed described 'no-go' areas which they will go to considerable lengths to walk around at night, and to a lesser extent during the day. Taking care with dress and demeanour are also common amongst the younger women in the survey, partly because the 'wrong' sort of clothes might hamper escape from a dangerous situation, and partly because of perceptions that they might provoke an attack.

I do like to dress up and wear a short skirt and high heels but I won't do it unless I'm in a big group...It's not so much that I worry it would cause someone to rape me but if it did happen, then it would be felt by the judge and the police and whoever that I had caused the attack in some way.

Elizabeth, Haymarket

Only a small minority of the women in the survey have taken self defence classes (4.9%) or say on their questionnaires that carrying an alarm or something as a weapon makes them feel safer (8.0%) (Table 3.14). However, in interviews far

more of this sort of behaviour was revealed than the statistics suggest. Keeping keys, umbrellas, hairsprays or similar articles to hand is in fact fairly common informal precautionary behaviour, while buying a rape alarm is less popular as it indicates a formal admittance of fear as well as a continual reminder of something which many try to forget. In Chapter 7 I discuss the some of the implications of this research for the wider debate on women's self defence.

Although most women try not to let their fear get the better of them and go about their daily activities, albeit in a restricted manner, fear of sexual attack often means avoiding activities which they would otherwise do. In particular, participation in leisure pursuits, which may already be restricted because of factors such as income and time constraints (Green et al 1987), is often seen as risky. Eight out of ten of the women in the survey say that they engage in leisure activities or have done so in the past, and of these over half feel that fear of sexual attack has affected their leisure activities for various reasons (Table 3.9). Many have at some point given up or avoided outdoor activities, preferring to miss out on their enjoyment and other benefits rather than pursue them in what seems a dangerous environment (see Table 3.11 in Appendix D for more details).

Well even jogging - I'd like to go jogging but it sorta puts me off, people looking at you, and I think you're a target for an attack aren't you? Even when I went to aerobics, you know mixed classes, there's always some creep looking at you. Well it's not worth doing something if you're uneasy all the time.

Gillian, Pilton

I wouldn't go for hill walks and things like that on my own. And things like walking along the canal bank, it sounds very nice, but you are very isolated.

Irene, Corstorphine

And then [while filling out the questionnaire] I realised that I would not um walk the dog in the park, for example, when my husband's away. You know maybe put her into the garden rather than go for a walk, or go for a walk in lighter places. Which is then the whole big problem about dogs and where dogs are supposed to perform. Which is tied up with women's safety in a funny sort of way, you know I mean if you're supposed to take your dog to a place where a dog is allowed to er do its business, then where do you go? As a woman?

Valerie, Corstorphine

I have briefly outlined the range of conscious strategies which women employ in public space and which impose considerable constraints on their lives. It has been argued that this degree of precautionary behaviour in public is not only unnecessary but that it encourages women to seek sanctuary in the home, paradoxically where

most sexual attacks actually take place (Hanmer and Saunders 1984). I would be cautious about this conclusion, however, on a number of fronts. First, the pressures which encourage women towards traditional heterosexual relationships are far too complex to be determined in this way. Second, statistics on the spatial distribution of fear suggest that women do not necessarily see private space as safe (Section A). Third, although the risks of sexual attack are clearly higher in private space, this does not mean that coping strategies employed in public are pointless. They certainly have an undesirable and detrimental effect on women's lives and well-being, but sexual attacks in public, although relatively rare, are a frightening prospect. In addition, many coping strategies are also geared around dealing with harassment, which is very common in public places (Chapter 5). Women's use of coping strategies can not be shrugged off as 'unnecessary', but there are alternative strategies which might be used more positively in public places (Chapter 7).

Valentine (1992a) furthers Hanmer and Saunders' arguments by suggesting that male partners actively discourage women from using public places, thus reinforcing women's traditional place in the home and men's control of private space. I found little evidence of this; several women say that they worry considerably about their partners' safety from physical attack outside as well as their own, but there are no reports of anxious husbands keeping women from activities they want to do. While domestic assault is clearly an example of individual men using sexual violence to control their partners, fear of violence in public places is often a problem families face together, particularly when it comes to children's safety (I discuss the relation of this to public policy in Chapter 7).

b) Constraints at work

Fear of violence also impinges upon many women's experiences of work: four out of ten of the women in the survey say that the risk of sexual attack affects their working lives (Table 3.9). More detail about these effects is given in Table 3.12 in Appendix D. Eight women in the survey say they have given up a job because they felt it put them in too vulnerable a position, or because they had been attacked at work.

Specially when I worked in the casino I had a terrible time in there. Just - they were all waiters where I was working and I was the only girl, and because you had to wear these kinda certain dresses they used to try and take advantage of you. And the people that came in would try and pick you up all the time...sometimes they'd wait outside for you and

follow you and it was just too frightening. I ended up handing my notice in. I was absolutely sick of it.

Karen, Pilton

Often in situations like Karen's, it is workplace harassment which creates fear of attack. I give a fuller discussion of the effects of harassment on women's working lives in Chapter 5.

c) Constraints in private space

Most analyses have concentrated only on precautions taken against rape in public space, as though the guard is always dropped once among friends, acquaintances and relatives. However, as I indicated in Section A, my findings, amongst others, show that the home is clearly not a safe haven from fear for many women (Crawford et al 1990; Junger 1987; Pawson and Banks 1993; Stanko 1990a). Many women continually monitor a range of situations for danger, not just those which are commonly perceived as dangerous and delimited by time and space. It is clear from the interviews I carried out as well as questionnaire material that minor adaptations in behaviour and 'taking care' permeate all aspects of life. Below, I explore some of the ways in which fear affects women in private space.

i) Social activities

Almost eight out of ten of the women in the survey feel that the risk of sexual attack affects their social life (Table 3.9). In some cases the coping strategies women adopt are aimed at countering the risk of attack by strangers, but they also extend to known men (see Table 3.13 in Appendix D for more details). Only a small number (18 women) say that the risk of sexual attack is a factor in deciding not to go out at all; for these women, fear of sexual attack has the most profound effect on their lives.

I'm frightened to go out at night. I dinnae go out now. You ken, I'm more or less in here all the time. You're feart to go to the shop for messages or anything like that. Even during the day, ken, cos somebody might pounce on you.

Shirley, Pilton

Several young women say that fear of sexual attack means they take particular care when going out with men they did not know very well; hence fear presents another constraint on social interaction as well as freedom. Again, women's behaviour is partly influenced by personal fear of attack, and partly by an awareness that ideas conflict about who is to blame in a case of sexual attack.

My attitude towards men has changed as I've got older. If say I'm going out with someone who I may not know very well, or even if I know of him, then I am careful, in making sure we go to a crowded place and I'm not left on my own with him and - just things like not going back to his place for a coffee until I totally trust him [laughs].
Does it affect the way you behave?
Well careful, as I say. I would probably just watch myself, what I say and not giving the wrong impression. I think - I think you have to really, because at the end of the day, and all my friends will agree on this, at the end of the day it's up to you. That's the impression that you get. It's up to you to be careful.

Marie, Corstorphine

Do you think worrying about being attacked affects how you behave towards men?
Oh aye. Well, it's never ending isn't it? I like to go out, get dressed up, wear a short skirt, feel good, go out with ma mates, well why shouldn't I? That's my time for enjoying myself. Those are my few hours a week, right. But - well where we go you have to be watchful all the time. You ken, there's men have got their eyes on you all the time and you have to watch what you say and make it clear to them who you're with and that you're not interested. And then I'd never walk home. Never.

Barbara, Pilton

ii) Fear of break-ins

Almost half the women in the survey say that they worry about being raped in their home by a stranger (Table 3.4), confirming that the home is far from a haven from fear. Often the home becomes a fortress from the dangers of the world outside and intimate relationships a sanctuary; a sizeable number of women put locks on doors and windows to make themselves feel more secure from sexual attack, and feel safer in the company of other people or their dogs (Table 3.14).

Table 3.14
Some factors which reduce fear of sexual attack

Have any of the following made you feel less worried about becoming a victim of sexual attack?	**% of respondents (n = 389)**
Getting married or having a boyfriend	31.9
Fitting locks on doors and windows	29.8
Having a dog	18.5
Spending less time alone	18.0
Carrying a rape alarm or something as a weapon	8.0
Moving house	7.7
Learning self defence	4.9
One or more of the above	70.2

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.8

iii) Fear of known men

For round a quarter of the women, however, private space itself is threatening in that they fear violence from men who they know (Table 3.4). The impact of this fear on women's lives in private space has proven the most difficult to research. Rather than this indicating that the constraints imposed by violence on women in private space are less severe than those in public space, I would suggest it might show that they are less visible to many women. Many respondents, for example, employ distancing strategies in response to worries about being attacked by an acquaintance, in contrast to the planned and conscious steps they take to avoid attack in public space (Chapter 4).

I would contend that for those who feel they are at risk, fear of violence from known men has a greater impact than fear of attack in public space. The perceived risks of attack in public space are, after all, reducible either by staying inside or by using a range of coping strategies to negotiate them. The threat of violence from relatives or partners is not so easily bypassed. Many women do, however, employ numerous behavioural strategies in an attempt to reduce the chances of danger (Dobash and Dobash 1992), for example in verbal negotiation or trying to avoid certain 'trigger' situations. The effectiveness of these strategies varies according to the situation the woman is in.

> One boyfriend I had who was a bit violent, I found out he had a history of that. But obviously because I wasn't living with him I could get out of that relationship.
>
> Vicky, Haymarket

> *Does it [ongoing rape by husband] affect your behaviour towards him?*
> Oh yes. I would say so. I will do anything to avoid a scene where he demands sex. Just as he uses any excuse to sort of cajole me into it. There have been occasions where I've stayed downstairs, in the hope that he goes off to sleep, found lots of hoovering to do [laughs]. But no, I mean there is a serious point which is that it's not sort of something that can be avoided when it's coming from someone you live with. Put off yes, perhaps...And especially having children, I think that if you're just on your own and you don't have any commitments, for one thing you can just walk out the door but also you can sort of shout and yell and scream and stand up for yourself.
>
> Valerie, Corstorphine

> I had domestic violence in a very bad way, with three children around. But where do you go to, where do you run when these things happen? And very often the man anyway blocks the way or locks the door. And what happens if you hit back. I mean I do know what it is like. I mean I'm extremely hard and outgoing, I mean I really did everything, everything to get rid of that man, to get this man out of the flat, because I was dead scared of him. I got so hysterical I just wanted to go anywhere, I just ran out and screamed at the staircase and ran to somebody's flat, and of course it seemed to be ages before anybody opened, so many

people don't want to have anything to do with domestic problems. Then I had police in my house, took the children out and then I could get out.

Ulrike, Haymarket

It has been argued that the impact of violence on wives' behaviour is to encourage submission, passivity and obedience, in other words it helps to maintain husbands' power and traditional gender roles (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Hanmer 1978; Hoff 1990; Pizzey 1974). Tellingly, all but one of the women who reported private violence to the survey were those who had escaped it in the past rather than those currently suffering. However, these experiences clearly have a lasting psychological impact.

I spoke to a psychologist about it in 1987, I spoke to a psychologist about it - and sort of straightened it out, came to terms with it. I kept thinking it was me that was bad. You know. Um, what had I done to provoke him? I suppose, you know, lots of people think like that when something bad happens to them.

Diana, Corstorphine

One effect of suffering violence in private space is that general feelings of security are shattered. The women in the survey who have been beaten or raped by husbands or boyfriends in the past say that the spatial distribution of their fear had broadened as a result. Their experiences have heightened fear of sexual attack and precautionary behaviour in public places, as well as increasing fear of men who are known and taking care not to expose oneself to risk.

Well I'd keep to a place that's a very, er, lit up area. I'd never think about taking a short cut down an alleyway or anything like that. Never. Years ago I would have, but not now.

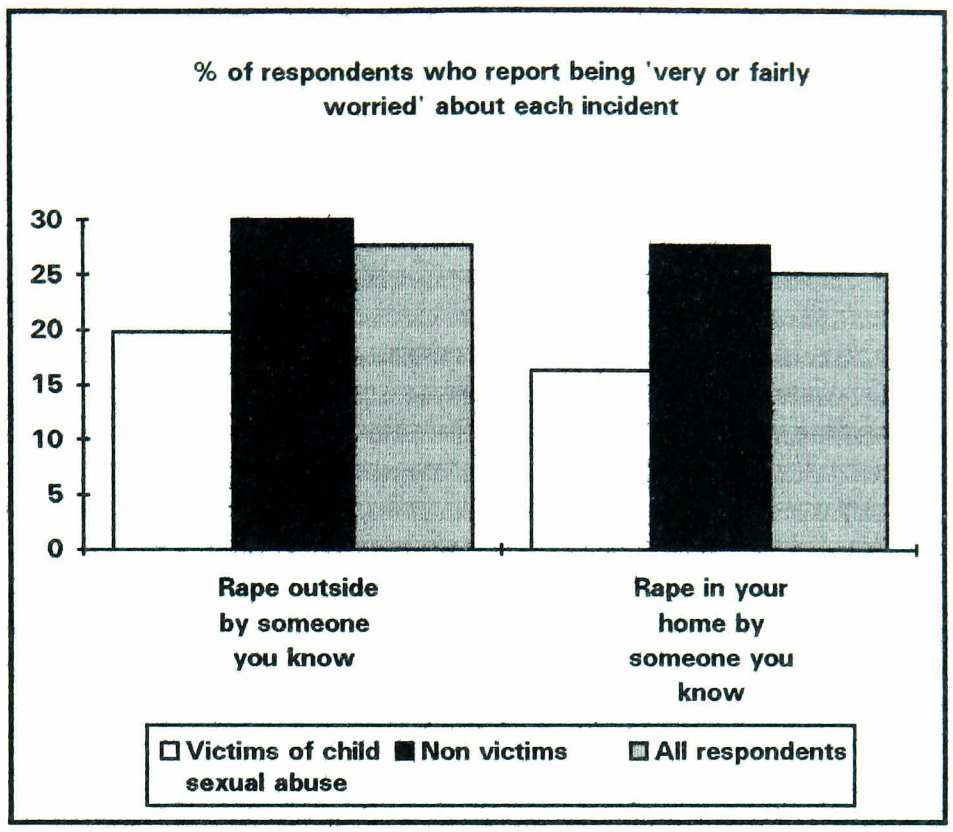
I'll tell you something, it made me dead wary of men. I can read, I'm quite good at reading people. I can read them pretty well. [Recounts meeting a man a friend had fixed up as a blind date, mistrusting him without knowing why, and later finding out he has a reputation for aggression towards women.] I dunno if it's sorta wisdom, you know, or experience or whatever.
So you'd be very suspicious now, of anyone?
Yes, yes.

Diana, Corstorphine

This cross spatial increase in wariness is fairly typical of the women who have experienced violence from men as adults. In contrast, women who have been sexually abused as children report feeling somewhat safer than those who have not. Table 3.15 illustrates a significant and marked relationship between experiences of childhood sexual abuse and fear of being raped ($p < 0.05$).

Figure 3.15

Fear of sexual violence from known men among child sexual abuse victims and non victims*



*** A corresponding Table (3.15) can be found in Appendix D**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 3.7b

The explanation seems to be that women feel safer by comparison: what happened to them as children was totally beyond their power, but they feel more confident about exercising choice and control about adult relationships. The following examples of the explanations which women give on their questionnaires for feeling 'less worried' now (Question 4.3) demonstrate this:

Have more confidence and able to face up to people.
(Reports being most worried between the ages of 11 and 16)

The incidents being domestic in situation, I am not terribly worried about it happening again. Also I am older and one of the people concerned is no longer alive.
(Reports being most worried between the ages of 6 and 15)

Less worried, don't see the same situation arising as when I was a child.
(Reports being most worried between the ages of 14-16)

I have left home and am now married with one hunk of a man.
(Reports being most worried between the ages of 10-23)

Overall, however, evidence suggests that fear of sexual attack in private has considerable effects on the significant minority of women who view it as a risk. In addition, several women who say that they do not feel at risk from private violence put this down to their perceived ability to monitor men they know socially. Clearly, these effects may be more subtle and less conspicuous in nature than the coping strategies employed in public space, and as it is likely that they become ingrained over a period of time, their full extent is probably beyond the scope of social surveys. However, if violence and harassment from familiar men - workmates, schoolmates, social acquaintances or relatives - are tangible risks for women, it follows that the effort put into avoiding them is more harmful than the much deliberated on public precautions.

4. Coping strategies and social class

So far I have discussed the effects of sexual violence as though women experience them equally. Older women are less likely to report being constrained by fear of sexual violence, while women with disabilities are significantly more likely to employ coping strategies for this reason; I discuss the implications of age and ability for fear of crime in detail in Chapter 6. Here, I want to focus on the effect of social class.

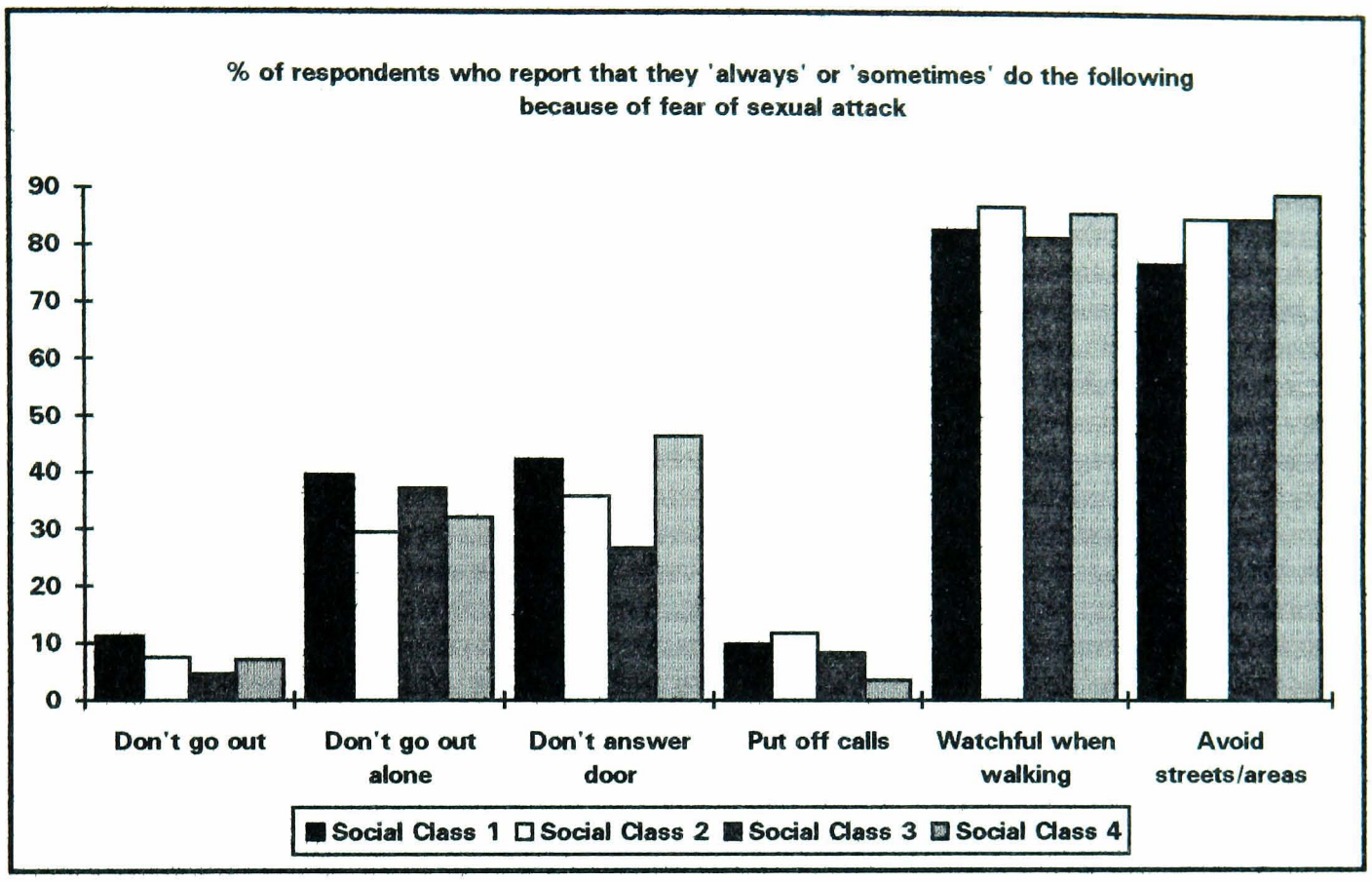
a) The effect of social class

It has been argued elsewhere that women who have particular advantages by virtue of class, income or education are able to circumvent the potentially harmful effects of fear on their lifestyle more easily, and are thus less affected by the threat of sexual violence. It is suggested that middle class women are less aware of taking precautions, have more opportunity to exercise control over their use of public space, and are thus less affected by fear (Hall 1985; Painter 1992; Stanko 1990a; Valentine 1989b). I would like to modify this by looking at fear and its effects across space. As I demonstrated in Section A, women in lower social classes tend to experience fear in a broader range of situations, and it seems probable that this might affect their experience of spatial and social constraints.

In my research there are no significant differences between the proportion of women in different social classes who employ the various coping strategies listed in the questionnaire affecting everyday life, social life, work or leisure pursuits (Figures 3.16 and 3.17). All of these effects of fear can be seen to be fairly evenly

spread among women of all social classes, in both the type and frequency of precautions taken.

Figure 3.16
Behavioural adaptations resulting from fear of sexual violence among women in different social classes*

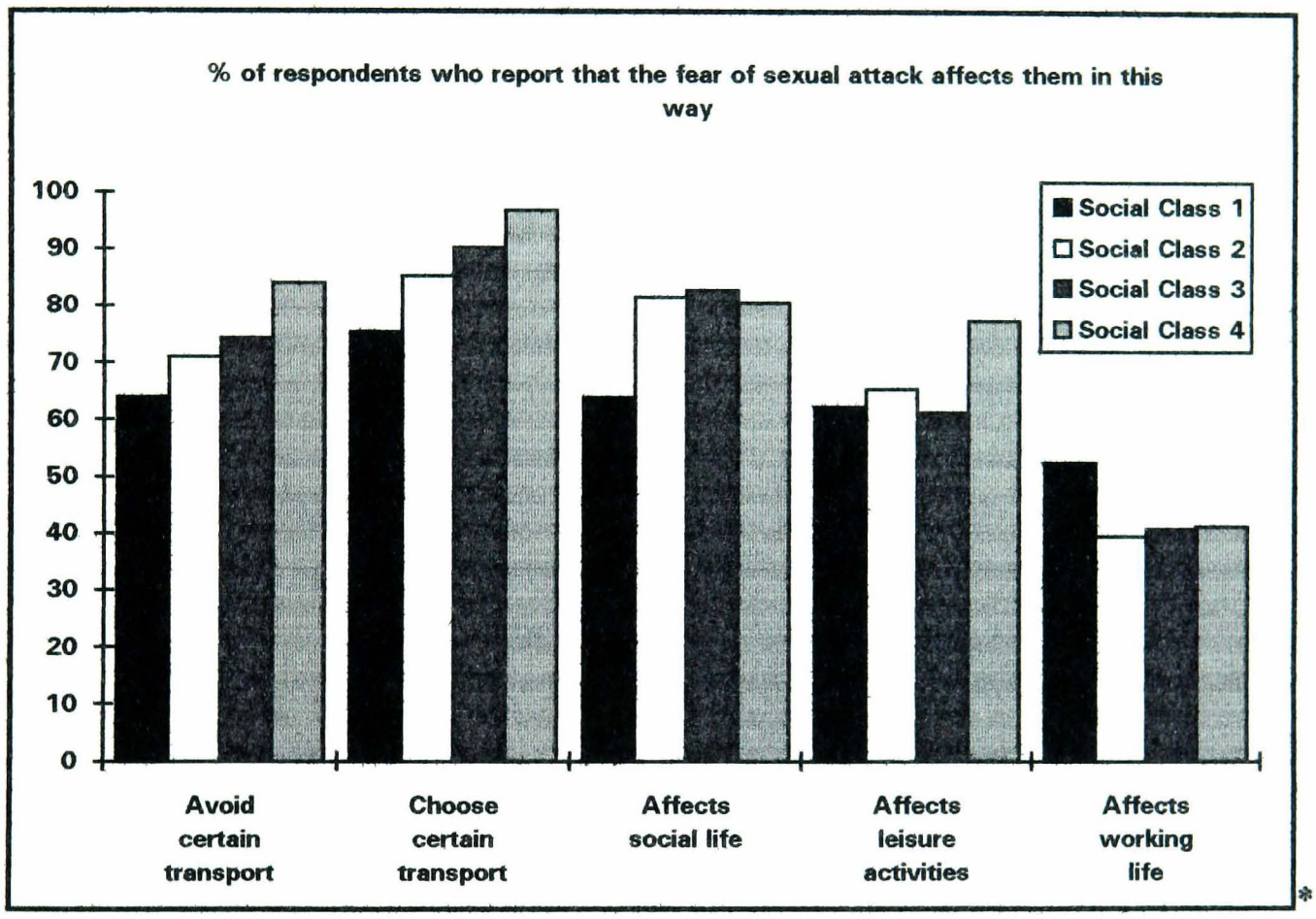


*** A corresponding Table (3.16) can be found in Appendix D.**
SC4 is the highest Social Class, SC1 the lowest.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 5.1

Hence there is no evidence to suggest that women in lower social classes experience more of the constraints imposed by fear than women in higher social classes, as has been contended. In fact, in some cases there appears to be a slight relationship exists in the opposite direction (Table 3.16). Considerably more women in SC4, the highest social class, say that their social and leisure activities are affected and that they avoid certain types of transport and choose others because of fear of sexual attack than women in SC1 ($p < 0.05$). This difference should be viewed with some caution, as middle class women may be more likely to recognise and report this type of constraint. The fact that this is one form of disadvantage which is as likely to affect them as working class women may in itself make it more noticeable to them. Conversely, if the finding is true to life it may reflect the fact that middle class women have greater access to leisure and social

activities outside the home (Green et al 1987), or that they have more means at their disposal to employ coping strategies, for example higher incomes and better access to private transport (Painter 1992). Whatever the reasons, it is clear that there are some differences in the ways that middle class women negotiate safety, if not in their general propensity to do this. This largely concerns the tendency of women who have access to a car or the money for taxis to use them frequently to avoid public space.

Figure 3.17
Lifestyle adaptations resulting from fear of sexual violence among women in different social classes*



A A corresponding Table (3.16) can be found in Appendix D.
SC4 is the highest Social Class, SC1 the lowest.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.8, 5.10

b) The effectiveness of coping strategies in fear reduction

Does this mean, then, that women who are fortunate enough to be able to avoid public space if they choose to do so are less fearful of violence? Coping strategies in public space may have little effect on rates of violence, but if they reduce fear of attack they are at least effective. If this is so, it follows that the benefits would be reaped more by middle class women.

Distinguishing whether the use of coping strategies reduces fearfulness in same way that fearfulness increases the use of coping strategies is problematic. The fact that those most fearful of crime report the most precautionary behaviour might suggest that it does not (Allen and Payne 1991). However, bearing in mind that precautionary behaviour may be subconscious, it may simply be less visible to those who employ it and are resultingly less fearful. There is no evidence from my research suggesting that employing precautionary behaviour reduces fear. This is partly because, as I go on to argue in later chapters, women's fear does not merely concern the use of public places but is shaped by a more general and pervasive sense of vulnerability. I would also suggest that many of the coping strategies women use in an attempt to bypass fearful places are negative strategies, some of which may actually make women less secure (Chapter 7).

Although private transport may mediate use of space for some middle class women, for example (although by no means all own a car), it does not automatically follow that this is a panacea for their fear. There is some evidence that the more women drive the more fearful they become when they do have to use public space: the women in the survey who have free access to a car tend to use it frequently and become increasingly dependent, losing the confidence and skills to negotiate public space which they have previously built up. Many women also perceive that taking private transport instead of public transport introduces the possibility of new risks. As well as offering no protection from threatening behaviour in the workplace, or when engaged in leisure or social activities, fear of public places can pervade the relatively safe space of the car. The women in the survey who regularly use cars are no less concerned about their safety in public places than other women. Habitually employing precautionary behaviour might inflate fear by being a daily reminder of insecurity, and having less contact with public space may mean a less balanced picture of its risks, and less expertise at negotiating it on the occasions when this becomes necessary.

I think I'm more fortunate than most people are to have a car, but having said that when I'm on my own I keep the car doors locked, if I'm driving into town and I'm going to be stopping at traffic lights and things like that.

Rebecca, Corstorphine

I don't tend to take the car out much actually, if I go out I leave it at home. Because if I break down in the dark I'm no better off.

Yvonne, Haymarket

I actually got stopped in my car a few years ago, on some pretext that there was something wrong with my car, and I was absolutely terrified. I wouldn't get out the car. But I later found that the fuel line had been cut on the car. So I don't know what happened then, but um I wouldn't say you were safe in your car, because if anything does happen you're completely on your own.

Deborah, Pilton

Some geographers have argued that capitalism and the class system is more instrumental than patriarchy in defining individuals' spatial experiences (eg Knopp and Lauria 1987); but clearly, in the context of fear of crime, this is not the case. Others have conceptualised patriarchy and capitalism as separate systems but have stressed that they may influence each other in particular places at certain times (eg Gregson and Foord 1987). My research finds more support for this analysis, yet often women's social class appears to do little to reduce their fearfulness or the effect of that fear. For example, the more affluent women in the survey may be able to afford taxis, but many say that they worry about the risks of attack even when using them.

There again you're not even safe using taxis. You get the nice looking ones who'll chat you up a bit, you know. But there again you'll get the creeps. They're worse. It's a weird society.

Barbara, Pilton

I don't trust taxi drivers a hundred percent. They reckon that Dundee murder was definitely a taxi driver and the police know who it is but they've no evidence for it. And um, but er, I've been - twice I was in a taxi where the driver's got very suggestive indeed. Once I was with a friend and he went a detour through Holyrood Park and made rude suggestions about going in the park. Um, but the other one I got to take me back to my parents' house and he says, 'oh so your husband isn't in then?', kinda 'do you fancy inviting me in?' And I don't like, um when I was younger they would start asking questions like 'have you had a lot to drink tonight dear? And where's your boyfriend?' I didn't like that at all. I mean you're taking a taxi to feel safe.

Vicky, Haymarket

Several women talked about feeling threatened by taxi drivers. In 1992, taxi firms in Edinburgh announced that they were going to prioritise women customers in response to recent press reports of sexual attack: but 6.9% of the women in the survey avoid using taxis because of their fear of sexual attack (Table 3.10, Appendix D). In a similar vein to the effect of women's use of different types of public environment which I go on to in Chapter 4, this demonstrates that fear of violence from men is not ultimately avoidable whatever coping and negotiative strategies are employed.

Middle class women may have more of a semblance of control of their safety created by being able to split their activities into 'safe' and 'dangerous' spaces. Overall, however, I have shown that the existing benefits of class social class may distinguish women's experiences of fear but do not ultimately affect the impact of crime upon them. In this case the fact of being female overrides class advantage and disadvantage.

These broad 'axes' of oppression do, however, vary and are not always predictable, as I go on to suggest in Section C. Many independent factors such as individual attitudes and experiences also have an impact on women's responses to the threat of violence. The women in the survey who appear to feel most secure are those who are determined not to let fear get the better of them, who walk alone at night, and say that they dress and behave as they please. These are typically women in early middle age who are single and living alone, who have felt afraid in the past but who have made an effort not to let fear affect them. Their coping strategies, more positive, tend to involve facing up to fear rather than giving in to it.

I refuse to let it affect my lifestyle nowadays, perhaps because I am particularly aware that the real danger is not from outside. I mean I've got friends who let it dominate them totally and won't even drive round the corner to the shops. But I - it's not something I even think about nowadays to be honest. When you're young you believe everything you're told and that makes you afraid...It's largely a panic whipped up by the media and I think it's ridiculous.

Elaine, Haymarket

It doesn't have any effect on me. Nah, it doesn't. Or rather I won't let it affect me. I'm no staying in because of one or two maniacs running around out there, I'm not gonna change what I do, I go out at night, I walk down Ferry Road Avenue, I do as I please. Anyone who disagrees with that is gonna get a good smack. I wouldn't say that I'm scared of anyone. Your chances of anything happening are so wee so you've got to put that into perspective.

Jackie, Pilton

I explore some of the consequences of these sort of individualistic explanations of fear for general theories about power and control in Chapter 6.

The point which has a significant bearing on the impact of fear, however, is that women in lower social classes are far more likely to be fearful of physical and sexual attack in private space than middle class women (see Section A). I have

argued above that the effects of private fear may be more pervasive and constraining than those employed while in public space. Precautionary behaviour which centres around the public sphere can not reduce the perception of risk for those whose fear of violence is more wide-ranging. Neither is the actual risk of sexual violence, which occurs most commonly in private space, likely to be ameliorated by this behaviour for anyone. It does mean, however, that the greater control exerted on certain women's lives by fear of private as well as public violence exacerbates the greater degree of powerlessness which working class women experience in their everyday lives.

5. Beyond the behavioural: the extent of the effects of fear

To round off this discussion, I want to highlight the fact that the constraints imposed by fear do not just concern women's behaviour. They have a broader effect on well-being and identity which many women identify in interviews as the most damaging effects of fear and those which they resent most.

a) Subconscious responses

Most of the coping strategies reported so far are only those which came to mind while the respondents filled out the questionnaire, or during interviewing. In one sense the methodology was an asset in that it allowed women a period of time in which to gather thoughts and memories before being interviewed. However, much precautionary behaviour is adopted over a period of time and becomes almost subconscious, and hence it is unlikely that this research or other projects can identify the full effect of fear sexual violence.

> See in my mind I must be aware that I'm taking precautions, but you know I'm not aware of it. I've never really thought about it till we've had this conversation. So you're doing things more or less because you always do them. You're doing it and you're not aware of it. It must be a sort of ingrown feeling that you're protecting yourself.
>
> Elizabeth, Haymarket

> Well it's a constant nagging at the back o' your brain. I don't think about it an awful lot. But it's there. You know, it's always been there.
>
> Barbara, Pilton

Many of the coping strategies women employ once they are out and about are so normal and everyday that the initial response to questions in interviews such as 'do you take any precautions to reduce the risk of being sexually attacked?' was often 'no'. In some cases, only when women began to talk about their daily routines did

it become clear what level of alertness they live with. Valentine (1989b) made similar findings by comparing what respondents said at first with their detailed spatial diaries. Several of my respondents contradicted their questionnaire answers in interview and it became clear that they took far more precautions to avoid sexual attack than they had at first suggested. Coping strategies may sometimes be employed at a subconscious level because codes of safety are instilled over a lifetime (see Chapter 5); peace of mind may sometimes be achieved through considerable mental and physical effort.

b) Emotional reactions and psychological effects

For many others, on the other hand, consciousness of the effects of fear can create anger, frustration and upset. As I have reiterated throughout this section, women are not all passive and accepting of fear and its effects, particularly not of the more conspicuous ones employed in public space. A considerable amount of awareness of and resentment at the position of having to think about attack daily and being denied the freedom male contemporaries take for granted emerged in interviews.

It's nice when you go on holiday and you've got your freedom to move around in the evening. And in the, yes, in the summer months when it's light as well, when you can just revert back again.

Myra, Corstorphine

Well I don't like the feeling that I've got to take the car everywhere, um, I would like to be as free as I was years back, going back maybe ten or fifteen years...Um, you could leave your door open years ago, now the first thing you do when you come in the door is shut it, lock it and bolt it. You know, so it's different. You feel as if sometimes you're in a fort. You know, for security, to protect yourself against other human beings. It infuriates me sometimes, thinking 'hell I would like a nice walk', or something like that.

Diana, Corstorphine

Basically I would like to walk out of my door and not think about it whatever time of day or night. I have a friend who's Iranian, and we say 'oh terrible, they don't have much freedom'. But she can walk about her country any hour of the day or night, and she either wouldn't be attacked or if she was, not only would there be someone to her aid but they would be dealt with very very severely.

Sheila, Haymarket

It's something that I just can't change overnight. I have to adapt my lifestyle or my social life to it, and I have to include it into the children's education. It's something that is, it makes me extremely aggressive, and I feel sometimes I could do the worst, ja? Cut their members off or something, or just - it's so impossible what men do to women.

Ulrike, Haymarket

The effect on feelings of well-being and general contentment should not be underestimated, as this damages the quality of life as much as the actual coping strategies which are employed. Fear of violence also lowers women's confidence and self-respect: living with fear is a daily signifier of a relatively powerless position. Just as fear of domestic violence lowers women's self esteem, a generalised fear of violence from men has become ensconced into the identity of many women. Several women comment that accepting constraints rather than trying to fight them, and trying to put them to the back of one's mind, is the only way to survive psychologically:

If you think about it too much you get paranoid and you don't do anything. You have to try not to think about it too much. You can't afford to let it get on top of you, I mean you'd go crazy otherwise.

Yvonne, Haymarket

However, most women find that coping strategies are not something which can be employed and forgotten about. The physical precautions which women take are not necessarily the most taxing effects of fear, as the psychological effort put into strategies to avoid dangerous men and situations is considerable. These protective strategies are often carefully prepared and involve a continual state of alertness about the surroundings and the behaviour of other people and the adoption of the right 'attitude' in response: walking in a certain manner, avoiding social contact, monitoring situations and people, and having evasive action planned in advance.

I'm aware of people roundabout me. If there's someone following me I'll know it. I mean you tend to keep away from, well very close to the sides where you know if there were stairs and things. I wouldn't walk down the centre of the road or anything like that but I tend to watch cars, and you can hear if they're slowing down, anything like that.

Irene, Corstorphine

The stair lighting doesn't come on in this block till five o'clock and its pitch black by half three. So I stand at the bottom listening scared to walk up one flight of stairs. Listening to see who's doing what and the doors opening and voices, anybody sort of creeping around - and then I run for it.

Tricia, Haymarket

I've always got it in my mind that if anyone goes to rape me I'll just say that I've got AIDS! So that might make them run a mile. I mean I don't think it would but that's one thing that always crosses my mind.

Gillian, Pilton

The time, effort and anxiety put into developing and deploying these strategies in public space is considerable. They also have broader implications for women's sense of their identity in public places and, as I have shown, in other spaces. I discuss this notion of female identity further in Chapter 5.

6. Fear for children's safety from violence

Women's fears about violence do not only relate to their own safety. In particular, many women worry about the children they care for, and in many cases this concern compounds the effects that their own fear has on their quality of life. Children are protected from sexual and physical risk by learning about danger (Chapter 4), but also by their parents' efforts to safeguard them from specific places and people. I go on to discuss the implications of these concerns, which evidence suggests are increasing (Hillman 1993), on children themselves in Chapter 6. For now, I want to look at the constraints which fear for children's safety imposes on women's time and freedom. Although women are not alone in their concern, most of the work involved in educating and protecting children from danger usually falls on them (Finkelhor 1986).

a) <u>The extent of concern</u>

Table 3.18 shows that high levels of concern about child sexual assault exist among the 195 women who have or who look after children who were under the age of sixteen at the time of the research. Six out of ten of these women worry 'sometimes, frequently or all the time' about the girls they look after being sexually assaulted or abused, and half worry similarly about boys.

Table 3.18
How often do you worry about the children you look after becoming victims of sexual assault or abuse?

Reported frequency	**Worry about girls (% of respondents out of 195*)**	**Worry about boys (% of respondents out of 195*)**
All the time	11.1	6.9
Frequently	19.3	11.9
Sometimes	30.4	31.4
Rarely	19.3	25.2
Never	19.9	24.5

*** 195 respondents have or look after children under the age of 16.**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 2.2 and 2.3

Recent publicity given to the fact that boys as well as girls are at risk from sexual abuse may be behind these high numbers. Some women only worry about girls' sexual safety, but many worry about boys as well, depending on their perceptions about gender and vulnerability as well as images of child molesters.

I worry about their safety, specially the girls, ken. I'm no really bothered about the lads because I know they could handle themselves.

Shirley, Pilton

I worry about it a lot, you know. Because even with not having any daughters, your sons are still at risk, you know. Like abuse doesn't stop at girls. If there's a pervert on the loose, if there's a child in the vicinity they don't worry if it's a boy or a girl.

Jeanette, Pilton

The degree of control which women feel they are able to exert on their children's activities can mediate their fear, as I describe below. However, worrying about boys' sexual safety in particular may be inflated by generally high levels of concern for their physical safety. It emerges from interviews that while concerns for girls' safety mainly relate to sexual danger, bullying is a significant worry which women have for boys. The reports of attacks on the children women look after are far more likely to involve of physical violence than sexual assault.

My main worry here isn't for me, it's for my kids because I've been here two years and my kids have had some good healthy doings in that period which - and you see kids fighting wi' sticks and things like that.

Karen, Pilton

I think the main worry is actually being put on by other children. Older children, you know, sort of being attacked by them. Because they get terribly knocked about by teenage children.

Myra, Corstorphine

What do you worry about for him?
Oh probably just being beaten up or stabbed. I mean he's been punched before for no reason.

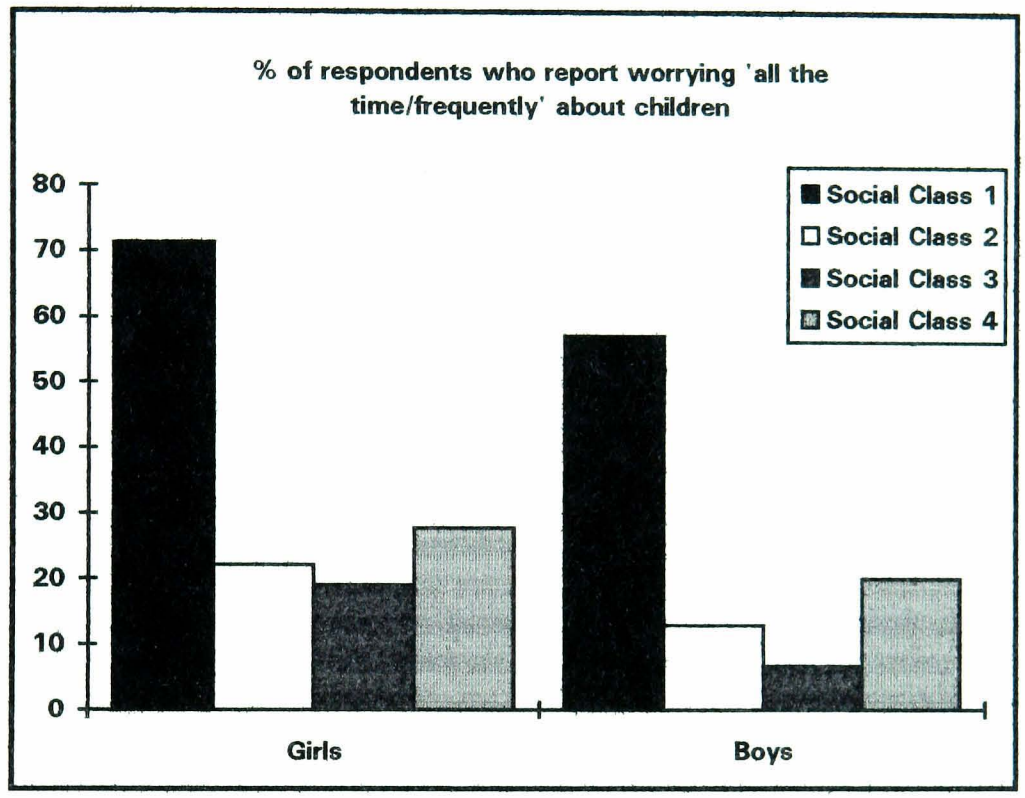
Sheila, Haymarket

The extent of women's fears for their children, if not the spatial patterns (Chapter 6), are well-founded. Bullying, sexual abuse and harassment of children are common (Anderson et al 1990b; Elliott 1986). However, in the case of physical attack outside the home, Pilton is particularly dangerous: many first and second hand reports of violence against children come from here, helping to explain the fact that there is considerably more concern amongst women about boys in Pilton

than in the other areas. Twice as many women in Pilton who care for boys say that they worry about them being sexually attacked or abused 'all the time' or 'frequently' than in Corstorphine or Haymarket.

This may partly explain the tendency for women in lower social classes to worry more about their children. Figure 3.19 (and Table 3.19 in Appendix D) shows that there is a significant and marked relationship between social class and reporting to be concerned about children 'all the time' or 'frequently'.

Figure 3.19
Concern about children's safety among women in different social classes*



*** A corresponding Table (3.19) can be found in Appendix D.**
SC4 is the highest Social Class, SC1 the lowest.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 2.3 and 2.4

Women in SC1, the lowest social class, are much more likely to demonstrate high levels of concern than women in the other three social classes, between which there is little significant difference. As women in SC1 are also more likely to live in Pilton (55.0%) than anywhere else, the fact that the public environment here is perceived as particularly dangerous may be inflating the concerns of some of them. Mothers in Pilton express concern about the gangs of boys out on the streets posing a threat to their own children, and feel that social controls on children are much less strict than in other areas.

I think it's a lot worse here. I've never known kids fight like these kids fight. Most of them fight with weapons which, I mean with the size of some of them, it's unreal.

Karen, Pilton

You've got to haul your kids in for their own safety, you know, because you can't let them play football when there's kids running round with knives and that. They have gang fights here on the park right in front of the house wi' kids from Muirhouse. Some of them have got knives, some have got baseball bats. So I don't let my boys out. They all sit at the window watching.

Jeanette, Pilton

They get to wander the streets half of them. You know I feel like the kids in Amy's class they get to wander everywhere. Even at the age of three year old, their younger brothers and sisters, right round the whole of the Pilton circus. Their mothers dinnae know where they are, you know I mean they dinnae bother that they're up to no good.

Gillian, Pilton

Three-quarters of those women in the survey whose children are now adult say that they still worry about their sexual safety. Although these children are now beyond their parents' jurisdiction, the emotional effects of anxiety continue. Many older parents' and grandparents' fears about younger relatives relate to broader concerns that the world is a less predictable, less secure place.

I think I'm more worried about my daughter [than myself]. I didn't mention my granddaughter.
How old's your daughter?
Oh [laughs] that's it, she's forty-four. And my granddaughter's eighteen. She's the age that could be in, in trouble.

Joan, Corstorphine

You do worry what it's gonna be like when they [grandchildren] are older, you know, what the world's gonna be like. The way things are going now, it's certainly not going to be very good. You just hope it does get better.

Maureen, Corstorphine

I've got an elder son coming up for eighteen but he's got his own place and that. I worry for him.
You still worry about him?
Oh aye. Because he's got, well the police shop is just a couple of yards up from where he stays but um, anything can happen to him. Well male prostitution, the whole damn lot. I mean you get conned into it.

Barbara, Pilton

b) Fear for children as a spatial constraint on women

The social and spatial limitations which childcare responsibilities impose on women's opportunities have been explored by geographers (eg Tivers 1985). My

findings highlight the fact that additional constraints on the time, effort and emotion of parents, particularly women, are created by fearing for children's safety. The transition to motherhood is often a turning point in women's experience of fear, which begins to include other people as well. Kathy, whose first son was two weeks old when I interviewed her, had already begun to worry about his future sexual and physical safety. While pregnant she had felt more frightened of being attacked, both because she was unable to run and because she was fearful for the baby. She now feels considerably more vulnerable pushing a pram for the same reasons: becoming a mother has increased and broadened her own concerns.

While most women at least feel that they have some control over the chance of an attack on themselves or on very young children, protection becomes increasingly difficult as they get older. This is differentiated by children's gender, however; while women's sense of responsibility for girls' safety remains very strong as they get older, there is a general feeling that boys in their mid teens are beyond the parental right to impose sanctions.

It worried me when she was at discos and things til three o'clock in the morning. I never slept until she was in. She would occasionally do things which I thought were really foolhardy but then - one of them certainly was my fault. She'd been told to come home by midnight, and she phoned up just about half past eleven and said 'oh the rest are staying on, can I stay a bit longer?' Well the place she was, she'd missed the bus, she was over at um Gorgie and she walked home. And when I knew that she'd been walking about up there I was really upset about it.

Irene, Corstorphine

I suppose the crime that I fear most living in town at the moment is for my teenage son. I fear more for him at the moment than I do for me. Because I, you know, I'm not streetwise, but I take precautions. But, you know, how do you limit a teenager coming up for fifteen?

Sheila, Haymarket

The age, gender, social class and ability of children, and the degree of control which parents feel they have over their spatial and social activities, also influences their concern.

Because it is largely public space attacks which women who care for children are concerned about (Chapter 6), the social and spatial constraints which child protection has on women's lives compound many of those resulting from concern for their own safety. Opportunities for the informal controls on children which traditionally operated are now fewer, due to factors such as the break up of

extended families, greater transience in areas, and the increasing privatisation of family lifestyles; there is more responsibility on parents to care for and protect their children. Hence many women said that they go to great lengths to ensure their children spend as little time as possible on their own outside. In the case of middle class families, this often means taking on the role of chauffeur.

I've got a twelve year old daughter and she gets taken everywhere by car as well, there's lots of places I wouldn't be happy about her going on her own at night.

Valerie, Corstorphine

With Jamie he doesn't stop any of his activities, he goes training tonight, he goes swimming, he goes to scouts on a Friday, and if he wants to go anywhere he's dropped off and he's picked up. We make sure that he gets there and back. All the parents do that so it really works out quite nicely, you know one mum will bring the whole lot back and then drop them off.

Kate, Corstorphine

Many of the women in Pilton lack the same means to protect children totally from public space, and are more reliant on walking to places with their children or leaving charge to a neighbour or relative. The social and educational activities of middle class children tend to be more structured; they are less likely to 'play out' and so in that respect protection is easier. This is not say that the time and effort involved for parents is any less. It does seem, however, that this is partly responsible for the lower levels of concern about children's safety among women in higher social classes: most women who care for children tend to see the limits of danger as extremely specific in space and time, and thus removing children's exposure can offset their fears.

For most women, fearing for children is fearing public space, and concern comes to an end once a child is indoors in the company of adults. For those who also worry about children's vulnerability to attack in private situations, the emotional and physical effort put into protection is even more taxing. These women tend either to have learnt about child abuse from their work - teachers and social workers, for example - or have been abused themselves when they were young by relatives or family friends. Many of this latter group go to great extremes to make sure the same does not happen to their children, at great personal cost. Amanda, for example, was abused by her uncle when she was a child, and now has four children of her own aged between two and sixteen years.

I'm paranoid about my children. Even with workmen in the house, and if we go to visit anybody I'm on edge. But that's just me, that was um that was because I had sexual abuse when I was younger which made me that way with my kids. And, um, I dinnae like my daughter staying overnight at other people's houses because - I maybe ken the couple but if I dinnae know them that well I won't let her stay. I just can't trust people.
I worry what doctors are up to. You know they can do all sorts of examinations on your kids. I stayed overnight when my son was in hospital. It's just you're no, you're no confident now. When I was potty training them they never got to run around with their pants down, if strangers came in they were put in a dress - I mean I just didnae allow it. It's there the whole time. And certain people that come in, I mean my older laddie's friends come in and I think 'no I dinnae like him', I mean the hair on the back of your neck stands up and that makes you all agitated. And it's stupid. It's stupid. But it's there all the time. I cannae get away from it.

Amanda, Pilton

This level of concern places additional strain on women who have suffered child abuse; it exacerbates existing difficulties with social and psychological adjustment which have been documented elsewhere (Parker and Parker 1991).

Where concern revolves around one particular man, the burden on the mother can be equally great. Diana's son Freddie was at risk from her abusive ex-husband from whom she had complete custody at the time of the interview. She therefore had to drive her son everywhere to protect him: her ex-husband watched him at school and had tried to abduct him several times. She reports chasing two of his friends away with a rifle when they came to her house to try to abduct her son. Diana spends a considerable amount of time apart from Freddie, who is often sent to his grandparents' house to be safe.

Since I've had him actually, yes I've become very aware of the different things, plus the fact that I had a, I'm more aware when I'm with him because my husband has tried to kidnap him. My ex-husband, a few times. I've had quite a traumatic life in the last ten years.
So that makes you more aware?
Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, very aware. I hate, um, as I say, youths in the streets, men in the street etcetera, and you're saying to yourself "hell's fire", you know. And especially when I've got my son with me and I'm driving the car, I'm saying "is there anybody following me?" So I'm aware, always, you know, very alert.

Diana, Corstorphine

Whether fears can be easily justified, as in this case, or not, women's childcare responsibilities are growing with concerns about sexual and physical danger to children, and this creates additional constraints on their own opportunities. For example, research elsewhere has shown that many women take part time rather

than full time employment so that they are free to accompany their children to school and back for reasons of their safety from traffic and molestation (Gershuny 1993). I discuss the implications of parentally imposed constraints for children's freedom and their own sense of vulnerability in Chapter 6.

C. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AS A SOCIAL CONTROL

1. A summary of the effects of fear

In Sections A and B I have presented empirical evidence from my research which demonstrates that women's fear of sexual violence is extremely widespread, and that its effects are pervasive over space and time and among women of different ages, social classes and areas of residence. From this survey of 389 women's experiences in Edinburgh, it can be seen that fear of sexual violence affects women profoundly. In most women's lives, employing coping strategies to avoid and protect against sexual violence is commonplace. The emotional, behavioural and psychological consequences of this effort have a considerable impact on the quality of life for many women.

I now want to return to the theoretical framework which I introduced in Chapter 1. I suggested there that feminist theories of violence as a social control provide structural analysis of the constraints imposed by women's fear which have been recognised by criminologists, and may be linked with geographers' broader analyses of crime and power over different spaces.

2. Feminist social control theory

In feminist analyses of violence, women's fear is viewed not only as being a product of a social and political system of male dominance, but as having a role in maintaining gender inequality by acting to socially control women. The validity of some of the early feminist arguments is increasing in one respect, as information about the spatial patterns of sexual violence and about the extent of women's fear grows. Fear of violence has been seen as central to the theory of violence as a social control: it is suggested that even though a minority of men perpetrate violence against women, its effectiveness is due to the fact that the majority of women are kept in a state of fear.

Feminist theory has offered a far better reflection and understanding of women's experiences than the bulk of criminological and geographical studies over two decades of research. As I shall illustrate, it can be seen to improve on mainstream fear of crime theories in four main ways. First, the notion of 'women's fear' is interpreted broadly in feminist discourse as a generalised feeling of intimidation; second, no distinction is assumed between public and private experiences or perceptions of danger; third, different forms of sexual aggression are considered;

and fourth, theory looks further than women's day to day lives to draw out the ways in which fear is ingrained, institutionalised and intrinsically linked to broader structures of social control. Until the work of Valentine (1989b) in geography and Stanko (1987a) in criminology, none of these points had been alluded to in the mainstream disciplines which have dealt extensively with fear of crime. Below, I give a brief summary and evaluation of the feminist literature which already existed, and then consider its implications for the research findings I have presented: how does theory fit the empirical evidence?

a) 'A conscious process of intimidation'

Brownmiller (1975) was the first to describe rape explicitly as an act of control of women's lives which is perpetrated by men collectively as well as individually, central to women's oppression and hence a routine and structurally underpinned feature of western societies. She suggests that sexual violence is:

> Nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all* men keep *all* women in a state of fear.
>
> (Brownmiller 1975:15)

That the fear of sexual violence exists among all women is central to her thesis of control. In an historical and cross-cultural examination, Brownmiller describes how rape has been used to maintain the status quo and has been seen as an acceptable form of punishment for women who deviated from expected norms, especially those of chastity before and loyalty and subservience within marriage. Bringing the argument forward to the present day, she suggests that these social rules and regulations still abide in different forms. Society has failed to demonstrate that it finds rape unacceptable, for example, and popular culture still portrays rapists as 'heroes' and victims as 'asking for it'. The legal system continues to work on this assumption too. Consequently women live under a continual threat of rape which closely shapes what they may and may not do and discourages them from breaking the mould of traditional gender roles. She suggests that passivity in women and dominance in men is not just the background to rape, but the norm in both personal and sexual relationships.

Since this work, which had a considerable impact, multi-faceted theory has been developed detailing how the 'intimidation' functions in different areas of personal and public life. Feminists have explored how the process operates by looking at

instances such as private violence, sexual harassment, fear, and state responses to violence against women.

b) 'The rapist who pays the rent'

Radical feminists have developed Brownmiller's ideas by linking rape with 'ordinary' heterosexual relationships. While some have agreed that the wide extent of sexual violence is the logical conclusion of all male/female relationships (eg Griffin 1971; Jackson 1978), others consider that not all relationships are unequal, but that the potential for oppression by the male is always present and this ensures that his control is maintained (eg Wise and Stanley 1987). Hanmer (1978) similarly comments that it is only necessary for some men to use or threaten to use violence for a majority of women to be constrained through their fear.

Much of the feminist literature on private violence attributes a parallel role to it. Dobash and Dobash (1980), in a study of 109 battered wives, describe how many of the women had been socialised into acceptance of male control as girls, and how once they were married violence from their husbands maintained this control. Similarly it has been argued that the occurrence of rape within marriage is tolerated in general socially-held notions about acceptable male/female relations and the privacy of family matters (Russell 1982; Stanko 1985). In these instances sexual violence acts as a form of social control within private space.

Brownmiller's analysis of rape has also been extended to less severe forms of male aggression, including sexual harassment. Her ideas have been refined by the introduction of the idea of a continuum of sexual violence (Kelly 1987; Stanko 1985) which I discussed in Chapter 2. Hence rape itself is only one means by which women are controlled by sexual violence.

c) 'The second assailant '

Many critiques have focused too on the institutionalisation of sexual violence as central to its persistence; the perceived reluctance of the state to intervene. It has been widely argued that the legal system deals inadequately with rape and remains entrenched in patriarchal ideology (Brown 1993; Hanmer and Stanko 1985; LeGrand 1977; London Rape Crisis Centre 1984; see Chapter 7). This deters the reporting of sexual violence and leads to high acquittal rates and low sentencing, with the result that the majority of offenders are not penalised. Thus sexual violence is commonly seen in the feminist literature to be tolerated and condoned

by the state (Walby 1989). It is also argued that domestic violence is sanctioned through lack of will or inclination to act and the ineffectiveness of the police, the social services, housing policy and the legal system (Dobash and Dobash, 1976, 1980, 1992; Mama 1989; Pizzey 1974; Wilson 1983). Similarly, women who suffer sexual harassment at work are frequently unable to take successful legal action against offenders (MacKinnon 1980). Elsewhere sexual harassment is trivialised, and consequently few women report it.

The use of force against women is therefore seen as:

> The structural underpinning of hierarchical relations; the ultimate sanction buttressing other forms of social control.
>
> (Hanmer 1978:229).

The net effect, feminists have argued, is that fear of sexual violence persists and encourages women towards traditional roles and dependence on the protection of men. Fear of rape becomes part of every woman's consciousness, instils in them the need to seek the protection of one man from all men, and for the adoption of appropriate behaviour in order to stay safe (Griffin 1986).

3. An evaluation

Many of the findings of this research would support this basic theory of social control. The research demonstrates that while most women have not experienced sexual violence, the majority are constrained through fearing it, and this has a significant impact on the spatial and social patterns of most women's existence and on their participation in public life. It has also shown that fear and related coping strategies are not limited to particular spaces. In Chapter 5 I explore the role of minor forms of male aggression in shaping women's fear, and in Chapter 7 I find support for the idea that sexual violence is still 'structurally underpinned' by the failure of the penal system and prevention policies to tackle it adequately. Equality is at stake as much as the quality of women's lives: my research has demonstrated that because of the threat of sexual violence, many women don't have the same freedom of movement as men, the freedom to be themselves, to do the things they enjoy doing, to benefit from the same opportunities in the labour market, and in some cases to be equal within the home and in their relationships with men. In many instances the threat of violence underpins many other social, economic, political and sexual inequalities with men which women experience.

The evidence suggests, then, that the threat of sexual violence does create a social control in effectively constraining women's lives. Some feminists' claims of the consciousness and collectivity by which the process operates are open to more doubt. The attempt to control women may be a conscious one for some individual men, but in a broader sense a conspiratorial collectivity of action is not likely, nor even necessary. The political and social structures which shore up male dominance are in place for systematic violence against women, and fear of it, to go largely unchallenged (Chapter 7).

One of my aims in the remainder of this thesis is to refine and update these feminist theories of violence as a social control, and I begin this process here by pointing out some of the shortcomings of feminist theory to date. Many of these failings are to do with the simplicity of early analyses. Brownmiller based her thesis on several assumptions and generalisations which find less favour today. She and her advocates (eg Griffin 1986; Hanmer 1978) have been criticised for implying that rape is the only, or the most important, form of social control over women (Walby 1989). Mono-determinism characterises many of the early key texts of feminism; Firestone (1979) concentrates on reproduction as the basis of women's oppression, for example, Delphy (1984) on housework and Rich (1981) on compulsory heterosexuality. There is no one base of patriarchy: Walby (1989) herself suggests there are six, of which male violence is one, but this itself is reductionist in the light of the complexity and pervasiveness of male dominance. It is more useful instead to see violence as one means to an end which interacts and enmeshes with other institutions of patriarchal control.

Brownmiller can also be criticised for seeming to assume that women are universally passive in the fact of the threat of violence. There is strong evidence that this is not the case. Neither do men universally use, or accept the use by other men, of sexual violence as a means of controlling women. Similarly, the reasoning behind rape was glossed over in early analyses. Men do not rape simply because they have the capacity to do so; this does not explain why some do and some do not (Segal 1990). In contrast to Griffin's (1971) assertion, men are not the only sex who can rape. As I suggested in Chapter 2, there is no universality of experience of rape among men or women, and focusing on the differences might be more illuminating as to the causes of sexual violence.

There is also a need for theory to stay abreast of the changes in some women's position in society in relation to men; there is no doubt that improvements have taken place in the two decades since Brownmiller's analysis. Women's position in relation to the patriarchal status quo is in a constant state of flux (see Dobash and Dobash 1992), and the fact that women continue to make inroads into the traditionally male-dominated avenues of power, notwithstanding the apparent rise in violence and fear of sexual violence, needs to be dealt with. Brownmiller has been criticised for assuming that rape has been used uniformly across space, class and time when there is much evidence which suggests otherwise (Segal 1990). My research highlights the fact that women are affected by fear of sexual violence in many different ways, according to their social, economic and personal circumstances. Yet the general benefits engendered by being in certain age groups, income classes, age, income, class and ethnicity ultimately offer no protection against it. Indeed, several of the women I interviewed feel that they enjoy equality with men in all areas of their lives, apart from their fear of attack. That the effects of fear are so pervasive and yet take different forms adds weight to the theory of social control rather than detracting from it; but needs to be drawn in more explicitly.

4. Conclusion

To summarise, the findings support the idea that the effects of fear of sexual violence act as a form of control, and this body of theory provides a good framework for analysis which links up with geographers' analyses of crime and inequality. Social geographers have stressed that crime reflects and reinforces patterns of social inequality (Chapter 1), and I demonstrate further that this can be seen in patterns of fear of systematic violence in Chapter 6.

However, feminist social control theory has certain failings which need attention, some of which I have outlined above. Hence in Chapter 6, I want to go on to modify and update the basic tenets of the theory. The complexity of power relationships needs to be taken explicit account of. Clearly, there are other broad frameworks of power such as age, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and so on, which intersect with women's fear of male violence and can provide added vulnerability; but there is also a need to acknowledge that this is not always the case. I have indicated the complex effect of social class on women's experiences of fear in this Chapter, and I draw this into existing theory in Chapter 6. Other forms of systematic violence and associated aggressive behaviour also exist, however,

with which clear parallels with sexual violence and its effect on women can be drawn. To a limited extent links have been made between various forms of systematic violence: Hall (1985) mentions the compounding effects of race and ethnicity on women's fear of male violence, and Stanko (1990a) mentions racist and homophobic violence in an analysis of risk and danger. I tackle these issues in Chapter 6.

CONCLUSION

In Section A of Chapter 3, I outlined some terminological and conceptual difficulties with 'fear of crime', and suggested that it should best be understood in this context as a constant or intermittent sense of anxiety. I then demonstrated that fear of sexual and physical violence is widespread among women in the survey. In Section B I illustrated the scope of the constraints which fear has on the lives of most women, showing that fear does not just manifest itself in behavioural changes, although these are extremely widespread, but has emotional and psychological implications too. These are damaging to well-being, to the quality of life, to independence and the equality of opportunity. I have suggested too that the effects of fear of private violence, where it exists, might be more damaging than fear in public space, in controlling social interactions and the power balance in intimate relationships and there being less chance of circumventing them. I have suggested that the greater tendency of working class women to fear violence in private space may have implications for their perceptions of their ability to control danger by linking it with space, and hence the degree to which violence affects their lives. In Section C I presented and evaluated feminist social control theory, and concluded that empirical evidence from my research provides broad support for the suggestion that fear of violence is one means by which women's opportunities for equality in public and private life are limited. However, I suggested that this body of theory requires modification and extension, and this is one of the aims of Chapter 6.

In Chapter 3, I also introduced the high level of concern many women have for their children's sexual and physical safety, suggesting that this also creates considerable constraints on women's opportunities and well-being, even more so for the working class women who feel they can not protect their children from public space as well, and for the minority of mothers whose fears centre around private space as well as public space. I discuss the implications of these concerns for children in Chapter 6.

Primarily, however, Chapter 3 has served to begin my evaluation of existing explanations for high levels of fear among women by focusing on the social and spatial nature of feared incidents of sexual and physical violence and the social backgrounds of the respondents themselves. Although, as criminologists have suggested, high levels of fear are justified in part by high levels of violence (Chapter 2), I have shown in Section A that the patterns of fear do not match the distribution of experiences of violence. Fear is considerably more prevalent than violence and, for many women, the location of their fearfulness does not match the most likely location of violence; hence there is evidence of the spatial paradox identified by geographers. I established that the extent of fear of public space attack varies little by social, economic or geographic factors.

However, the spatial patterns of fear in private space do bear a relationship with social difference. A significant minority of women fear sexual and physical attack in private space as well as in public space, and closer examination of this minority demonstrates that the finding can be largely explained by social class. While middle class women worry about being attacked outside, working class women's experiences of fear are more widely dispersed across space.

Fears about private violence are well justified by rates of private violence, and I have summarised evidence elsewhere which suggests that this might well underpin these fears amongst working class women, despite the fact that most of the women who reported private violence to the survey were middle class. However, rates of violence can not be held to explain the high and socially undifferentiated levels of fear in public space. It is therefore my aim in Chapter 4 to explore the development of perceptions about danger and space, and to evaluate feminist geographers' explanations for the spatial paradox between risk and fear. How likely is it that the spatial paradox is due to misinformation about violence, when fear of attack in public space is equally widespread among women of different social, economic and educational backgrounds, as I have shown? As I indicated in Section B of Chapter 3, the control imposed by fear of violence continues to be one form of female subjugation which is not mediated by the axis of class.

Chapter 4
NOTIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISK: THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'SAFE' AND 'DANGEROUS' SPACES

Space is fundamental in any exercise of power.

(Foucault 1982:20)

INTRODUCTION

I have shown that although private space is more dangerous, both in terms of general risks and in terms of the experiences of women in the survey (Chapter 2), most women fear public space to a far greater degree (Chapter 3). For women, fear of public places and strangers operates regardless of factors such as social class: while income and mobility may allow women to bypass public places some of the time there is no evidence that this reduces fear. As I have underlined, while the large number of coping strategies which women employ in public places do not address the main location of risk, they are harmful to the quality of life and equality of opportunity, and hence understanding of this 'spatial paradox' is very important.

This Chapter therefore aims to begin to evaluate existing explanations. I examine how notions about safety and danger in private and public space are shaped in Sections B and C, by looking at the physical and social construction of space. I want to consider how space is 'gendered'; how notions about appropriate male and female relations to space are reproduced. In particular, I use empirical evidence from my research to assess the role of the built environment, formal social controls, lessons about physical and sexual danger, and information sources, all of which have been implicated with the ostensible growth of fear of violence against women. I want to concentrate on some of the most recent explanations offered for the spatial paradox between risk and fear: that women fear violence in public space far more than in its usual location, private space, because of a basic misunderstanding of the locational risks of sexual violence due to misinformation.

In Section A, by way of a theoretical framework for these discussions, I introduce the conceptualisation of the division between private and public space which has been said to shape women's lives and opportunities, and consider how this relates to women's experiences of crime.

A: THE DIVISION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACE

1. Power relations and space

Dominant social, cultural and political forms are always manifested in spatial patterns and spatial relations. For Foucault (above), space is where discourses about power are transformed into actual relations of power, and where spatial relations in turn reflect political strategy. While the concern of Foucault in making this point (and indeed of many urban analysts) is the physical structure of space, its social construction can be viewed in the same way. I have already outlined feminist theories which are based on the idea that women's inequality with men results in fear of rape which furthers their subordination (Chapter 3). I have also highlighted the role of space in the patterns of women's fear, arguing that there is a distinct if not unqualified spatial mismatch between fear and risk. Hence space is indeed central to this form of social control and, in particular, notions about private and public space.

I outline a framework here in which feminists and feminist geographers have considered public and private space, before going on to examine how notions about space are constructed by using empirical evidence from the survey. An influential discourse of a dichotomy between the public and private spheres has been widely applied to describe and explain women's subordination. The simple dualism implied by this has been discredited more recently but, as I will argue, it is still a useful framework by which to examine the role of violence in social control.

2. Patriarchal power and the public/private dichotomy

Just as dominant capitalist or racist ideologies label space on their own terms, it is central to the feminist view of space that patriarchy defines space as masculine (and public, economic, cultural, political) and feminine (private, reproductive, domestic) (Rose 1990). The public/private dichotomy has been used to describe the ideological and material conditions governing women's lives and opportunities. The result of this organisation of space is to 'reflect, reinforce and help recreate in new forms gender differences' (Bowlby et al 1982).

The division can be seen in early sociological research, which was almost entirely carried out by men and gave all its attention to 'male' matters concerning public activities and institutions (Garmarnikow et al 1983). Later studies of gender tended to concentrate exclusively on the private sphere, in which women's activities are

ascribed a lower value than those of men in the public sphere, based on the assumption that the gender split between the public and the private is natural (Imray and Middleton 1983). Space became ensconced in feminist thinking early on in the debate about the causes of women's oppression, revolving around the sexual division of labour. Marxist feminists, for example Seccombe (1973), have argued that the public/private divide was brought about by the introduction of market relations during industrialisation: men began to sell their labour outside the family but women carried on providing unpaid domestic work. Hence their relative positions in space and society became polarised and men enjoyed greater power, reinforced by the state and enabling them to dominate in both the public and private spheres. An alternative view is that the sexual division of labour is timeless and independent of capitalism, the effect of which was only to compound the distinction between public and private by providing a political framework as well as social and economic one (eg Delphy 1984). Dual systems analysts argue that capitalism and patriarchy are dependent on and bolster each other, fusing at the level of the state (eg Eisenstein 1979; Hartmann 1981).

The idea of a sharp division between male and female spatial experiences, and hence their access to power, has been extended from the debate about the division of labour to explain other aspects of gender difference in modern life. In particular, feminist geographers have taken on the dichotomy to explain women's experiences of urban space, how men collectively and individually dominate space, and how power is manifested and reconstructed there.

> Feminist geographers are currently attempting to understand the basis for, and consequences of, the separation of 'male' and 'female' spheres in cities, the division of 'public' activities from 'private' activities.
>
> (Women and Geography Study Group 1984:45)

In Chapter 1 I outlined how this separation has been examined in feminist geographers' analyses of the gendered division of physical and social space, in areas such as paid work, access to resources and services, mobility and urban development. It is held that spatial divisions both reflect and reinforce the traditional role of women and their access to power.

Such discussions of men's and women's relative positions have tended to assume that there is a clear dichotomy between public and private, and that it is expressed in gender terms. In reality, however, both spheres interpenetrate and interact

(Brittan 1989). Most women now participate in the public sphere of paid work, for example, and images of masculinity now permeate the private too (Segal 1990); yet most areas of women's lives are still dominated by men.

> However you categorise the relationship between men and women we are talking about inequality. This inequality can not be explained under the rubric of the public/private dichotomy.
>
> (Brittan ibid.: 137)

The public/private division can best be seen as one historically and culturally specific way in which gender relations have become expressed, rather than as intrinsic or a cause of men's power. Radical feminists have argued that there is no public/private distinction, but that gender relations within the family simply represent a microcosm of social relations and the pattern of male domination in wider society (eg Millett 1972). Recent challenges to feminist geography, including postmodernist discourses, have also called into question the simplistic view of gender and gender relations denoted by the public/private dichotomy. Women's and men's relationships with space are clearly more complex. Importantly, there are many different versions of femininity and masculinity and these are not reducible to a static, monolithic notion of gender and space. Considerations of gender in geography now acknowledge transections of class and ethnic divisions; that the public and the private are interconnected and overlap; and that increasing gender differentiation and sexual tolerance in society mean that gender meanings are fluid and diverse (Bondi 1990a; 1992). However, rather than implying the disintegration of patriarchy, postmodernism simply 'refashions images of femininity and masculinity within a broadly patriarchal culture' (Bondi 1992:167).

In other words, everything changes but stays the same. Beyond modern and postmodern shifts in gender roles, the meanings of masculinity and femininity, and the changes in men's and women's use of space, the broad structures and controls of patriarchy remain. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of women's fear of male violence: my findings have shown that despite the differences in terms of background, identity, and relationship to power among the women in the survey, the spatial lives and opportunities of the majority are constrained and limited by fear of violence, the sharp end of patriarchal control. The advantages of age, class and ability which have made some of these women 'equal' with men in many senses are ironed out by sexual violence and harassment, which is not so discriminatory along these lines. In Chapter 6 I point out some of the

differences between individual experiences of fear of violence, yet at the same time indicating that there are broad similarities concerning the effect of fear on individuals' relationships to power.

3. Feelings of unsafety and the public/private dichotomy

While geographers such as Valentine (1989b) have seen the public/private dichotomy as central to women's fear of male violence, feminist criminologists (eg Stanko 1988a) have argued that there is no spatial dichotomy in women's experiences of danger:

> The issue of violent crime against women illustrates that there is in fact no sharp division between public and private space.
>
> (Painter 1992: 188).

I would maintain that space remains an important frame of reference. Even if there is no tangible distinction between women's experiences of sexual violence and harassment across space (Chapters 2 and 5), the social construction of space mediates the impact of crime. The ways in which public and private space are gendered on an ideological level are crucial to women's perceptions, images and concerns about violence and its effects. It is evident from the findings of my research presented in Chapter 3 that, unless they have learnt otherwise through experience, most women still hold powerful concepts of public space as dangerous and private space as safe. The persistence of these feelings about space have not been adequately explained, and I want to turn now to evaluate existing explanations.

Plate 1 West Granton estate, Pilton

Plate 2 West Pilton Park, looking across to blocks of flats

Plate 3 West Granton Gardens, Pilton, showing upper walkways and underpass

Plate 4 West Granton Crescent, Pilton: tunnel leading to stairways to flats.

Plate 5 West Pilton Gardens: typical three-storey tenement building with largely council rented flats.

Plate 6 Three storey tenement buildings of largely owner-occupied flats on Ferry Road Drive, Pilton.

Plate 7 Shopping centre, Pilton.

Plate 8 Morrison Street, Haymarket: typical four-storey tenement buildings.

Plate 9 Gardner's Crescent, Haymarket.

Plate 10 Waste ground behind Grove Street, Haymarket.

Plate 11 Castle Terrace carpark with Edinburgh Castle behind, Haymarket.

Plate 12 Five-storey tenement buildings on Castle Terrace, Haymarket.

Plate 13 Local shops, corner of Grove Street, Haymarket.

Plate 14 The brewery, Fountainbridge.

Plate 15 Bungalows on Craig Gardens, Corstorphine.

<u>Plates 16 and 17</u> Semi-detached Victorian villas on Belgrave Road, Corstorphine.

Plate 18 Corstorphine Hill: Clermiston Road with Corstorphine Woods behind.

Plate 19 Craigievar Square: modern houses on East Craigs estate, Corstorphine.

Plate 20 St. John's Road: local shops in Corstorphine "village".

B: PHYSICAL SPACE: NEIGHBOURHOOD INFLUENCES ON FEAR OF CRIME

1. Introduction

Many explanations of fear of crime in particular places, as well as some of the feminist geography literature which seeks to describe men's and women's inequality, have focused on the structure of physical space. Before going on to look at more recent suggestions about the ways in which space is socially constructed, I want to examine some of the explanations for fear of crime at the neighbourhood level, using evidence from my research.

Analysis of fear of crime at the level of the neighbourhood has been popular (Chapter 1), as crime surveys have appeared to show that sizeable differences exist between areas in cities (eg Hough and Mayhew 1985; Kinsey 1984; Jones et al 1986). In Chapter 3 I demonstrated that area of residence in itself does not predict fear of sexual violence among the women in this research: fear in public space, and the coping strategies which women employ in response, are equally widespread in Pilton, Haymarket and Corstorphine. However, certain aspects of neighbourhoods have been identified elsewhere which might contribute to women's perceptions that public places are safe or dangerous, and I go on now to examine the effect of three such factors: levels of incivility, visible formal social controls, and the structure of the built environment. In part these are concerned with the physical material of the environment, and in part with 'markers' which indicate control over public space. As the three study areas comprise such contrasting built environments (Plates 1 - 20), the research provides the opportunity to evaluate some of these suggestions.

2. Levels of incivility

Visible signs of incivility may be taken to indicate that a neighbourhood is out of control and unsafe. Minor nuisances such as vandalism, litter, graffiti and groups of youths hanging round have been held to alert people to the prospect of crime and thus inflate fears (Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Skogan 1986). It has been suggested that certain groups, for example older people, are more prone to concern about neighbourhood incivilities and hence more likely to fear crime in consequences (Painter 1989). From interview material in my research there is some evidence that indicators of incivility in the neighbourhood have an impact on women, increasing their fear of attack and deterring them from using certain areas

of public space. Particular bother seems to be caused by groups of teenagers or children hanging around, and petty crime.

I don't like um to be out after dark by myself. I never used to be hyper about maybe even youths in the same street...but I am very hyped up about it these days. I don't like the feeling, cos you just don't know what might happen.

Diana, Corstorphine

There tend to be groups of people taking a shortcut from somewhere to somewhere, um at night it can get extraordinarily noisy. There's an awful lot of vandalism of cars goes on. I mean I had about three occasions and six hundred pounds worth of vandalism to my car in six months.

Elaine, Haymarket

The kids have such vicious ideas, we had a lot of bother last summer holidays with a gang of five of them...throwing slivers of glass from the balcony down into the front porch, no matter who was there - babies in prams, dogs, humans, anyone. I cannae understand it. It's shocking. I don't know where the kids get their ideas from.

Sharon, Pilton

Women in Pilton are most likely to be concerned about the implications of incidents such as these. In Pilton levels of vandalism are particularly high, as is the visibility of groups of teenagers on the streets and open spaces. Alcoholics and drug users, frequently mentioned to be hanging around the shopping centre or squatting in empty flats, are seen by many women as likely potential attackers. A couple of local pubs are perceived as no go areas for women without the protection of men. In this way, concern about certain people is attached to certain places.

What sort of things worry you?
Well as I say, this place is no safe anyway, you see druggies, you see your folk taking drugs up at the shopping centre and all that, aye, and there's, I mean the shops is swarming wi' 'em. I dinnae think it's a very nice thing. I dinnae, as I say I just stay in here all the time. I more or less just go out for my messages and then back to the house.

Shirley, Pilton

In Corstorphine, older women express most concern about groups of young people hanging around, although these are considerably less visible and there is less hearsay evidence of them actually committing crimes than in Pilton. They do, however, present a contrast to the generally quiet, well-ordered tone of the area and hence provoke concern. In Haymarket many women's concerns about incivilities centre around Lothian Road, an entertainment centre which is busy all night with a stream of people going in and out of pubs and clubs. The area has a reputation for occasional stabbings and random street violence. Several women

interviewed in Haymarket have personal experience of vandalism to their property and of being harassed by young men coming out of pubs after closing time.

In all three areas these incivilities seem to heighten fear of crime, especially about burglary, mugging or vandalism. However, it could be that those women who are more concerned about crime are simply more aware of incivility. Concern about incivility also depends upon individuals' perceptions of their vulnerability to start with (Painter 1989). The older women in my research are more concerned about noise and nuisance which younger women can overlook. The exception is when the nuisance incurs into one's own private space, for example graffiti or vandalism of homes, gardens, cars or tenement stairs. Incivilities are, however, less likely to inflate fears about sexual attack than concern about other crimes: but general concern about crime can in turn heighten fears about personal safety.

Does that [car vandalism] affect how you feel about your personal safety?
Yes. Yes. Because I think that the same sort of mentality follows through, you know. I think if it's somebody smashing the car window, that if we caught them, I don't think they would think twice about turning round and sticking a bottle in your face or a knife in you. You know, it carries through. So far it's been directed at property but I think it's directed at people too.

Sheila, Haymarket

Sexual harassment is a more specific and worrying form of 'incivility' in relation to fear of male violence, and I discuss this at length in Chapter 5. Rather than being an indicator of an unsafe neighbourhood, however, women do not relate sexual harassment so much to particular areas. Harassment is less specific in time and space, less controllable and less avoidable than the perceived localised threats mentioned here; therefore it provokes more anxiety.

3. Local social controls

Another explanation which has been suggested for patterns of fear of crime at the neighbourhood level is that the apparent erosion of local social control over past decades has contributed to growing concerns about victimisation. Many analysts have been concerned with the existence of community feeling; factors such as a sense of integration into the neighbourhood and the existence of formal community organisations have frequently been linked with levels of fear of crime (eg Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Lewis and Salem, 1986). However, it has been shown that women's fear is far less affected by factors such as these (Kail and Kleinman 1985).

Some of the middle aged and older women interviewed express concern about the apparent slackening of formal controls on the activities of children and young people. These women tend to be unhappy about groups of teenagers hanging around in public places in Pilton and Corstorphine, as I have mentioned, seeing them as a threat to person and property. Blame is laid at the door of the police, schools and parents by these women for not restraining and disciplining children adequately. This concern relates to general feelings that traditional ways of life and social controls have been disrupted: for example several of the women I interviewed blame working mothers for the rise in crime. Others blame the level of rape, which they perceive to have risen dramatically, on what they perceive to be the lowering of moral standards among men and women.

However, a significant concern among all of the women I spoke to is the role of formal social controls, ie the police and the legal system, in protecting women and penalising violent men. It has been suggested elsewhere that perceptions about the efficacy of these institutions affects feelings of security and levels of fear of crime, in particular it has been suggested that many people feel these controls have been eroded (eg Donnelly 1989; Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Skogan and Maxfield 1981). Evidence from the British Crime Survey, for example, shows that a lack of faith in the police can increase people's fear of crime (Bennett 1991), and the distance perceived between police and public has also been linked with fear (Brown and Wycoff 1987). Sixty percent of Scots in the 1988 British Crime Survey feel that there are too few police around (Allen and Payne 1991).

Consequently in this research women were asked about their views on police protection, how they feel about the attitudes of the police and the law courts in relation to rape cases, and how this affects their own feelings of security. Only a handful of the women in the survey have experience of taking cases of sexual violence to court, despite the high incidence of victimisation among the sample. However, attitudes towards the protection afforded by the police have been shaped cumulatively by factors such as their visibility on the streets, through experience in reporting other crimes, and by police education campaigns about women's safety.

> As I say to a friend, we have a wee competition here when we see a policeman because she, like me, stays just round the corner from a police station and she never sees them either. I only see them when they're coming on duty or coming off duty. And I think it's a deterrent really if they do have them on the beat.
>
> Mary, Haymarket

I've known me phone up for them and if they came at all it took them a couple of hours. Now I mean you could be dead by then, you know. I mean it's like that here - sometimes they come, and sometimes they don't. And I mean they're only at the top of the hill. And if you phone 'em too regular, they don't come at all.

Sharon, Pilton

It does not please me to hear the police say 'women do this, and you take responsibility'. I'm sorry, it's their job that's public order. I think it's outrageous that the police are standing on that platform, it's their job to bring this thing under control, not mine. I mean I do, I feel really let down badly by the police.

Sheila, Haymarket

Comments in a similar vein were very frequent, and I discuss women's feelings about the protection offered by the state further in Chapter 7. However, as Table 4.1 demonstrates, when it comes to views about the efficacy of the institutions which deal with sexual violence there is considerably more confidence in the police than in the legal system. Just over one in five women feel that the police are 'very or quite unsympathetic' to rape survivors, compared with one in two feeling that the legal system is 'very or quite unfair'.

Table 4.1
Confidence in institutions which deal with rape survivors

On average, how sympathetic do you think the way the police deal with women who suffer rape and sexual attack is? (% of respondents / 383)	
Very or quite sympathetic	55.1
Very or quite unsympathetic	22.1
No strong view	22.7
On average, how fair do you think the British legal system is to women who suffer rape and sexual attack? (% of respondents / 385)	
Very or quite fair	29.6
Very or quite unfair	49.8
No strong view	20.8

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.11 and 4.12

It may be that this greater level of faith in the police indicates awareness of the recent improvements made in the treatment of rape survivors, while the shortfalls of the legal system in protecting rape survivors have received considerable publicity over the last couple of years. The remaining quarter of respondents who feel that the police would be unsympathetic to victims of rape may well have had

their opinions shaped by experience in reporting other incidents, including sexual harassment.

When asked what might deter them from reporting sexual crimes, almost three quarters of respondents cite at least one reason (Table 4.2 in Appendix D). 16.2% say that a lack of faith in police treatment would put them off reporting sexual crime, while 22.1% say they would be put off by their view of the legal system. Women are considerably more likely to say they would report rape by a stranger than rape by a man they know, while around half say that they would report incidents of sexual harassment (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3
Perceptions of the likelihood of reporting sexual violence and harassment

Incident	% of respondents who say they would 'always' or 'probably' report this to the police (n = 370)
Rape by a stranger	96.5
Rape by someone you know	90.2
Domestic violence	71.4
Being flashed at	55.7
Being followed	60.1
Being touched up	53.0
Receiving obscene phone call	52.9

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.9

However, the overwhelming majority of women who report these incidents to the survey have not in fact reported them to the police, suggesting that there is a tendency to overestimate this reaction to future incidents. Choosing not to report sexual violence and harassment is not only due to a range of factors such as fear of stigma, reprisals or feeling the event to be too trivial to bother the police with; it is also a way of minimising the event (Kelly and Radford 1990).

Does the level of protection women feel affect their fear of victimisation? There is no evidence of a relationship between women's faith in the police or legal system and their fear of rape in public space. There is, however, a significant relationship between feeling that the police are unsympathetic to rape survivors and worrying about rape in the home by a known man (Table 4.4 in Appendix D). Discussions in interviews confirm that many women have rather more faith in the police to deal with public space attacks than private space attacks, reflecting the fact that women

who are attacked by men they know are far less likely to gain police support or a conviction (Grace et al 1993). Hence perceptions about formal controls on sexual violence do not seem to influence the extent of fear among women, but do have some bearing on how safe different spaces are perceived to be.

4. The built environment

The third aspect of the neighbourhood which I want to examine is the physical structure of the built environment. The design of the built environment has been linked closely to opportunities for crime (Coleman 1985; Newman 1972), although the theory has never had much credence: social and economic influences on crime find more favour among criminologists. However, there is more support for the idea that the built environment has some bearing on fear of crime (Smith 1987a). The suggestion that environmental improvements such as building design and public lighting can have a role in reducing fear of crime has received support from empirical studies (eg Allatt 1984; Hay 1993; Nassar and Fisher 1992; Stollard 1991; Vrij and Winkel 1991).

For women, fear of sexual violence is rather more pervasive than concerns about burglary or mugging, and less closely tied to public space (Chapter 3). There remains, however, a link with public places in many women's minds which is not simple to explain. Feminist critiques of architecture have suggested that the built environment is designed by men without taking account of women's needs and interests (Boys 1984), and links with women's fear of sexual violence have been drawn in feminist theory and research (eg Kelly 1986; Matrix 1984; Metrac 1990; Women's Design Service 1988). Certainly, women feel more afraid in particular built environments (Valentine 1991), and aspects of design are among the most frequently cited factors affecting feelings of safety reported to surveys (eg Hall 1985; Kirk 1988). I now want to discuss how far particular places in or design aspects of the neighbourhood contribute to fear of sexual attack and affect the women in the survey in their everyday lives.

Concern about the built environment stands out in both questionnaire and interview material. Table 4.5 shows, for example, three basic features of environmental design which respondents say have an impact on their fear of sexual attack.

Table 4.5
The built environment and fear of sexual attack

Have any of the following increased your anxiety about sexual attack? (n=389)				
Environmental feature	**Overall**	**Corstorphine**	**Haymarket**	**Pilton**
Poor street lighting	55.8	56.8	63.9	46.3
Badly designed buildings/estates	35.5	26.7	36.9	44.6
Badly placed bushes, shrubbery, etc.	37.3	37.7	37.7	36.4

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.5

Most of the women in the survey have not always lived in the areas they now reside in, and so their answers to this question may not necessarily reflect only their immediate surroundings. However, Table 4.5 shows no great differences between women's concerns about the built environment in the three areas of residence. Women in Pilton are slightly more likely to be worried about estate design, and slightly less likely to be concerned about lighting. Overall there is a similarity despite the fact that the three areas provide perhaps as great a contrast in terms of physical and social structure as may be found in Britain.

Interviews reveal many more aspects of the environment which women find frightening. In Corstorphine, an affluent residential suburb, the features which are designed to make the area an attractive place to live can also make it seem more dangerous. The quietness of the area, poor street lighting, the gaps between houses, and the privacy engendered by greenery and large gardens were commonly mentioned in interviews (see Plates 15 - 20). Areas which many women avoid include enclosed pathways and the local parks and woods.

Are there any places round here which would worry you?
If I was out at night and walking down the Braes, things like that. I don't go up near Corstorphine Hill [Plate 18] because there's nobody about whatsoever. Anywhere a bit isolated, we're okay where we are but if the houses are spaced out.

Christine, Corstorphine

Our lighting system, that one across the road, that's out, never gets fixed. And also the part when you walk up from the bus stop, you walk towards, coming up here towards North Gyle, there's a big road in between and there's no lights on either side.

Kate, Corstorphine

I wouldn't like to walk through St. Margaret's Park, I wouldn't even consider doing that. I wouldn't even do it during the day if it was very quiet.

Irene, Corstorphine

There is a bit along that railway line there, that is the way I would have to walk if I walked home from my work. But I don't do it. And again it's because it's dark along that bit and then you go up the side of the Forestry Commission [woods] onto the main road. So I just, you know, I don't put myself into the position if I can avoid it.

Rosalind, Corstorphine

By contrast, in Haymarket the density of housing produces its own hazards. The tall tenement buildings and dark, narrow streets, lanes and alleyways (see Plates 8 - 14) are universally disliked while the communal tenement stairs, many of which have no external locks, are viewed as places for potential attackers to hide. Castle Terrace carpark, a large multi-storey (Plate 11), and local parks are identified as places where attacks and harassment can and do take place.

Are there any areas you avoid?
Subconsciously, yes. I mean I don't think "gosh that's a place I'd never go", but I would tend to plan my routes around better lit areas rather than anything else. And areas where there's not likely to be about twenty yobs who've failed to score coming out at one time.

Elaine, Haymarket

I used to come in from Haymarket Station up Morrison Street [Plate 8] at night and it was horrid. It's very dark and there's no houses, just big walls. You feel that if anybody stopped a car and went for you there's nothing you could do.

Paula, Haymarket

I don't walk around feeling nervous, but at the same time I am aware that, if you're by yourself, especially as the streets are quite dark - there's an alleyway to the delicatessen and I use a shortcut which I really shouldn't but I do, and there's the carpark where I got flashed at - so I am aware that something might happen cos it's not as well lit as it could be.

Ann, Haymarket

We have a lane right next to us which I avoid when it's getting dark. Anywhere on my own, either by myself or even with my husband, if there's not much lighting there I feel very nervous. Especially with Edinburgh having so many little nooks and crannies as well, I don't feel happy about it.

Danielle, Haymarket

In Pilton (Plates 1 - 7), many of the environmental features mentioned by women are part of the West Granton estate, a series of multi-storey council blocks to the north of the scheme which are now due for eventual demolition. The staircases, upper walkways and underpasses are seen as places to avoid, as is the proximity of

vacated flats (Plates 1, 3 and 4). Open spaces in Pilton are also considered places where attacks might take place (Plate 2).

What sort of places worry you?
Well quite a lot of it actually. The park, for example, that's never safe [Plate 2]. And down at the shops here, especially at night [Plate 7]. And The Gunner [pub] - that should be closed down completely. There are places you sortae feel safe, like Davidson Mains, but then you've got to get a taxi there and back if you can afford to.

Barbara, Pilton

Er, I think Muirhouse, West Granton, because of the tunnels [Plates 3 and 4]. There's drug addicts, weird drug addicts and everything. You see them if you go across the street to the shops, you see them having their fights.

Moira, Pilton

Well they're pulling down the flats across the road and I won't walk down there now. I mean that's the way I would go to get the bus on the bottom road. Some o' them have been put in wi' metal doors to keep it safe but sometimes you walk past and there isnae a metal door. If you ken a metal door then you ken there isn't gonna be anyone there, but I mean if there isn't one you're like this [alert] the whole time and it's no safe.

Amanda, Pilton

Often fear of attack is extremely specific, attached to very localised places such as a particular bus stop, street or alleyway rather than the whole area. This means, too, that the spatial constraints imposed by fear can be quite specific; Amanda (above) makes the journey from her flat to the bus stop three times as long as it need be, in order to avoid a single underpass. This involves walking down a main street close to the shopping centre which itself is a place that several other women try to avoid. Often avoidance of these places was based on hearsay evidence that an attack had once happened there. As Valentine remarks:

Women cannot be fearful of all men all the time, therefore in order to maintain an illusion of control over their safety they need to know where and when they may encounter "dangerous men" in order to avoid them.

(Valentine 1989b:171)

Although fear is often focused on particular aspects of the built environment, it is clear from many of these women's accounts that is it the social connotations attached to places which makes women fearful. Parts of Pilton may look very unappealing to people coming in from outside, but it is the association of certain men with certain places at certain times which provokes fear of those places. This is equally true of other environments - in particular, associations are often made with sexual harassment (this is discussed further in Chapter 5). Many analyses of

the built environment have focused on the biases and dominant ideologies of those who have designed it, but few have paid attention to the characteristics of those who use it (Bondi 1992). Although there were many complaints about urban design to the survey, there is a feeling among most of the women I spoke to that improving facets of the environment would not prevent violence taking place (and therefore would not reduce their fear of being attacked).

I think there should be better lighting in some places but that said, the places that aren't properly lit are really places where I wouldn't consider walking anyway.

Deborah, Pilton

In some areas we do need more lighting.
Would that make you feel safer?
Not really because I think it's going to happen anyway. Alleyways where there's no housing, definitely I wouldn't want to walk down, even with lights.

Christine, Corstorphine

The stair's revolting, that. Revolting. This is actually the Council's job to keep that stairway clean but they cannae, they'll no keep it clean. The lighting's really bad on the stairs as well...the archways, the tunnels is terrible, you ken. But I'm no too happy walking anywhere to be honest.

Shirley, Pilton

Rather than creating or shaping women's fear, aspects of the built environment simply provide one of the ways in which it is manifested. This is lent support by the fact that concern about the built environment was equally widespread in all three areas, as Table 4.5 and the interview material show. Much research in the past on fear of crime has tended to focus on the built environment in run down inner city areas or council estates; yet women in Pilton, which as one of the worst examples of bleak sixties council schemes might be expected to have the most frightening environment, are not noticeably more concerned about it than women in Haymarket and Corstorphine. There are aspects both unique and common to all three neighbourhoods which provoke anxiety. Moreover, some of the contradictions between particular features identified as 'frightening', for instance open spaces and narrow alleyways, point to the inherent difficulty in reducing fear solely by making physical changes.

As the areas represent such extreme contrasts in social and physical environments, this tends to suggest that there is no 'safe' housing environment for women. Women have to leave their homes at some point, and public space is considered unsafe; hence it is inevitable that fear is focused on the environment outside. Public

places are only the most visible location in which certain concerns are expressed. Fears about attack may be transferred onto specific environments which become markers of unsafety, but this does not mean that they are the cause of fear.

This is borne out to some extent by research into the effect of changes in the built environment on fear of crime. It seems that changes in the built environment are less effective in reducing women's specific fears about violence than their general concerns about crime (although the latter may, of course, affect the former). A recent series of studies which tested the link between fear and urban design have confirmed that the structure of the built environment has some bearing on women's fear of crime, but less impact on their self-imposed behavioural restrictions than on men's (Painter 1989). Recent Australian research also suggests that men's precautionary behaviour is governed to a greater degree by environmental features (Hay 1993). In Painter's research, where fear among female pedestrians did appear to be reduced this was in part a function of changes in social relations on streets which resulted from the environmental improvements; there was more pedestrian movement and less antisocial behaviour when areas were well-lit (Painter 1989). This reflects the findings from my research and others that social cues or markers are paramount (Valentine 1991; Warr 1990). Hence the findings here support conclusions that changes to the built environment might have a minor role in reducing fear, but only within a wider context of social and economic measures (Metrac 1990; Smith 1987; Stollard 1991; Womens Design Service 1988). I discuss the practical implications of this further in Chapter 7.

5. Conclusion

The evidence from my research which I have presented here confirms that the perceptions of physical and sexual danger of many women are closely linked to certain places. Many commentators have assumed that fear of crime can be most meaningfully explained by the neighbourhood influences I have discussed, but it has been pointed out that these are less useful in accounting for the differential distribution of fear between households and individuals (Smith 1989). This is particularly true of women's fear of male violence.

In general, the evidence suggests that concern about incivilities, formal social controls and the built environment are more likely to inflate fears about other types of crime than be a cause of fear of sexual attack itself. There is some support for suggestions that the neighbourhood influences discussed have a bearing on feelings

of security and hence perceptions of public space as dangerous, but they exacerbate existing fears rather than generate them. It is also clear that it is the social connotations of environmental markers which women find worrying, and this might explain why concern is widespread regardless of differences in the built environment. The relatively low incidence of sexual violence in public places also suggests that the association between dangerous people and certain public places has a symbolic rather than a material basis. As I now go on to argue, theories around the social construction of space contribute more to understanding of the mismatch between women's fear of attack and the spatial patterns of violence than suggestions about the physical characteristics of space.

C. THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE

1. Introduction

How do women's impressions about space and danger evolve, and how are they reaffirmed or altered? Most female experiences of violence are in private space at any stage of life (Stanko 1988b; Chapter 2). Yet public places are most closely associated with risk and danger, and most women's fear revolves around them. In the previous Section, I suggested that the structure of public space itself does not account for the high levels of fear among the women in the survey. In this Section, I want to investigate the suggestion that the information children and women receive about sexual and physical danger throughout their lives leads to the development and preservation of spatially misplaced fears (Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Valentine 1992a).

Firstly, in order to develop the framework of there being an ideological distinction between the public and the private spheres further, I want to outline feminist socialisation theory. This has been central to feminist discussions of how patriarchy 'gets done' in everyday life (eg Wise and Stanley 1987): how the ideological distinction of men as public beings and women as private beings is maintained. It has been seen to have a key role in the theories of social control which I outlined in Chapter 3. It also provides a coherent contribution in explaining why fear of sexual violence in public places is so widespread. I then go on to explore what the women in the survey were taught about danger when they were young, and how far this explains their current fears about public violence. I follow this up by looking at women's information sources and perceptions about violence today. Through this discussion I come to a conclusion on the question of fear of violence and misinformation.

2. Feminist socialisation theory

Feminist socialisation theory developed in the seventies, partly to counter arguments that gender differences are biologically determined and the spatially dichotomised world natural (Sydie 1987), and partly to provide a coherent explanation of the ways in which sexism and sex-stereotyping develop. Socialisation theory is an explanation of the profound effect that learning in early life has on shaping future gender roles and behaviour. Giddens (1991) suggests that the separation of childhood from adulthood accompanied the development of the public/private divide in social life. Whereas in pre-modern societies children grew

up in a collective setting and interacted with adults outside the immediate family, today they are 'concealed and domesticated' (Giddens 1991:152). The segregation of childhood, compounded by the introduction of formal schooling, presented the opportunity to control the ideas and roles which children take on.

Essentially, feminist socialisation theory suggests that 'masculine' and 'feminine' social and sexual identities are socially constructed (Thomson and Scott 1990). The early feminist writers view socialisation as a tool of patriarchal power, a way in which girls learn that male dominance is normal and natural so that they collude in their own oppression by accepting unequal status as they grow up (eg Millett 1972; Pleck 1981; Sharpe 1976). Millett (1972) identifies three means by which socialisation operates to form certain gender roles and behaviour. These are that boys and girls are socialised into 'masculine' (assertive) and 'feminine' (passive) personalities; they adopt roles which are appropriate to these personalities; and the differences in status which result ensure the survival of male supremacy. Feminist analysis has focused on how socialisation is institutionalised in the family, the media, and the education system (eg Deem 1978; Barrett 1980). Hence gender roles are maintained by conditioning rather than the use of force; but socialisation is an important feature in central to the social control theories described in Chapter 3 (eg Brownmiller 1975; Griffen 1986).

Socialisation theory enables consideration of lifetime influences which are unique to women to explain high rates of fear of sexual violence, rather than features of the current social or physical environment alone. The link between gender roles and the construction of notions about place is particularly relevant to this discussion. Below, I give a brief outline of the literature on how women and girls are taught about sexuality and gender roles, and how they learn about places.

Awareness develops among females that they are vulnerable to male power and to male violence from an early age (Burt and Estep 1981). Messages about appropriate behaviour which will keep them safe come from various agencies: parents, schools and peer groups as well as the media. Research has supported that adolescents girls receive increasingly conflicting, prescriptive messages about their sexual identities: social convention has it that girls must be attractive and available to men and yet remain morally pure (Holland et al 1992; Lees 1986). While gendered sexuality encourages the development of feminine traits such as passivity and submissiveness, women are taught that the threat of sexual violence is an

inevitable 'part of the natural environment', which they can only protect themselves against rather than challenge (Griffin 1986:3). This leads to the imposition of a code of unspoken rules about dress, behaviour, lifestyle, sexuality, and female loyalty and passivity in relationships: women learn that there are a series of boundaries in the physical and social worlds which they must not cross if they wish to remain safe (Hanmer 1978). Proponents of this view argue that not only does this mean that women are more likely to be attacked (as most violence comes from male partners), but that it also creates a climate, in terms of perceptions and personalities, in which women are fearful of attack.

Meanwhile, it is argued that women receive clear messages about public and private space as they grow up from the various agencies of socialisation. In particular, it has been said that women and girls are misinformed about the location of male violence: they are taught that public space is risky and the home is a safe haven from aggression (Hanmer and Saunders 1984). Some of the literature on the built environment ties in here: designed by men, it has been said to contain cues that public space is unsafe, literally reflecting and reinforcing gender difference (see Section B). There also exist visible symbols of female oppression, just as there are neighbourhood levels of incivility which increase fears about crime; degrading representations of women's sexuality in the media, advertising and pornography have been held to add to women's unease about their vulnerability to sexual aggression (MacLeod 1990).

Recent concentration has been on misinformation about public space, however; the ways in which girls are taught to fear strangers and public places (eg Stanko 1990a; Valentine 1992a), and the media, are popularly implicated in maintaining these stereotypes among adult women. It is suggested that the media shapes women's fear of certain types of public places, such as parks, dark alleys and so on, by a tendency to report only those sexual crimes which occur there (Gordon and Heath 1981; Gordon and Riger 1989; Stanko 1985; Valentine 1992a).

Before going on to present evidence from my research, I want to highlight some of the problems of socialisation theory. Inevitably, the main difficulty is that of overgeneralisation; not all women are brought up in the same way, others break away from early socialisation, many do not conform to patterns of 'feminine' behaviour. As I have shown, many women are resilient in the face of the perceived threat of male violence. Importantly, there is little evidence that between women

with various lifestyles and backgrounds, some are more concerned about the possibility of attack (although substantiating this would be complicated). Neither is there any support in my research for the idea that most women are unconscious of their oppression; instead, I found a high degree of awareness and considerable anger about the feeling of being under curfew (Chapter 3).

Socialisation theory also treats masculinity and femininity as rigid, whereas there are many different forms. Discourse analysts such as Foucault (1981) and Coward (1982) would argue that the materially and institutionally embedded ideas about male dominance are more important than the rigid way in which the sexes are portrayed in society. In Chapter 6 I go on to suggest that power is more widely dispersed than many feminist theories have acknowledged. Additionally, the implications of socialisation theory bear a resemblance to the vulnerability theories of criminologists, which have been criticised for making it appear that women are inevitably victims of fear. Overall, it could be argued that too much emphasis has been placed on female socialisation, and not enough on male socialisation into the violent behaviour which contributes to women's fear.

In Chapter 3, I presented evidence from the survey which shows that many women are indeed subject to the behavioural codes which Hanmer and Griffin (above) describe, and in Chapter 6 I demonstrate that this is true for many children too. I now want to examine what informs these fears about violence in public: what is the role of socialisation about dangerous places?

3. Learning about danger in childhood

What are children taught about the safety of particular places? It has been suggested that this has a key role in shaping their feelings of vulnerability, particularly for girls (Valentine 1992a), who 'learn lessons in being female' as they grow up (Stanko 1990a). What were the women in the survey taught about danger as children, and what effect this has had on their current day behaviour and feelings?

Table 4.6 shows that almost half of the women in the survey recall being warned about sexual assault. Most of these women were warned young - over two thirds before the age of eleven. The most common sources of warning were parents, teachers and the police. As to the content of the warnings, two thirds were told of a general unspecified danger and over a third were warned about being abducted, but

fewer than one in twelve of all the women in the survey were specifically warned about sexual attack.

Table 4.6
Childhood warnings about sexual and physical danger

	% of respondents
Warned about sexual attack	**(n=380)**
	44.5
Estimated age at which first warned	**(n=169)**
Under 5 years old	10.0
5-8 years old	29.4
8-11 years old	31.2
11-14 years old	24.7
14-16 years old	4.7
Who warned you?	**(n=169)**
Parents	94.1
Teachers	42.0
Police	24.3
Sister or brother	5.3
Other relative	9.5
Friends	4.7
Other	4.7
What were you warned about?	**(n=169)**
General danger	68.0
Being abducted	41.4
Being sexually attacked or abused	17.7
Being physically hurt	16.0
Other	4.1
Who were you warned about?	**(n=169)**
Men who were strangers	100.0
Women who were strangers	31.3
Men you might know	14.2
Women you might know	5.3

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9

As the interviewees range in age from a nineteen year old to four women in their seventies, it is possible to examine children's education about danger over time. Younger women are more likely to have been warned at a younger age. Older women, especially those from middle class backgrounds, are more likely to have been shielded from what was considered to be morally damaging information.

How about when you were young, were you warned about your safety?
Never at all! But I was brought up by my grandparents when my father was killed in the war. And um, oh they were very strict. It was never mentioned at all.

Joan, Corstorphine

Were you ever warned yourself about being attacked as a child?
It's a thing that didn't occur when I was a child, or if it did occur - I couldn't say. But no, no, that never entered their head.

Brenda, Haymarket

Well I think in my day sex was never, or that type of language, or conversation, was never mentioned. In fact when I got married at twenty-nine I still wasn't sure how a baby was born. I had to ask my mother where it was going to come out of when it was born.

Nell, Corstorphine

However, the content of warnings does not seem to have changed markedly over the last couple of generations. Many the warnings which the women in the survey recall share two common features, both of which have implications for the effectiveness and impact of the constraints imposed on children's use of space. First, the nature of the threat rarely seems to have been made clear (Table 4.6). Obviously warnings to young children can not be too blunt, but some respondents said their parents' cautions were so oblique that they did not understand what they were referring to at all, or found them so unlikely that they disregarded them.

I can remember reaching puberty, my mother the only warning she gave me was "don't ever go into stairs", it was always that! [laughs]
Don't what?
"Don't ever go into stairs with boys." Well we lived in this tenement, so the idea was that you never went in, you know, with the young boy. And for a while I found this quite terrifying because I didn't know what she meant. So I think my imagination worked overtime.

Irene, Corstorphine

It would be like, don't talk to strangers, don't ever get into a car with strangers, don't accept sweets.
Did they ever say why?
Um, probably that they would maybe kidnap you or something, you know they would take you away. But there would never be anything more, um, not sordid I suppose, nothing deeper explained.

Olivia, Corstorphine

I was warned as a youngster never to go into anyone's car. But never about being attacked or anything like that. No she just says "just don't ever go in a stranger's car". But never ever told you what would be done to you, you know. Sometimes she used to say "sometimes it can be people that you know". It sorta used to confuse me, you know, "well what would they do to me if they knew me?" I think if she had gone into a bit more detail I wouldn't have been so confused.

Gail, Pilton

Secondly, the spatial risks emphasised were one-sided. All of the women who remember being warned had been told about male strangers, and a third were also told about female strangers. But only 14.2% were warned that men they might know could harm them too (Table 4.6). Thus parentally imposed constraints were focused almost entirely on public places, and many women developed an image as girls of there being a small number of maniacs around who were to be feared. Several report that constraints on their use of public space were especially tight when a particularly dangerous man was known to be on the rampage.

I became more aware when I was living - my home is in Yorkshire, and when the Yorkshire Ripper was about. Um I was quite aware of it. I had no idea what he did or anything but I was told it was horrible. Um and there was a lot of talk about that at the time. But it seemed like he was the only one and once he was - we felt safe once he was arrested! [laughs]

Becky, Haymarket

The only thing I really mind is Bible John, this guy from Glasgow who had been murdering women. And there was a rumour that he was running about the Whitburn-Bathgate area, and I was not allowed out for weeks. And I could never understand it. My dad didn't tell you. You just werenae allowed out because Bible John was near you.
Was that enough to scare you?
I don't think it was because I didnae ken what he had done or why I should be scared. I just wanted to play out with my friend.

Moira, Pilton

I will discuss some of the consequences of focusing warnings on this type of attacker, rather than the far more common abuser who gets access to children in private space, in Chapter 6. One of the most serious of these is how children react when facing abuse from someone they know in private space. Frequently, children's experiences of harassment or abuse from adults do not live up to the narrow stereotypes which parents prepare them with (Stanko 1987a).

We were only about eight or nine year old and the Provident man used to come up the stair. There was about five kids and he used to say "if you come here and let me press my body up against yours I'll give you a sweetie". Now at that time we didn't even have a clue what he was doing. And we forgot about that for years and we told my mum a few months

ago. But I feel that if we had been warned about what people could do we would have told her.

Deborah, Pilton

I was sort of fondled as an adolescent by the lollipop man who knew my mother, spoke to my mother, was allowed into the school. You know, trusted position. And I didn't report that because I was in such a dilemma because he wasn't a stranger. It threw everything to one side.

Sheila, Haymarket

"Don't go with strangers" is all I remember...I think it would have been much more helpful if they'd made it clear what they were talking about, because they didn't, and it meant that when you did have sort of groping uncles or friends, you felt uncomfortable but nobody had said, you know, "this is not on, you should do something about it". Because they'd never been specific. I think that made it difficult.

Elaine, Haymarket

Few differences are apparent in the spatial patterns of warnings reported by women from different social backgrounds report. As I demonstrated in Chapter 3, little has really changed in what women warn their children about now, apart from for the women who were abused themselves as children. Constraints imposed by parents on children's use of public space are, if anything, greater now than at any time in the past (Hillman 1993).

Have these warnings shaped the perceptions of danger in different spaces which women hold today? Separating out the various layers of vulnerability is difficult: how much is taught in childhood, how much is a product of adulthood lessons, how much is shaped by experience, how much due to individual attitudes and backgrounds, and so on. However, several women comment that the images about danger and behavioural codes which they were taught as children young have stayed with them.

I always had a picture, because I picture it even now, they were saying there might be somebody, a man in a car. And I always pictured a man in a car outside the school. I can still see the same picture, it's just where all the parents came to meet their children from school all in cars, and it would be somebody in a car there. And that was just a very vague idea. I never imagined them stopping you halfway home from school or anything like that.

Paula, Haymarket

I don't know whether like - when I was young, since I've been little, my mum and dad always made sure they knew where I was, that I had to either ring my dad or get a taxi. So it's always carried on into my older life. I mean I just would not think about walking home on my own at night.

Danielle, Haymarket

I was very strictly brought up. Um I mean they had to know exact details, I had my freedom as a kid but um it was very controlled and quite restricted, you know. It obviously affects your outlook on life, um I think for the better, considering what we're living in nowadays. It's lived with me and I'm glad I was told about it.

Christine, Corstorphine

It seems, then, that socialisation in childhood about space and danger has some bearing on adult women's fears about violence. However, adult women are obviously subject to a wider range of sources of information about dangerous spaces. Do these differ from those instilled in childhood or reaffirm early perceptions? I now go on to look at adult women's perceptions of fear, what informs them, how they perceive the risks attached to sexual violence and, from this, whether or not education about danger can be held to explain the spatial mismatch between fears and risks.

4. Perceptions of danger in adulthood

It has been assumed by some commentators on women's fear of crime that because there is evidence of a mismatch between risk and fear, women's perceptions about the spatial patterns of sexual violence must be misplaced. The issue of misinformation has been central to some feminist analyses of women's fear, which suggest that ignorance breeds the damaging and unnecessary precautionary behaviour which I outlined in Chapter 3. Hanmer and Saunders (1984) describe misinformation about the relative risks of public and private space as crucial to the continuation of the cycle of fear and violence: it leads to inaccurate notions about public space, which is then avoided by women who seek safety in the home instead, increasing their actual exposure to risk. Valentine (1992a) is in agreement that the social construction of space leads women to transfer their threat appraisal from men in general to public places in particular.

In the remainder of this section I focus on this issue. With evidence from the survey I demonstrate not only that many women are well-informed about the spatial risks of sexual and physical violence, but that for those who are not, misinformation provides only a partial explanation for their fear. In the course of this discussion I highlight some more of the means by which space is socially constructed.

a) Information sources about public and private violence

The information women receive about the spatial risks of sexual violence comes from several sources and in several guises. Some comes in the form of direct warnings, such as cautions about particular places from friends, family or the police. These tend to follow the same pattern as childhood warnings, the emphasis being firmly on public places and strangers (see Chapter 7 for a discussion of official crime prevention advice). Some information comes indirectly, in the form of stories about attacks in the media, or through more general indications about appropriate places in which women should or should not be.

Table 4.7
Sources of information about sexual violence

Have any of the following increased your anxiety about sexual attack? % of respondents (n = 389)	
Newspapers or television	64.5
Warnings or advice from the police	15.9
You know someone who's experienced such an incident	15.7
Warnings or advice from other people	11.8
Your past experience of such an incident	10.3

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.6

Table 4.7 gives some examples of women's sources of information about sexual attack which, in this, case, women say have served to increase their fear. First or second hand experience and direct warnings from others may all increase anxiety, although the effect of hearing about attacks on other people depends on individuals' evaluation of their own vulnerability (Stanko 1990a). For some women these are the main sources of information. In some of the interviews with women in Pilton, for example, 'experience' was often mentioned as the reason for believing places to be unsafe; not necessarily personal experience of violence but a more general awareness of danger, created partly by the indicators of incivility in the neighbourhood, and partly by frequently hearing stories about crime.

Where do I get my information from? From living I suppose. Experience and living. I mean I dinnae read papers and I very rarely listen to the news...I think it's because of the places I've lived. They make you wary.

Karen, Pilton

I've really noticed it myself that things have gone on, you ken. Just from folk around you, maybe you're saying to yourself "what are they talking about, what are they doing?"

Shirley, Pilton

However, the media is the biggest single provider of information about sexual attack, as well as being the source which most women are most likely to say has increased their fear. Out of 198 respondents who answered an open-ended question 'if you are more worried now, can you explain why?' (Question 4.3), 65 mention an increase in media reports, and 66 say that it is due to an actual rise in sexual attacks. Some women filter media reports and are aware that they may sensationalise or misrepresent violence against women, yet this awareness does not necessarily reduce the impact the stories have.

Where do you get information about rape from?
Um women's magazines, newspapers, things like that. Then generally you know discussing it with yourselves and that. I mean a good example is "oh how do you get to such and such" and it's "well don't go that way but if you go this way", you know. Cos it's a better road or something like that.

Danielle, Haymarket

What implications does this have for women's perceptions about the relative risks of sexual attack in public and private space? A great deal of research has shown that newspaper and television reports exaggerate the risks of violent crimes and that they appear to increase fear of crime (eg Ditton and Duffy 1983; Gordon and Heath 1981; Smith 1984a; Williams and Dickinson 1993). Valentine (1992a) argues that the media particularly misrepresent the spatial patterns of violence against women, and that in concentrating on public place attacks rather than domestic incidents, powerful images about the spatial and temporal incidence of danger are created. The media often imply a degree of responsibility on victims for being in the wrong place at the wrong time, and hence women use news reports to make judgements about safe places and behaviour for themselves and their children (Morley 1986).

Clearly, however, the media are not solely responsible for high levels of fear. Readers are not indiscriminate in their acceptance of news reports, nor are they unaware of the degree of sensationalism which exists (Smith 1984a; Williams and Dickinson 1993). People invest what they read with meaning according to the bearing it has on their own knowledge and experience (Smith 1984a). The local media in Edinburgh has certainly played a role in focusing women's fears about particular public places, but it seems that as women fear these types of places anyway the role of the press is to reinforce rather than create the spatial patterns of fear of attack. Those women in the survey who say that the media has a role in

making them worry about sexual violence are no more likely to be worried about being attacked in a public place than those who feel it has not affected them.

In addition, information about sexual violence in the media is becoming more accurate. Reports are no longer only about attacks in public places (although this is still the predominant location). Particularly over the last five years, publicity about private violence has improved noticeably, both in news reports about notorious cases and in feature articles. Date rape, marital rape, domestic violence and child abuse are all covered in television documentaries, news features and women's magazines fairly regularly, and representations of violence against women on popular 'real life' drama serials such as The Bill (ITV) and Casualty (BBC1) are now more likely to present a known man than a stranger as the attacker. The local newspaper in Edinburgh itself began a campaign focusing on private violence a few months after the fieldwork for my research had ended, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, and this, along with the district council's education campaign may mean that knowledge about the spatial distribution of violence among women in the city has improved even since the conclusion of the research. Again, the prominence of women's issues is changing, and feminist theories need to stay abreast of such changes (Chapter 6). Yet despite all this, it remains true that most women fear being attacked in public space far more than being attacked in private space, and my aim here is to examine why this is.

b) Women's perceptions about the likelihood of victimisation

First, how do women perceive their chances of becoming a victim of sexual violence? Assessment of risk is based upon perceptions about the incidence of violence and of the type of situation, victim and offender usually involved.

i) Perceptions about the incidence of violence

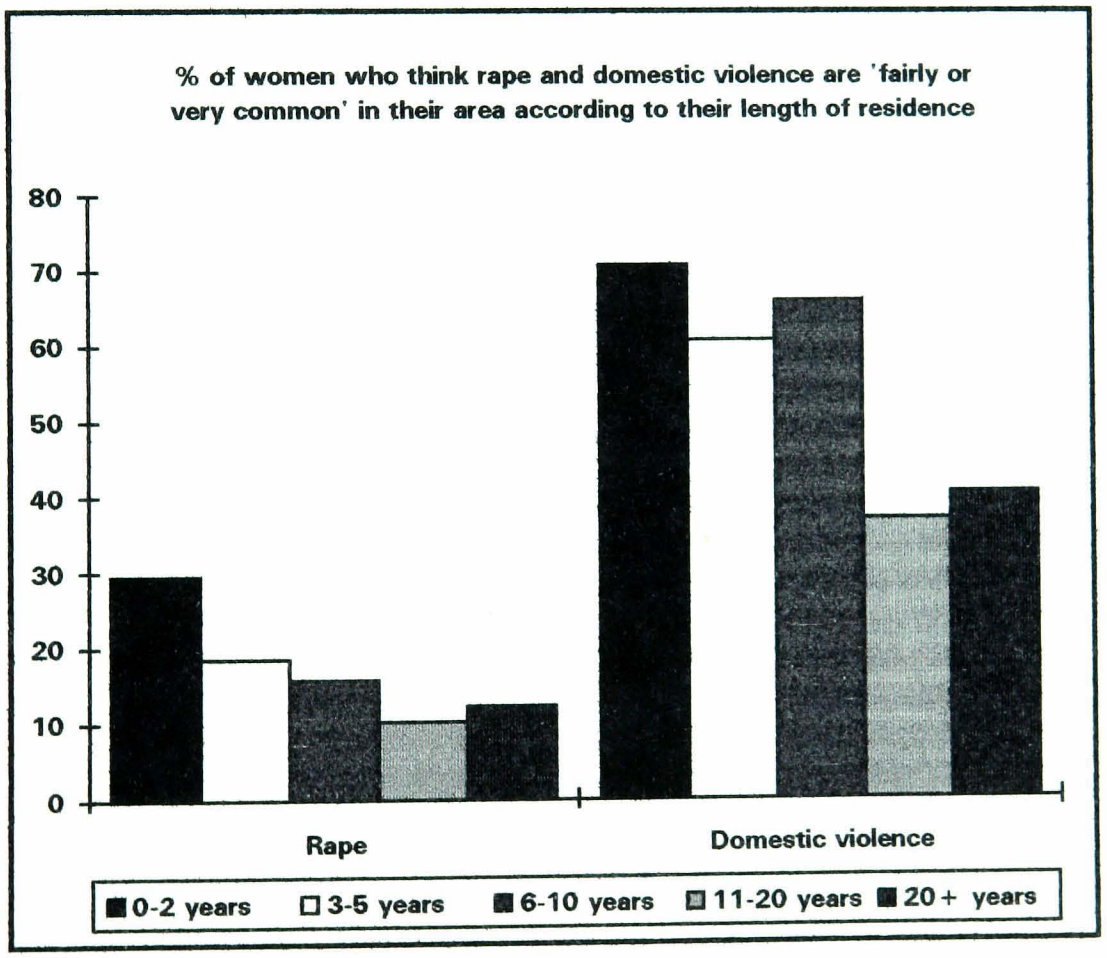
Sexual violence is perceived to be widespread by most of the women in the survey. Two thirds of the respondents think that rape is very or fairly common in Scotland (Table 3.2 in Appendix D), and two thirds also say it has become more common in the last five years. Only 13.3% believe that rape is common in their own area, however (and only 2.1% of those living in Corstorphine believe this to be so compared to 19.4% in Pilton). Hence there is a distinction between feelings about familiar areas and broader areas which resembles the private/public split. As one respondent wrote on her questionnaire, however, 'this is probably wishful thinking!', especially in light of the fact that the majority of women worry

considerably about rape and this fear is expressed in everyday coping strategies aimed at the negotiation or avoidance of local places (Chapter 3).

Perceptions of the incidence of rape are fairly evenly spread amongst the sample, with two exceptions. Older women (aged over sixty) are significantly more likely than younger women to believe that rape has become more common over the last five years ($p<0.01$), although they are no more likely to believe that it is now common. There is also a marked correlation between length of residence in an area and perceptions of the incidence of violence in that area (Figure 4.8). One in three of those who have been resident for less than two years think that rape is common in their area, compared with one in seven of those who have been resident for more than twenty years ($p<0.1$). The relationship with domestic violence is more significant still ($p<0.001$).

Figure 4.8*

Perceptions about the commonness of rape and domestic violence in area of residence according to respondents' length of residence*



*** A corresponding Table (4.8) can be found in Appendix D.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 1.2 and 6.1

ii) Perceptions about the location of attacks

Most women are at least partially aware of the commonness of private violence. Most of the attacks reported in interviews which have happened to respondents or to people they know tend to be violence from partners. Knowledge about public space rapes said to have taken place locally tends to be further removed and less well substantiated; they might have been read about in the media, or rumoured. 84.5% of the women in the survey say that they believe domestic violence to be fairly or very common in Scotland (Table 3.2 in Appendix D).

There appears to be far more direct knowledge of private violence in Pilton, which may lie behind the fact that 73.1% of women in Pilton believe domestic violence to be common in their own area, compared to 44.1% in Haymarket and 13.7% in Corstorphine (Table 3.2 in Appendix D). Although it is clear from my research findings alone that domestic violence also occurs in these latter areas, it is better hidden from neighbours. In Pilton the density and quality of housing, and the better developed local social networks, mean that domestic violence is more likely to be public knowledge.

I do hear a lot o' domestic violence, you know, I don't hear it but I hear from other people about it, you know. "See her over the road she got beaten up by her husband last night" and just a lot about that.

Gillian, Pilton

Do you ever hear about anyone being attacked by someone they know?
It's not talked about. No. I think it probably happens, but it's never talked about.

Irene, Corstorphine

The greater knowledge of domestic violence among women in Pilton may well contribute to the social class divide I have identified between those who see it as a potential risk for themselves and those who do not (Chapter 3). There is also a feeling among some middle class women in Haymarket and Corstorphine that domestic violence is linked to poverty and run down areas. This is a way of distancing unpleasant events from oneself, which I discuss further below. Holding the belief that violence among intimates is more likely to happen to certain people in certain areas is a way of reducing the personal threat in what seems to be a rational way.

Do you think it's more the deprived areas?
Yes I would because poverty, you know people are driven to these things in lots of ways...With domestic violence maybe the frustration of the fact that they're unemployed or whatever, you know, and lack of money and all the rest of it that causes these things to happen within the family unit.

Christine, Corstorphine

For those women who come from middle class backgrounds, the experience of violence from partners came as a great shock.

Is [violence in marriage] something you expected when you were single?
No, you expect it to be love and er, no, everybody's brought up with this idealised image that it's all going to be love.

Valerie, Corstorphine

Did you ever imagine anything like that could happen when you were younger?
No. Nope. Never.
Did you know about violence in marriage?
I never knew about violence in marriage until, like, my friends started to get married. "He done that to you? I'd kill him if he done that to me!" You know, and I was pretty old when I got married, I was twenty eight, but um, no I never thought he could be like that to me.

Diana, Corstorphine

iii) Perceptions about victims and offenders

Table 4.9 shows women's perceptions about who rapists are most likely to be. In relation to rape in general, just under half believe that a stranger is most likely attacker. However, when asked who would be the most likely attacker if they were the victim, this proportion rises to over two thirds of the women in the survey. Only 10.6% imagine that they would be more likely to be raped by someone they know; yet 43.4% believe that men who are known to the victim are the most likely to commit rape in general.

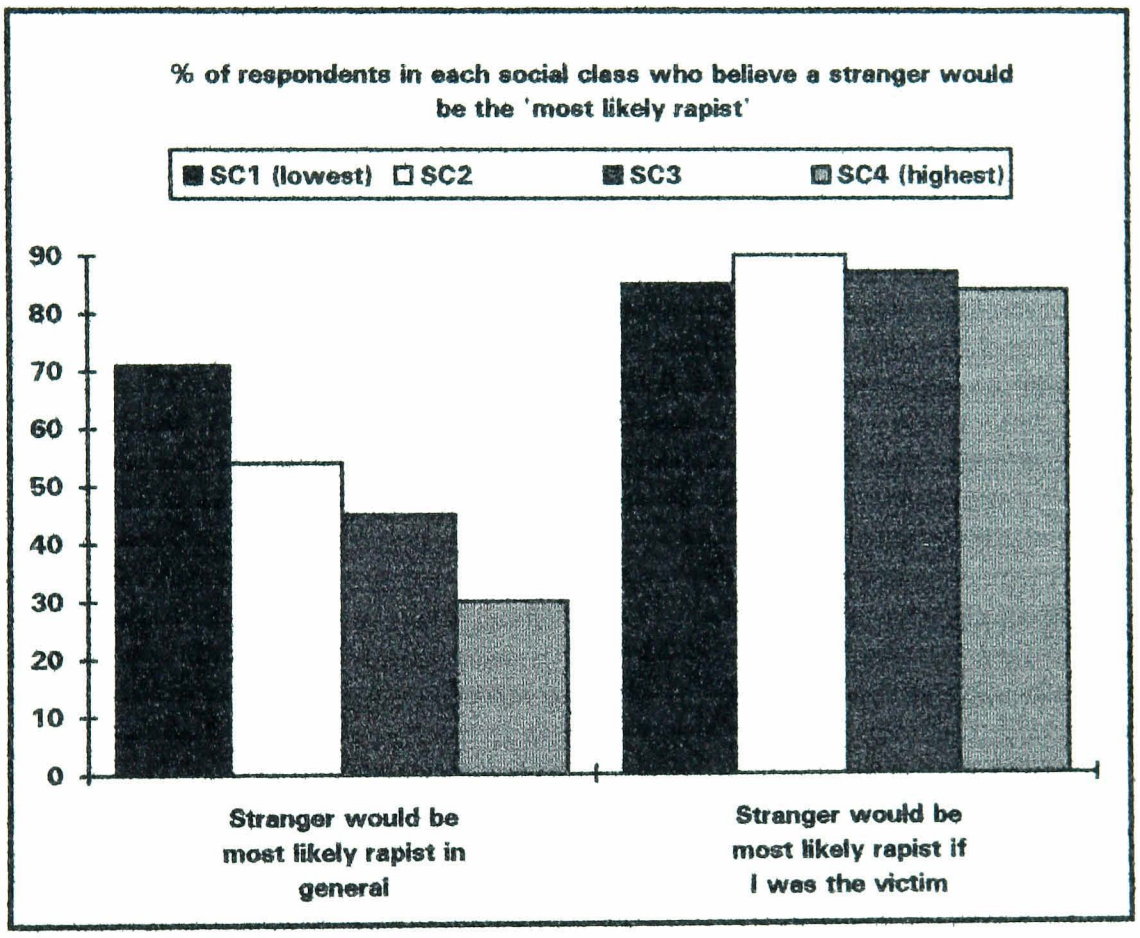
Table 4.9
Perceptions about rape

Which person do you think is most likely to commit rape? % of respondents (n = 386)		
Most likely offender	**In general**	**If you were the victim**
Stranger	47.3	70.2
Friend/acquaintance	39.2	8.5
Relative	4.2	2.1
Don't know/can't imagine	9.4	19.2

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 1.4a and 1.4b

Therefore there is not just a paradox between risk and fear, but importantly one between knowing something to be true on a rational level, and feeling it to be true on an instinctive one. This is most clearly demonstrated by looking at the relationship between women's social class and their perceptions about rapists. Figure 4.10 shows that women in higher social classes are much more likely to know that strangers are not the most usual rapists ($p < 0.01$). However, when asked who would be the most likely rapist if they were the victim there is no significant difference; the vast majority of women in all social classes say it would be a stranger ($p > 0.8$; see Table 4.10 in Appendix D).

Figure 4.10
Perceptions about rape among women in different social classes*



*** A corresponding Table (4.10) can be found in Appendix D.**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 1.4a and 1.4b

The fact that women in lower social classes are more likely to believe that strangers are the usual rapists seems to belie the greater direct knowledge of private violence displayed by women in Pilton. The explanation may lie in the fact that reports of domestic abuse in Pilton were of beatings rather than of rape. In addition, women in higher social classes may be more likely to hold and express the view that forced intercourse between married or sexual partners constitutes rape (Segal 1990).

c) The gap between rationale and instinct: distancing sexual violence

The disparity between accurate knowledge about general spatial risks and feelings about personal risks typically occurs in fairly young, well informed and educated, middle class women. Their better knowledge about violence against women may be a result of greater access to the improving information sources which I described above: accurate media coverage of private violence often comes in the form of feature articles and documentaries and is more common in the broadsheets, which tend to be less sensationalist and misrepresentative of crime than tabloids. It has been suggested that the class differences in newspaper reading may underpin class differences in perceptions about crime (William and Dickinson 1993).

Although these better informed women do not constitute the majority of women in the survey, their example is important as it suggests that knowledge about risk is not a factor affecting levels of fear. On a personal level, better informed women feel as much at risk from strangers as anyone else, and it is women in lower social classes who report more fear of private violence. Previous commentators have focused on misinformation about violence as being central in shaping women's concerns (Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Valentine 1989b, 1992a), the assumption having been that improving information will free women from the false image of public places as dangerous. My findings demonstrate that this is clearly not the case.

As I have already suggested, women tend to distance violence from themselves if possible. Indeed, tagging crime with particular social indicators is a common response to other offences crime too; white people, for example, may relate crime closely with people of colour as a means of fear management (Smith 1986). Hence in all of the three study areas, women say that rape and domestic violence are considerably less common than in Scotland as a whole. Domestic violence is imagined to be linked with working class council schemes by those who live elsewhere, and rape is closely associated with strangers and public places. In one sense, middle class women can afford to take on the reality of private violence if they also hold the belief that people other than they are more likely to be the ones at risk.

The way women interpret media reports of violence also involves an attempt to distance incidents spatially and socially. Random attacks where the victim has no previous relationship to her attacker are perceived as the most frightening, as are

attacks which are relatively close to home - in both cases they make the threat seem less avoidable. Women read stories and interpret them both in the light of their own situation - 'could it have happened to me?'; and by moral decoding of the incident - 'she shouldn't have been there/doing that anyway'. The approach of reports sometimes actively encourages this line of thought, and often police comments about women's safety do the same (Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Valentine 1992a).

During interviewing the issue of public space rape was being brought to the fore of interviewees' thoughts by a series of reported sexual attacks in Edinburgh. As this made the threat more difficult to distance, some women reported feeling more concerned and employing more coping strategies. Some of the reported attacks actually took place in Corstorphine and Haymarket wards.

I get the Evening News a bit nowadays, which I didn't used to do, and I find since I started reading the Evening News I'm more scared than I was before. Cos I was completely, didn't know about the attacks in Edinburgh and now I do. I listen to Radio Forth a lot but they don't usually come up with that in the same way as the papers, sort of really, you know, two inch high headlines. It does make me a bit worried.

Vicky, Haymarket

We discuss it in the office or if we're out, um, just what's been happening in the past few weeks in Edinburgh, it's becoming a very unsafe place to stay. You know, in that respect if you're out on your own at night, or anyone in the morning, you worry about kids on paper rounds in the morning, going to school.

Christine, Corstorphine

It is frightening because it really brings it home that this is happening in the area that you live in, and therefore possibly you might be as vulnerable as a victim has been.

Alex, Haymarket

Distancing, however, is a particularly common response to private violence. While public space attacks are seen as more random, they are at least perceived to be avoidable. Private violence is less easy to escape from, but many women minimise their personal feelings of vulnerability by telling themselves that they are not the sort of person who is at risk. For some this is done by linking violence with class; others feel that they have confidence in own ability to be able to predict which men are violent and which are not.

Personally you'd want to say no it wouldn't happen in the house and stuff, but you know from all the statistics that it does...I think it's because you don't want to accept that it can

happen, because it's so awful that you want to distance it, and I think you do that by thinking "it won't happen to me".

Ann, Haymarket

I know that's what the statistics say, but it's not something I can imagine. I try to think about it but I can't. There isn't anybody that I know that I can imagine being attacked by.

Paula, Haymarket

There was a bit in the questionnaire about domestic violence and I think that's very very common. But I know it wouldn't happen to me because I would be out of the door like a flash.

Deborah, Pilton

I can understand it happening maybe to younger women who aren't that clued up about men, and just maybe aren't that experienced, not even with men but just with people, to suss out when they meet a new man, you know, what he's like. And maybe get themselves involved in a situation where that happens. But um, not for me, no, because I'm a bit older.

Vicky, Haymarket

I think it's, it's just a matter of judgement eventually. You know, if it's a fairly new acquaintance you've got to think well anything could happen. Yeah it's very difficult when they say perhaps "can I give you a lift home", something like that. I know it sounds silly but I think that instinct does help to a large extent, you have feelings about people, and I think if you have any sort of doubt about them you just don't.

Irene, Corstorphine

As far as I'm personally concerned it doesn't affect me at all. I think I'm quite good at, you know, just assessing people by initially meeting them, so I don't, no, I don't think I ever feel worried, no.

Marie, Corstorphine

Of course, as the experiences of women in the survey who have suffered violence from partners show, it is not really possible to distinguish this easily between 'good' and 'bad' men. Women continue to evaluate men in this way as a management strategy by which they hope to be able to avoid danger.

d) Conclusion

There are signs that women's awareness of the spatial risks involved in violence are improving, both from the media and from the fact that the women in my research hold more accurate perceptions than those Valentine questioned four years previously (Valentine 1989b) A recent survey in New Zealand showed young women to have a more realistic spatial appraisal of threat of rape still, and suggests that press reports are less biased in representing where attacks take place than those in Britain (Pawson and Banks 1993).

The fact that improvements do not seem to have any influence on women's fears about public places demonstrates that misinformation alone can not explain the spatial paradox: the persistent feeling that public places are where danger lies. This is underpinned by another paradox identified in my research; one between knowing something to be true on a rational level, and accepting it to be true to the point of orienting practical responses around it. Women seek to distance themselves from experiences of private violence, even when common sense knowledge tells them that this is where danger overridingly lies. In one sense this is understandable, as most women have not been attacked or threatened in their close relationships with husband, boyfriends, fathers or brothers. The most pressing question is not why most women feel safe with men they know, as some feminists have suggested; the answer is simply that most men are not violent. Instead, my findings underline the importance of asking why women are frightened of strangers.

Why does the same process of distancing and ignoring danger not occur in public places? Here, whatever knowledge about spatial risks women hold, fear of sexual attack is constant, a fact which is best demonstrated by the differences in perceptions among women of different social classes. Part of the answer is that many women's lifelong acquaintance with strangers has been one of mistrust and hence lives up to the idea, reinforced by media reminders, that they are likely to attack. However, these findings suggest that women's experiences of public places might be most important to explanation of the spatial mismatch between risk and fear.

CONCLUSIONS

After analysing the effect of various social and physical influences, I have suggested that social factors are more important in explaining women's fear. The findings of my research suggest that although features of the visible environment outside may sometimes heighten feelings of insecurity, this is a way in which fear of violence is expressed rather than a root cause of it. Perceptions about formal controls on sexual violence do not seem to influence the extent of fear among women, but do have some bearing on how safe different spaces are perceived to be, one example being the link between low levels of confidence in the police in dealing with rape victims and fear of private space violence. I discuss some of the policy implications of these findings in Chapter 7.

The findings display particular support for the impact of childhood socialisation on adults' feelings of fear; most women have been taught as children that public places are the location of greatest sexual and physical danger, reflecting their current fears. However, there is less support for suggestions that this socialisation continues into adulthood, as women's education about danger is variable, their views and feelings remain open to information and are fluid through their lives. The findings suggest that common sense knowledge about violence in different places is not ultimately responsible for the spatial paradox, as has been suggested. Owing, perhaps, to increasing representation about private violence in the media, many women know that private space is most dangerous. Yet this does not affect their feelings of unsafety in public; a fact which is particularly well demonstrated by the tendency of middle class women to fear attack in public space far more than private space, but to be well-informed about the relative spatial risks.

Hence, as I have shown by considering women of different social classes and specific beliefs about violence, there is a fourth and more central paradox in women's fear (see Chapter 1), between rational knowledge and instinctive feeling. The question which remains is why do women who know on a common sense level that public space is relatively safe not believe and act upon it? In order to uncover what reinforces these conceptions of public space as dangerous, I go on to suggest in the next Chapter that women's day to day experiences of danger in different places provides an explanation.

Chapter 5
HARASSMENT, VULNERABILITY AND FEAR OF CRIME

INTRODUCTION

In this Chapter, in which I explore the geography of harassment, I have several aims. As the Chapter title suggests, I aim to confirm and build upon recent suggestions about the role of harassment in vulnerability and fear of crime. I do this by examining the evidence from my survey concerning the effect of harassment on women's perceptions of danger. Can this help to elucidate why most women fear attack in public places when the greatest danger lies in the private sphere? In Chapter 4 I demonstrated that the information received by women about danger and place can no longer be held accountable for this paradox. Although the relevance of harassment to women's feelings of security has recently been noted by criminologists, harassment is almost always discussed aspatially. The way in which women evaluate individual incidents of harassing behaviour and the consequent effect that incidents may have on them have not been fully examined, and I aim to crystallise these and their relationship to patterns of fear of crime. I will argue that location, space and time have a central role in determining this, as well as on women's opportunities for challenging harassment.

Hence, building on the theories of social control introduced in Chapter 3, I want to explore more broadly how harassment is used to assert men's control of different spaces, not only public places. I argue that how space is used on a day to day basis, and how it is controlled by the behaviour of those in it is more central to the oppression of women than, for example, how it is designed or socially constructed through other media.

First of all, in Section A I discuss various conceptualisations of the harassment of women, coming to a working definition by examining how the women in the survey feel about and view it. Section B comprises an exploration of the geography of sexual harassment and its effects on women's vulnerability, and in Section C I tie together some issues remaining and conclude on the meaning and role of harassment, and highlight some theoretical implications.

A. CONCEPTUALISING HARASSMENT

1. Introduction

In Chapter 2, I presented data on experiences of sexual harassment among the women in the survey, and justified analysing it separately to violence. One reason for maintaining a distinction is that there is no consensus on what constitutes harassment against women or in condemnation of it. There are numerous meanings of 'sexual harassment' and its interpretation is very complex. It is necessary to attempt to resolve some of these issues before going on to look at its relation to the broader concerns of this thesis.

The debate about what sexual harassment is and how it operates often appears to have taken place above the level of people's day to day experiences. The survey therefore presents a timely opportunity to explore what women from a range of backgrounds feel about sexual harassment with the aim of resolving some of the conflicts arising in common interpretations of what sexual harassment is. It is also important to come to a definition of sexual harassment; this not only has intellectual consequences but also methodological implications for research. I go on to outline the issues below before exploring how women in the research view harassing behaviour, and hence how it is conceptualised in this research.

2. Conflicts in the interpretation of sexual harassment

a) Evolution of a term

Sexual harassment was named by women's groups around the mid-seventies in the United States, and soon became widely used as women began to challenge unfair treatment in the workplace (see Farley 1978). Although discrimination and aggressive or objectionable behaviour by men in the workplace were not new, 'sexual harassment' provided a global term to describe these experiences, going on to become a public issue in Britain in the early 1980s. The evolution of the term has been, however, 'both a triumph and a problem for feminism' (Thomas and Kitzinger 1990:4). The public discovery of sexual harassment enabled organisation against it and opened up debate, but once the term became public property its meanings became convoluted: there is still wide disagreement not only over its incidence and the behaviours which constitute sexual harassment, but also over the intentions behind it and its impact on sufferers and social relations.

The politicisation and stigmatisation of the term 'sexual harassment' appear to have had an impact on women's inclination to use the term, and this has significant methodological and theoretical consequences for research (Grahame 1985). I go on to discuss these implications below. Firstly, what are the major sources of conflict in the debate about sexual harassment and where do these stem from?

b) Two polarities

Certain conflicts emerging in academic discourse over the last decade tend to reflect the polarities of opinion outside academe. Unlike many of the phenomena which social scientists are concerned with, many of the issues around sexual harassment are within the experience of most people, regardless of their occupation or social class. Recently, for example, attention has been brought to the wide extent of sexual harassment within Universities between staff and students, among students and among staff (Golden and Breslaver 1990; McDowell 1990b; Rubin and Borgers 1990). In the face of feminist claims of the universality of sexual harassment, it is not something which can easily be externalised. There are marked disparities in social scientists' recent treatises.

To illustrate, sexual harassment has been defined in some feminist analyses as including:

> All process of control enacted by men over women in which the totality of our lives are available to being policed by them.
>
> (Wise and Stanley 1987:15)

In other words, sexual harassment is viewed as all forms of dominating behaviour by men. Wise and Stanley (1987) stress that sexual harassment is the behavioural manifestation of sexual politics; that it is driven by power rather than sex. They argue for the importance of definitions and analyses based on women's experiences. Recognising, quite rightly, that researchers can never be objective (especially with regard to a topic which is an emotive and personal one to many people), some feminist research tends to over-represent the researchers' own views and experiences or those of unrepresentative samples (Chapter 2). While I agree at the outset that sexual harassment is a basic reflection of men's power over women, and while acknowledging the influence of this standpoint on the research outcome, I feel it is important to take account of all the views and experiences of women in the survey. Hence I will have covered a far greater diversity of meanings of sexual harassment by the end of this chapter. My search for a definition is intentionally

aimed at being 'woman-centred', and is similar in that respect to early investigations into women's perceptions about sexual violence (eg Hanmer and Saunders 1984).

To look at an opposite extreme, there has been an identifiable backlash against feminist conceptualisations of sexual harassment. This draws on the conflicting perceptions of men and women about harassment and the apparent disinclination of many women to report sexual harassment. Research has shown that women and men frequently conceptualise sexual harassment differently (Gutek et al 1980; Kitzinger 1991; McKinney 1990), and that women are less willing to say they have been sexually harassed than might be expected from feminists' claims of its universality (Grahame 1985; see also below). The 'backlash' writers typically accuse feminists of exaggerating the problem, of broadening the definition of harassment until it includes predominantly the trivial and inconsequential; and of potentially harming interaction and communication between the sexes irreconcilably (Cohen 1991; Paul 1991; Davidson 1991). This reaction has been mirrored in the British tabloid press, where sexual harassment has been trivialised and constructed it as a figment of the feminist imagination; a 'disappearing problem' rather than a growing one (Wise and Stanley 1987). Because of the influence of the media, the problem of trivialisation has a considerable impact.

A multiplicity of views lie between the two perspectives I have outlined. There clearly exist conflicting opinions on what sexual harassment is and what it does. My aim is to try and clarify some of the issues and conflicts involved, using empirical data from my survey. Although this represents only the views of those on the receiving end of harassment, as well as inevitably reflecting my own feelings, I hope to present a contribution to the debate.

c) Five conflicts

There are five at least basic problems or conflicts which can be identified in the quest to define and conceptualise sexual harassment, as follows. First, which forms of behaviour does the term cover? While Wise and Stanley (1987) would include all behaviour in which men exert power over women, and therefore reject the possibility of drawing up an objective 'list' of incidents, some might restrict inclusion to overt instances of sexualised contact. A second and related conflict is the basis of sexual harassment. The 'backlash' authors above tend to identify it almost entirely in the context of genuine attempts at sexual communication. In

contrast, feminist definitions tend to see it as aggressive and an attempt to humiliate or control women. Third, how significant is sexual harassment? While it is, perhaps, commonly seen as fairly harmless, in feminist conceptualisations it has an important role in policing women's lives, and is viewed as being closely related to physical violence against women (Chapter 2).

Fourth, where does sexual harassment take place? Wise and Stanley (1987) contend that it happens anywhere and everywhere, while many other definitions restrict it to the workplace where the term was first coined. Such accounts tend to be very limited spatially, socially and temporally; typically sexual harassment is seen as something that happens to young working women of a certain social class and occupational strata. Indeed, much of the feminist research on sexual harassment is also restricted to the workplace. For example, in otherwise valuable analyses MacKinnon (1980), Grahame (1985) and Stanko (1985) all discuss harassment only as a workplace phenomenon. Where concerted efforts have been made to police sexual harassment, for example by trades unions, these also tend to focus on the workplace.

Fifth, how are incidents evaluated as harassing or non harassing? Clearly, evaluation depends heavily on whose perception is in question (Booth-Butterfield 1989; Kitzinger 1991; McKinney 1990). What affects these perceptions and whose view counts?

Is it worth devoting so much attention to these issues? It has been suggested that focusing on this question of definition detracts from the business of tackling the problem (Kitzinger 1991). However, before intervention can proceed effectively (and indeed before its role in fear of crime can be assessed) it is of important to be able to delimit and define the problem as far as possible. Sexual harassment is essentially socially constructed and much of the problem lies in interpretation; particularly in research, there is a practical as well as an intellectual need for definitions which are based on empirical data.

3. The neutralisation of experiences of harassment

A further suggestion in the literature which complicates analyses of harassment is that women appear to neutralise and minimise their experiences. Some writers suggest that sexual harassment is so 'normalised', ie so common, that many women do not notice it happening at all (eg Wise and Stanley 1987). Thomas and Kitzinger

(1990) refine this assumption by suggesting that women choose not to give significance to incidents of harassment, rather than being blind to them, for various common sense reasons. As I describe below, the use of the two research tools together highlights the fact that this is true of many of the women in my survey. What are the reasons behind the tendency to make little of experiences of harassment, if it is true that it can have quite a severe effect on women's freedom and well-being? Consciousness may have a part to play; some interviewees say that they have only interpreted behaviour as harassment in retrospect, after reading or hearing about other women's experiences. There is more evidence, however, that some women 'neutralise' their experiences of harassment as a means of coping with them. Junger (1987) proposes that women trivialise or ignore certain experiences so that they are able to go about their daily lives without feeling overtly affected. Just as many of the women in the survey distance sexual violence from themselves by linking it with social and economic factors which they feel do not affect them (Chapter 3), ignoring or neutralising harassment is a means of risk management. It provides a way of minimising awareness of the effects harassment is having, although not necessarily its actual effects.

The fact that sexual harassment is in many ways institutionalised (MacKinnon 1979; Russell 1984; Wise and Stanley 1987) compounds the feeling that it is beyond people's capacity to challenge, and that the best way of coping is to accept it. There have been few state responses to harassment, and these have been piecemeal (Chapter 7). Interview material suggests that where workplace strategies for tackling it exist, they have little impact on women's experiences in practice. The lack of criminal status of many forms of harassment, including most of the incidents this Chapter is concerned with, further suggests to women that they are trivial and are tolerated by the state.

4. Methodological problems in investigating harassment

The issues of definition, evaluation and neutralisation create particular problems for researching women's feelings about sexual harassment. In Chapter 2 I discussed how I attempted to circumvent some of the methodological problems by supplying respondents with neither a definition nor the term itself on the questionnaire. Because of this, and also because I felt there was a need to produce some statistical support for the incidence of sexual harassment, the questionnaire listed a limited range of incidents (Table 2.2). I did not, however, intend to restrict exploration to these; they stand as an index which indicates the commonness of harassing

behaviour. The most illuminating method of investigation when it comes to the meanings attached to sexual harassment is qualitative research. Hence in the interviews, considerable attention was given to sexual harassment. Respondents were asked what they understood by the term, what their own experiences have been and whether they label these as harassment or not. Most importantly, they were asked how they evaluated their experiences and how this affected the impact they had. In most cases discussion moved away from the overt incidents mentioned on the questionnaire to more subtle behaviour.

In the following discussion of women's conceptualisations of sexual harassment I have tried to represent the range of views and feelings about harassment as well as drawing out the commonalities. A single tidy definition of sexual harassment is not possible; however desirable it may be from a political or a practical point of view, it is not possible to draw distinct boundaries around it. In the following discussion of sexual harassment I am not searching for a failsafe definition, but rather I explore some of the means of identification women use to differentiate between different behaviours. I now go on to discuss how women feel about harassment, conceptualise it and evaluate their own experiences.

5. How women view harassment: evidence from the survey

a) <u>The commonness of harassment</u>

Harassment from men is a common experience for many of the women surveyed. Chapter 2 gives statistics on the commonness of certain incidents, and in Section B of this Chapter I go into more detail on these and other experiences which are viewed as harassment. Younger women are more likely to report harassment than older women, which might suggest that it is increasing, although this might also be due to younger women's greater inclination to label their experiences, and fewer problems with recall. However, several older women themselves say that they believe sexual harassment to be more common now: although younger women are considered the usual sufferers, some of the older women say they have experienced more harassment in recent years than when they were young. Meanwhile the sexual harassment of children appears to be on the increase (Anderson et al 1990b).

b) <u>Labelling harassment</u>

Most of the respondents recognise harassing behaviour in their lives, and there is an overridingly negative attitude towards these common encounters (Table 5.1).

Even what are commonly viewed as fairly minor incidents are almost universally disliked (for example, leering and unwanted comments).

Table 5.1
Reactions to harassing behaviour

How do you feel (or how would you feel) about each of these experiences happening? % of respondents (n = 378)					
	Hate it	**Dislike it**	**Don't mind it**	**Feel flattered**	**No strong views**
Being flashed at	69.2	24.4	0.5	-	5.8
Being followed	86.8	11.9	-	-	1.3
Being touched up	87.3	11.9	-	-	1.6
Being leered at	56.8	39.3	1.9	0.5	1.6
Being whistled at	16.0	25.9	40.5	12.0	5.6
Unwanted comments	39.8	52.0	3.4	0.3	4.5
Obscene phone call	81.2	17.2	-	-	1.6
Harassment at work	66.9	28.3	-	-	4.8

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 3.2

These incidents are not necessarily labelled 'sexual harassment' by everyone. On the questionnaire, they were not labelled as such, and when directly presented with the term 'sexual harassment' in interviews, some women were unwilling to apply it to their own experiences, as previous research has suggested. In a Canadian workplace study, many women said that they had received 'unwanted sexual attention', in some cases having detrimental affects on their employment opportunities, yet 57% of these women did not apply the term 'sexual harassment' to their experiences (Grahame 1985). However, the reaction in my research to questions about unpleasant or oppressive behaviour from men nonetheless demonstrates high levels of awareness of experience of harassment. For example, several women say in interview that they have never been 'sexually harassed'; but the same women indicate in their questionnaire, and confirm later on in discussion, that they have been touched up on the bus, received offensive sexual comments in the course of their work or have had similar experiences which they see as negative.

The same point is illustrated by my attempt to measure the extent of sexual harassment at work. Where women are asked only how often they had experienced

'harassment at work', only a quarter indicate that this has happened to them. In a separate question (Question 3.5) where respondents are asked if they have experienced any of a range of unwanted behaviour from men at work (none of which are labelled harassment), half of all respondents indicate that they have - twice as many as actually name their experiences 'harassment' (see Table 5.5 and Section B of this Chapter). Thus while women commonly recognise and dislike unpleasant or aggressive aspects of male behaviour, they do not necessarily want to label it behaviour sexual harassment. The following three cases are of women who did not report harassing behaviour on their questionnaires and denied they had ever been harassed and, at first, maintained this when directly asked if they had been harassed at work in interview. Only when pressed did it emerged that they have had experiences which many other women did label harassment.

No. Never come across that at all.
Have you ever heard about it in relation to anyone else?
Heard about it, yes.
Anyone who you knew?
Um not directly, no. I've always just worked in smallish firms, you know. I used to work at the airport, you know, but that went on all the time there.

Maureen, Corstorphine

In the bar? No. Not with the regular clients, not at all. I mean they were always going on about, if I had a short skirt "oh get something off the bottom shelf" or whatever. Um some of them could be a bit of hassle. But they didn't get away with it.

Jane, Corstorphine

I've never had any harassment. Well I know once I had bother with the boss who thought I should sort of play footsie round the desk with him. But I wasn't having any.

Sharon, Pilton

Women's disinclination to use the term is not because they are 'dupes of patriarchy, unable to recognise their own oppression, and in dire need of having their consciousnesses raised' (Thomas and Kitzinger 1990:4). Instead, it can be related to the fact that 'sexual harassment' is a socially and politically constructed term. Many women are influenced by patriarchal constructions of it, and alienated by the common 'backlash' reaction to feminist conceptualisations which I outlined above. They may recognise harassment but not wish to do so explicitly: women often neutralise experiences of harassment in this way (Junger 1987). Maureen does not label harassment because it 'went on all the time': it was so common as not to be noteworthy. Meanwhile Jane and Sharon do not label men's behaviour 'harassment' because the men 'didn't get away with it'. Sexual harassment seems

to be linked with admitting weakness. Because these two women do not feel that they were victims - they could cope with the behaviour - they do not call it harassment.

Indeed, there are many good reasons for not labelling one's own experiences as sexual harassment. There may be no support or sympathy for women who claim to have suffered, or they may not want to acknowledge that they are not in control of a situation (Thomas and Kitzinger 1990). Many women feel that admitting they have been sexually harassed reflects badly on them (Grahame 1985), an association which recent media coverage of notorious cases tends to encourage. Claiming sexual harassment is claiming to have been sexually victimised, which is often seen to carry a stigma.

c) Behaviours and locations

Despite this reluctance to label their own experiences, there is quite a high level of consensus amongst the women in the survey as to what does, or does not, constitute harassing behaviour. When asked in interview, many women found some difficulty at first in coming up with a definition for sexual harassment, but most suggest that it basically happens because of the woman's sex, and that the term is quite broad and includes a range of behaviours.

> Oh god there's so many meanings! Er basically if some - I dunno how to describe it - if somebody sortae eggs at you because you're a female. That's about it, that's sexual harassment.
>
> Karen, Pilton

> I suppose I understand it that it's somebody who has got power over your career, and uses that in order to make inappropriate remarks, from sort of the minor things up to the major things, forcing you to have sex. So again it's a range of things.
>
> Valerie, Corstorphine

As well as mentioning some of the more obvious forms of harassment, many mention the more subtle instance too, and a common response was pointing out where the line lies between harassing behaviour and acceptable behaviour. The following excerpt is from an interview where the respondents' female friend joined in. Tellingly, Fiona's first response to the question 'where does sexual harassment happen?' provokes a stereotype about the workplace. Intervention from her friend Becky encourages her to refine and evaluate harassment from her own experiences. This train of thought is typical of several interviewees.

FIONA: Well I always imagine it at work, and you know, the boss sort of touching you up and um slobbering all over you, that sort of thing. That's how I always imagine it.
BECKY: I imagine it as that and taking it a bit further, um just if you're walking along and someone, a complete stranger makes some reference to you.
FIONA: Yeah and like whistling at you as well. Whistling, like builders. I hate walking past people on scaffolding!
BECKY: I know and they're always - you can tell from thirty yards off that when you walk past they're all going to look and...
FIONA: Yeah you know it's going to happen don't you.
BECKY: But I mean that's not too bad.
FIONA: No - but when it's actual reference to like, you know, parts of your body and stuff. It's an invasion of your personal space I think, by someone that you don't know or don't - or it's something that's uninvited.

d) Summary

Although women are less likely to label their own experiences due to the stigma which is attached to claiming to be a victim of harassment, there exists a high degree of awareness and condemnation of harassing behaviour from men. As I stated in Chapter 2, the working definition of harassment, based on the consensus view of the women in the survey, is threatening or worrying mainly non-physical behaviour which may be sexualised, malicious or both, and is distinct from violence.

Section B is an exploration of how harassment affects vulnerability and fear of crime, and in it I go into more detail about the sorts of behaviour reported to the survey to explore exactly how women evaluate situations and how they are affected by them. I illustrate that while the basic notion of having personal space invaded is crucial to the evaluation of harassment, space in a broader sense also influences the outcome of events. In Section C I outline what this suggests in regard to the five conflicts around sexual harassment which I identified above.

B: HARASSMENT, VULNERABILITY AND PLACE

1. Harassment and fear of crime in public places

In this section, I begin to explore the role of sexual harassment in the control of space by examining women's experiences of harassment in public places. This aspect of harassment has received the most attention in analysis of fear of violence and social control. In Chapter 2 I demonstrated that while sexual attack in public is relatively rare, sexual harassment in public places is very common. As I shall go on to show, some incidents of sexual harassment create far more concern than some officially defined 'crimes'. However, sexual harassment in public places has an added significance because, as I shall argue, it is instrumental in shaping women's fears of sexual attack directly. In Chapter 4, in which I explored what women learn about sexual attack, I concluded that information is not enough to explain the continuance of the association of sexual attack with public places, and I suggested that it might be more relevant to look at daily experiences of public places. Below, I present evidence supporting the link between harassment in public places and fear of sexual violence which has been suggested in several previous analysis. My aim here is to establish how the link operates, and what factors affect it. Using examples from the qualitative and quantitative survey data, I want to explore the relationship between harassment and fear of crime in public places closely.

a) Fear and the evaluation of incidents of harassment

To begin with, it is clear that fear of crime is an important way in which women evaluate incidents of harassment in public space. As Table 5.2 demonstrates, levels of concern about various instances of harassment are high among the women in the survey.

The most worrying incidents of harassment are the most direct or obviously threatening, for example being followed or receiving an obscene phone call. Yet even minor incidents such as unwanted leering and comments provoke quite high levels of anxiety, and in some cases more women worry about harassment than have actually experienced it (compare Table 5.2 with Table 2.2). Thus certain incidents of sexual harassment provoke more anxiety than crimes like burglary or car theft, yet have barely been considered in general discussions about crime and safety. Clearly, too, concern about harassment is enough in itself to lead to behavioural restrictions and act as a spatial deterrent in its own right.

Table 5.2
Concern created by sexual harassment

How worried are you that each experience might happen? % of respondents (n = 365)				
	Very worried	**Fairly worried**	**Not very worried**	**Not at all worried**
Being flashed at	9.8	19.8	50.3	20.1
Being followed	33.0	41.7	20.3	5.0
Being touched up	29.4	26.2	33.9	10.6
Being leered at	12.5	25.2	46.2	16.2
Being whistled at	1.1	7.7	44.8	46.4
Unwanted comments	7.9	20.6	50.5	20.9
Obscene phone call	25.9	28.8	33.3	11.9
Harassment at work	15.6	19.6	37.3	27.5

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 3.3

However, when respondents are asked why harassment frightens them, the unanimous reply is that it creates fearfulness if it seems likely that it might lead to a more serious sexual or physical attack. In interviews, many women demonstrate a taken for granted association between harassment and sexual attack. For example, one of the first topics of discussion was the often sorts of places and situations which provoke feelings of unease. The answers given follow a pattern: one common element to replies is the stereotype of a dark, lonely place such as a park, a housing scheme at night, or an empty street (Chapter 3). Secondly, however, and often in conjunction with this, many women mention some sort of menacing behaviour taking place, such as being followed or approached, as the first sign of danger.

What sort of situation would you feel unsafe in?
Walking alone on my own and it's dark and hearing footsteps behind and er thinking you're being followed.

Vicky, Haymarket

Can you describe a place you'd feel unsafe in?
Somewhere dark, somewhere where perhaps there was a risk of um someone approaching me that I didn't particularly wish to approach me.

Rebecca, Corstorphine

Can you describe a situation where you'd feel unsafe?
Um, if - if anyone approached me when I was on my own, um, and...
What sort of place?
Anywhere I wouldn't see any need for anyone to approach me really, um, to want to speak to me. Somewhere, say if it's dark, er - I would be a bit nervous if I was approached.

Becky, Haymarket

These examples illustrate not only that certain public places are linked with sexual attack, but that instances of harassment are also attached to these places and are also seen as threatening. The key factor in women's evaluation of incidents of harassment in public space is in assessment of the likely consequences. This is where most women draw the line between behaviour which is harassing, and behaviour which is passed off as inconsequential. Most women do not, therefore, have strong feelings about wolf-whistling. Many find it momentarily annoying, but because it is unlikely to be perceived as carrying the threat of attack, it is not perceived as harassing by most respondents and, although irritating, it has a very minor effect on women's personal geographies. Most women 'draw the line' somewhere higher:

I don't think being whistled at is any problem. As long as they don't follow you or anything.

Maureen, Corstorphine

I should be so lucky! I would just ignore them because they're just stupid. If they were to try and get too close and start touching then that would worry me.

Amanda, Pilton

I don't take it as an offence. If they said something to you, or if someone actually approached me I would take that as pure harassment. It would be more threatening, someone coming into your space.

Diana, Corstorphine

In each case, being physically approached or touched - as Diana says, having one's personal space invaded or threatened - is what triggers real concern, meaning that a situation is evaluated as harassing and some action is taken to avoid or negotiate it.

b) <u>The impact of harassment on fear of sexual violence</u>

i) The link between harassment and violence

It is...no exaggeration to assert that sexual harassment is one of the most effective mechanisms of social control in that it perpetually reminds unaccompanied women that they are not welcome, or safe, in public space.

(Painter 1992: 176)

It has been widely suggested in recent years that minor incidents of harassment have a role in explaining women's fear of public places in this way, in acting to remind or forewarn women of more serious sexual attack (Crawford et al 1990; Gardner 1989; Kinsey and Anderson 1992; Stanko 1987b; Valentine 1992a). Indeed, in my research sexual harassment has more influence on women's feelings about public places than any other factor: the relationship is more significant than that between women's fear and childhood warnings or experiences, social factors, economic factors, concern about the built environment or faith in policing and the penal system.

Table 5.3 demonstrates the direct link between incidents of harassment and women's fear of sexual violence. Some forms of harassment are more fear-provoking than others (notably being followed, which was associated with heightened fear of sexual attack for 85.1% of those who had experienced it), but all of these incidents, even apparently minor instances of unwanted comments and leering, can seem to indicate that a more serious attack might be about to happen.

Table 5.3
The link between harassment in public places and fear of sexual attack

Have any of the following ever made you worry about sexual attack?		
Incident	**(a): % of respondents who record this happening at least once**	**(b): % of respondents in (a) who felt fearful in response**
Being flashed at	33.5	49.8
Being followed	49.8	85.1
Being touched up	38.3	42.5
Being leered at	64.8	22.0
Unwanted sexual comments	76.4	20.8
Being whistled at	89.5	3.1
Obscene phone call	55.2	49.6

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992: Questions 3.1 and 4.6

Therefore although sexual violence is more common in private space, the common occurrence of sexual harassment in public space routinely suggests to women that there is danger outside (Painter 1992; Stanko 1987b). This is helpful in explaining women's dislike and avoidance of public places and the association of them with

sexual attack, and provides the missing link for those women who know that their chances of attack are comparatively low yet still feel fearful in public places (Chapter 4). In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that many women are almost continually alert to danger while in public places: because they may be unsure which male activities are precursors to violence, many are wary of all of them (Grahame 1985). Thus sexual harassment, as a common form of intimidation, evokes fear of more severe sexual attack through routinely creating a state of insecurity and unease amongst women, as feminists have suggested (Hall 1985; Wise and Stanley 1987b). It contributes to the avoidance of public places, the restriction of women's activities, and generally encourages certain modes of behaviour while using public space (Gardner 1989).

As Figure 5.4 demonstrates, the effect of harassment in public may be long term as well as short term. In most cases, around half of the women who say an incident of harassment has increased their fear of attack say that they were only frightened at the time, while the other half say that it has frightened them since, or both at the time and since (see also Table 5.4 in Appendix D).

If an incident provokes fear at the time, then the effect on feelings about public space may only be short term. But if, later on, a woman looks back on the incident and imagines what it might have turned into, then fear will be more pervasive and is likely to affect future movements and behaviour. Danielle, for example, was flashed at twice within a week, a few months before the interview, and she has felt less safe since.

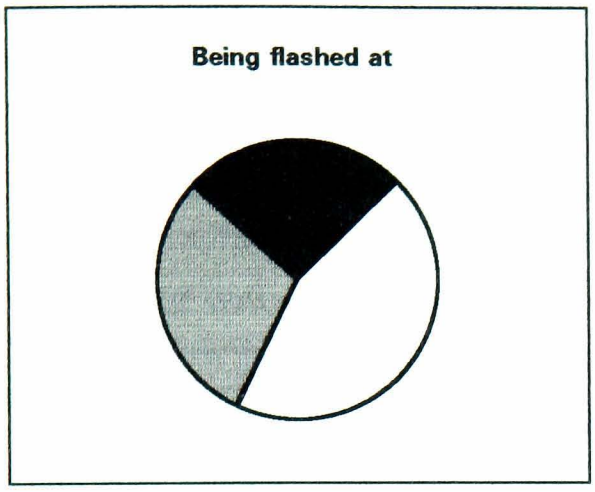
> It didn't affect me very much at the time. I just gave them a look, you know, like "what the hell are you trying to prove?" I mean it just didn't frighten me the fact that this man was standing there with his willy out because I just didn't feel that he would do anything from that. I just walked away. But I have been warier since it happened, you know. You kinda think well what could have happened, and what if he had been a violent type, you know somebody crazy, so - I don't take that shortcut across the park any more, and I'm kind of wary when a man seems to be approaching me, you know, watching him for what he's about to do.
>
> Danielle, Haymarket

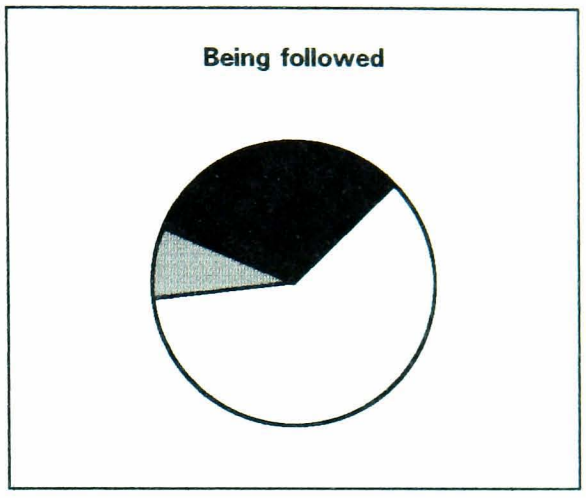
Figure 5.4

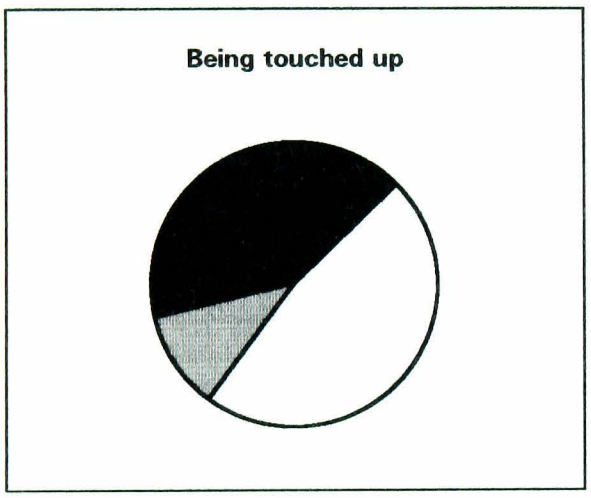
The short term and long term impact of harassment on fear of sexual attack*

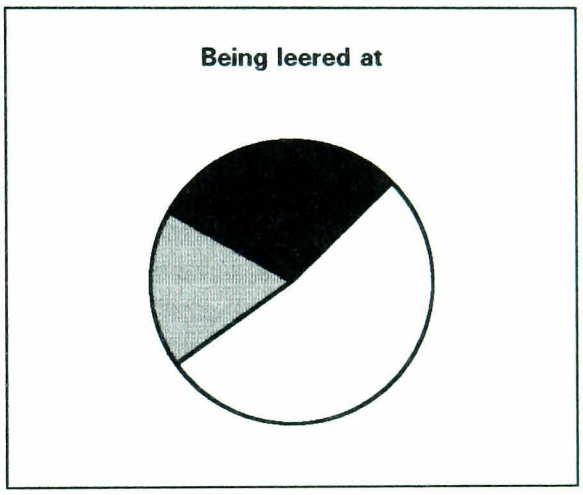
Key

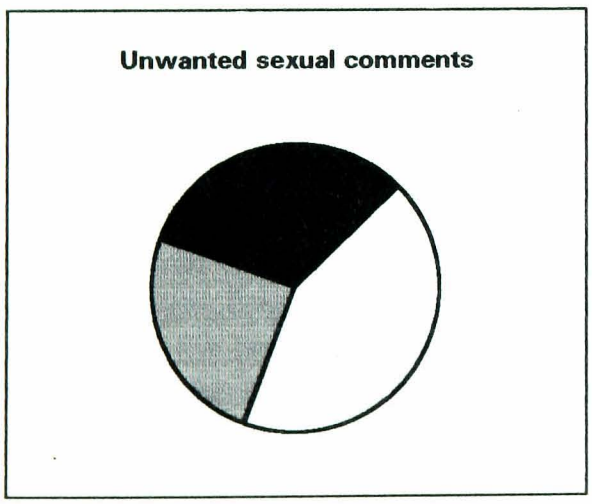
☐ Frightened at the time ▒ Frightened later ■ Frightened at the time and later

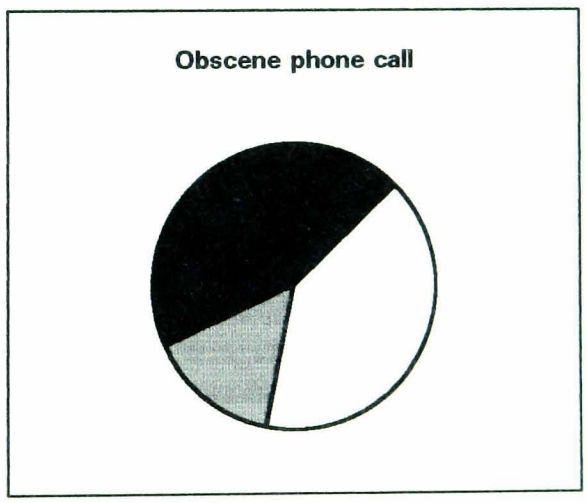












*** A corresponding Table (5.4) can be found in Appendix D.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.7

Of course, the context of incidents has a significant bearing on whether they have a lasting impact or not, and I go on to discuss this shortly. In Section C of this Chapter I point out some of the limitations in examining only the effect of particular incidents on women's fear. For most women, the effect of harassment in shaping feelings about public places does not take place as a one off event, but is a continuous and cumulative process which is reflected only in a simplified way by the statistics I have presented here.

In the remainder of this section I want to outline how the relationship between harassment and fear of attack in public places operates. I want to focus on the evaluation of incidents: are there particular factors which lead women to link an incident of harassment with sexual attack? How do women decide that they can cope with certain behaviour while others are threatening and to be avoided? What makes some incidents more alarming than others? I explore whether there is a well-defined pattern to women's reactions by examining respondents' experiences in more detail. I want to consider three forms of harassment; following, flashing, and 'minor' incidents such as leering and unwanted sexual comments.

ii) Experiences of following in public places

The form of sexual harassment which perhaps best demonstrates how and why it can heighten women's fear of sexual attack is being followed by a stranger through public space. This is one of the most common experiences of harassment in public places; half of the women in the survey report being followed, and more than eight out of ten of these say that it has increased their fear of sexual attack (Table 5.3). Eighteen interviewees relate particular incidents of being followed; none of these escalated into a sexual attack, but all created considerable fear of attack at the time.

> I was followed home the other night. Now I don't know if it was serious, if there would have been an assault or whether it was just a sick way of winding me up. But he kind of quickened his footsteps, you know, and he was so close behind me that I could smell the alcohol on his breath. At first I had thought "don't panic, it's just somebody else walking home", but by this point I had decided to run for it. I thought he may be fooling, but I'm not going to hang around to find out.
>
> Sheila, Haymarket

Maintaining a safe distance from others while in public places is central to women's feelings of security. Hence being followed, which is experienced as an explicit threat of intrusion into personal space, is particularly menacing. When sexual attacks by strangers do occur, they usually begin with a similar incident and

escalate. Therefore the fear created by these minor incidents is justified, and the reaction of most women is to run or to take cover in the nearest busy place. Often the fear created is heightened by the possibility of the man following a woman all the way home, and thus gaining personal 'access information' about her (Gardner 1988). Being followed often has long term consequences: Sheila (above) decided to stop walking home alone after her experience. For others it can mean heightened alertness to men's behaviour while using public space subsequently, or the avoidance of particular places which are now seen to be dangerous (Valentine 1992a).

Nothing happened, just nothing but I was so totally aware and I didn't like it. You become paranoid in yourself, you think "oh I'm walking faster, they're walking faster". And I mean it was brightly lit and nothing happened, but um I always remember that and I mean that's a long time ago.

Kate, Corstorphine

A friend and I used to go together to a club, at that time I stayed near Dalry Road, and we went down what they call Coffin Lane. And a man followed us down there. And we ran. And luckily when we got to the bottom, we got to Dalry Road, and he went away. But um we really got a fright then. We used to go down there every time, you know, and it never bothered you, but once that happened well you didn't because it frightened you.

Maureen, Corstorphine

It is almost always strangers who follow women, and occasionally it can be difficult to tell whether it is intentional behaviour - whether it is actually happening - or not. Together, these two factors mean that many women feel an inability to challenge men who follow them, and this makes it more of a concern when it does happen. Women who think they are being followed may feel foolish going for help, changing their route or facing up to the man. Making the wrong interpretation can be embarrassing.

I must admit, it's happened two or three times, one night I was walking home from work and I was walking along the road and the footsteps at the back, someone running you know, and I must admit I was getting a bit panicky. And I sortae turned around and it was a chap, he says "I'm awfully sorry" he says, "I'm in a hurry hen!" And I laughed, you know, he said "I didnae mean to frighten you" and I felt such a twit!

Moira, Pilton

iii) Flashing

Indecent exposure is one of the few incidents of sexual harassment which are classed as crimes. Flashing is the most common sexual offence recorded by the police, although it is still under-reported. Despite its official status, it is not usually

as frightening an experience as being followed, partly because of certain commonly held beliefs about the men who do it. A third of the women in the survey overall reported having been flashed at, and thirteen of the forty-five interviewees related particular incidents. Seven of these had been flashed at when they were children, and in these cases the effect of flashing in creating fear and upset was strongest.

I remember a particular incident as a child, and I remember I was very upset as a child. I wasn't alone, I was with another girl coming home from school one lunchtime. And I remember being upset and sort of horrified by that.

Rebecca, Corstorphine

I did get flashed at when I was in my last year at school. That was frightening. I'd pushed it into the back of my mind, it was quite a long time ago. But I - actually that was probably the first time I began to feel these things [fear of men].

Paula, Haymarket

As for Paula, early experiences of harassment are often instrumental in being a lesson about dangerous men. Parental warnings may have had little impact, but encounters like this equip girls with clear messages about female vulnerability, as well as adding to general confusion about male sexuality. When adult women are flashed at, fear is sometimes a strong reaction because of an awareness of what might come next. Ann was flashed at while walking down the stairway of a multi-storey carpark a few weeks before I interviewed her. She was frightened at the time, and consequently felt more worried about her safety.

He was a young chap in his twenties I think and I thought he looked as if he was zipping up his Barbour. He was standing at the landing in between the two flights of stairs and I thought we were making room for each other. And as he was coming almost to my level, still below me, he opened his jacket and um his trousers were undone and you could see like everything he had to show basically.

You don't react. I mean I feel quite confident, but I just couldn't do anything. It made me feel completely vulnerable, and paralysed, your reactions just completely slowed down. And it scared me because I thought what if he was going to do worse? I wouldn't have reacted immediately.
Has that made you more nervous since then?
Yeah it has. And it's happened quite recently so I think it'll take a while for it to die down. I thought I would be okay but the other night I had nightmares about it and it hasn't particularly gone away.

Ann, Haymarket

Flashing typically happens in public places such as parks, streets or carparks. Women's reactions, however, depend fairly heavily on two things: the exact

context of the event, and their beliefs about flashers. Flashing may happen in crowded or lonely places; to a group of women or to individuals. Sometimes flashers appear to be flashing 'at' their victim, sometimes they are self-absorbed. They may follow it up with threatening behaviour or violence, or they may run away themselves. These variations on a theme mean that flashing does not create fear of sexual attack for all women, but for about half of those in the survey who had experienced it (Table 5.3). These facets of the situation in which it occurs shape its effect.

If they flashed at me, depending on where I was, I mean - it would depend on who the man was, do you get my drift? If it was a young boy that was flashing at you, you could say "oh put that away, behave yourself". I think when they're over thirty and they're flashing they're dangerous. Because there's a want about them sexually.

Diana, Corstorphine

I think it's surprising. I think you'd get more of a fright than be frightened. I think mind you if maybe it was a darkly lit street or something, I think you would be frightened.

Moira, Pilton

I was flashed at once. I didn't know what it was til I was past it! [laughs] I must have been about, oh sixteen or whatever, and I was walking through a shopping centre in Dublin with my younger brother and I looked at this guy as he went by and afterwards I thought "he was flashing me!" I was past the situation before I'd realised what he'd done so it made no impact.

Olivia, Corstorphine

I think I've only come across two flashers.
Is that something that worries you?
Flashers? No, not really.
Do you think they're harmless?
Yes, aha. Once on the street and once near the Meadows. Actually coming to think of it both these cases were men wanking themselves off rather than standing with the coat flashing, so they weren't interested in anyone else. Or sort of showing off what they were doing, but you know they weren't gonna, you could tell they weren't looking for a woman or that, they were engrossed in what they were doing.

Vicky, Haymarket

Women's experiences of flashers demonstrate, again, that evaluations of harassment are shaped to a large degree by location and space. Ideas about 'safe' and 'dangerous' places and people affect how flashing is experienced. Flashing is open to more interpretation than following, which is a direct threat of personal space. McNeill (1987) lists various reactions amongst women who had been flashed at, ranging from amusement to fear of death. However, I found that fear of sexual attack is a far more common response than fear of murder. The fact that the

men who do it are almost always strangers, along with the fact of exposure, mean that flashing fits in with general notions about what a sexual predator is. These notions are, of course, socially constructed themselves. Experiences of harassment do not affect women separately from previously learnt messages about safety and space which I discussed in Chapter 4. Instead, experiences of sexual harassment fuel these images and they in turn affect how harassment is interpreted.

Place and situation also affect women's perceptions of their ability to challenge flashing, and this perception of control has a great impact on fearfulness. If flashing happens in a situation where women feel confident - either when they are with others or in a relatively busy place - then it often becomes the subject for amusement, both at the time and in later recounting of the incident. Diana, for example, describes being flashed at while out with a group of female friends.

> This guy's standing there, there were six of us right, he's standing on the steps with his raincoat, and I thought "god there's something funny about that guy". And my friend Debra, she says "och don't be ridiculous!" And when we got up the steps the guy just goes like that [mimics opening coat] - "cuckoo!" She goes "ah you behave yourself, is that all you've got? You put that away!" she says. You know, and that became a laugh!
>
> Diana, Corstorphine

Experience and rumour can also affect women's evaluation of how risky a situation is. One common belief is that flashers are sick but basically harmless, which may appear to be borne out either by multiple exposure or separate and more serious experiences. Elaine was flashed at numerous times when she was a child playing in Corstorphine Woods. Although on a separate occasion she witnessed a friend being sexually assaulted, the incidents of flashing never escalated and she ceased to be bothered by them. Others held the same view.

> You learn quickly that the flashers are not a problem. It's the others. I mean flashers, they don't speak, they just stand there, and they flash.
>
> Elaine, Haymarket

> Well I think they just do it. I don't know enough about it dear - but I don't think they're the dangerous ones. They're just unpleasant because candidly one doesn't want to see somebody with their trousers down, you know.
>
> Glenys, Haymarket

> *Would it worry you now do you think?*
> If somebody flashed at me? I'd probably laugh at them! No I don't think it would. I don't think men who flash are really posing any threat.
>
> Karen, Pilton

On the other hand, another popular belief exists that flashers are apprentice rapists who might go on to commit sexual attacks. This contributes to confusion over their motives, an unwillingness to ignore or tackle flashers, and consequently more fear.

The trouble is where do you say they're harmless and where do you say it's not the Yorkshire Ripper in disguise or something.

Amanda, Pilton

In Tricia's case (below) flashing did escalate into an attack. She feels that being flashed at was instrumental in her current state of nervousness about going out. She describes how her fear was shaped first when she was young, and was later backed up by an experience when she was older:

We were coming out of school, and anyway I'm by myself walking up the road, and [mimics opening coat] so I walked on. And that was the first time that happened to me.
How did that make you feel?
I didn't know whether to laugh or cry, because I was on my own. I did get a fright. But anyway I got home and I don't think to this day my mum knows about that. And then I moved to London and that happened to me again. Um now how did that happen? I was on my own again but it was dark. And I was really frightened because he actually physically grabbed me. Cos I was walking back to the flat I was staying in and he flashed at me and then grabbed me and pushed me against the hedge. But I think I was strong enough, and I kicked him in the right place. But I thought "oh no that's twice now" and that did give me a fright because I thought "oh god, what's going to happen now?"

Tricia, Haymarket

McNeill (1987) concluded from her study that most women's lives are restricted by their experience of flashing. I have not found this to be universally true; most of the incidents reported in my study did not have a direct impact on the individual's use of space. Although flashers may be attempting to express power they are often seen as pathetic rather than frightening, and clearly provide a focus for amusement among women. As I have indicated, its effect depends upon the spatial context. Flashing sometimes contributes to a general sense of unease and, especially for girls, may have a role as part of a broader education about dangerous men and dangerous places.

iv) Minor incidents of harassment

I want discuss more minor incidents of harassment in public places in the same light. By minor incidents I mean, for example, unwanted looks, comments and subtle physical contact as opposed to overt instances of flashing or groping. These minor incidents are very common, and although they are not so likely to create

fear of more serious attack as flashing and following, quite a strong association is still present (Table 5.3). Just as importantly, they act as a frequent reminder to many women of a general vulnerability which comes from being female in a male-dominated society; nowhere is this made plainer than by the harassment received in public space.

Unwanted comments and looks, propositioning and unwanted physical contact are closer to the usual and socially acceptable ways in which men make sexual overtures to women than are the more aggressive encounters such as following. As such it might be assumed that they do not present cause for concern, and that women find it easier to challenge or deal with them. Yet when minor incidents are experienced from strangers in public places, this is not the case. As I have already suggested, the context of the behaviour makes women concerned that these unwanted encounters might lead to violence.

I was on the bus the other night and this guy sat down beside me and tried to speak to me. And I said um I didn't want to talk to him and um he got a bit annoyed. He'd been asking me to go to a disco or something, and so I moved seats. And I was thinking I really don't want to get off at the same bus stop as this person because I was on my own. And this guy had been abusive to the driver so you could see he was a bit violent, and since he'd sort of latched on to me I was a bit worried. Oh things like that have happened an awful lot.

Vicky, Haymarket

Well that happens a lot round here actually especially on a Friday and Saturday night! I was standing at the bus stop on Pennywell and this guy was asking me not to go on the bus, to go home wi' him. [laughs] Really embarrassing. So I got on the first bus that came just to get away from this guy. You do get a lot of them here. It's usually because they're out of their brains, you know. Actually I think drunk men pose more of a threat than sober men, aye definitely, because people change when they're drunk and people are more capable of anger.

Karen, Pilton

[On the London Underground] There was a chap came in and sat down beside me in the seat, and I still haven't worked it out, but his hands were down there [in between him and her] and I was very aware of his hands sort of [moves hands] up against me. You know, and I kept looking at him, glaring at him, and it didn't make any difference. There were other people around but then you see they were all strangers to me...Eventually he did get off the train when I did. And that did bother me, he moved at the same time as I did, but fortunately he did go in a different direction. Because I was very aware of that and that bothered me.

Rosalind, Corstorphine

Again, the men concerned present a challenge to these women's personal space, although in the first two cases they are using what they might see as accepted

means of social interaction to achieve this. For women, however, social interaction of this nature from men they don't know in public places is not acceptable: it is a cue of danger.

I suppose sexual comments is a bit threatening because you again think that that's likely to lead to something else maybe, um that would mean that somebody who had said something to you would then follow you, and you're not sure what's going to happen next.

Alex, Haymarket

All you have to do basically is be a lone female walking along the street and you've got a group of males working and they think it's acceptable to either whistle, or look, or to make comments, which again you don't particularly wish them er to make.
Would you call that harassment?
I think it is harassment. You know, it's obviously not as major as perhaps as um other things, but my worry is that you know, if males do that, and they think they have licence to do that, where do you draw the line? What do they then go on to?

Rebecca, Corstorphine

Gardner (1989) suggests that these forced interactions from strangers are one of the ways in which women are socially controlled in public places. She refers especially to street remarks, either made to women or between men within a woman's earshot. Gardner suggests that these remarks carry latent hostility rather than genuine efforts to communicate, noting:

Appearing in public places carries with it the constant possibility of evaluation, compliments that are not really so complimentary after all, and harsh or vulgar insults if the woman is found wanting.

(Gardner, 1989: 49)

In other words, women in public places, particularly if unaccompanied by men, are often seen to be on show. If their version of femininity appeals, men let them know. If it doesn't, men deride them. In Gardner's interviews with men she found that all of them had made street remarks at some time, regardless of their age, class or race - this form of street harassment is simply about the public evaluation of women because men can get away with it. The consequence of such situations is that women can lose control of their own identity when in public places. Street remarks force a particular version of gendered sexuality on women. They are a way in which women are reminded of their subordination, even if they do not experience this in other areas of their lives. It is not surprising, then, that many try to avoid the sort of places where minor incidents happen.

Minor incidents do not happen everywhere or to every woman, but are most common in particular places: streets where groups of men are either working, hanging about or driving, and public transport being two examples. Certain activities which women may take part in, such as jogging and cycling, also appear to particularly attract street remarks. Thus minor incidents are seen to be avoidable, and therefore can affect women's day to day activities; can in effect socially control women's use of space as Gardner suggests. Amanda, for example, describes the effect that kerb-crawling has on women's behaviour in one area of Edinburgh.

Now when we stayed in Leith, right, you would get these stupid men, and you're no aware of it but, and think they're asking for directions to start with, and you go over and you think "you fool!" So I think they should legalise prostitution because then if you were waiting to meet someone on street corners you wouldnae get bothered. Now you've got to say "ok I'll meet you inside a pub or a pizza place" or wherever you're gonna meet.

Amanda, Pilton

How to react to minor incidents of harassment presents a double bind. There are few possibilities for challenging this sort of behaviour effectively, because of the situation of being strangers in a public place. Reacting to a comment is admitting that an encounter is taking place and that social interaction has begun. Some women feel that this might have dangerous consequences. Provoking a reaction may also be seen as acknowledgement that the harasser has achieved something. Instead, most women choose to ignore minor incidents when they happen, or else take steps to avoid the possibility of it happening again (Gardner 1989). Almost all of the women I interviewed have had many experiences of street remarks, and each has a view on the best way to react. The consensus is, however, that ignoring harassment is the best form of protection.

[Leering] You just don't register anything. It's when it's accompanied by remarks - "give us a smile, what's wrong with you, you're frigid" - there's always a temptation to retaliate which isn't really worth it, you end up in a slanging match.

Elaine, Haymarket

I get comments a lot, comments about on my bike when I'm cycling around. And I get annoyed about it and hurl abuse back at them which isn't the right thing to do because it makes the people, it makes the men very angry. Because they just seem to think that they can do what they like to you, and if you give abuse back to them um they don't like it. If I shout anything back at them I've had things thrown at me out of cars.

Paula, Haymarket

v) Summary

The experiences of the women in the survey, some of which I have documented here, strongly suggest that sexual harassment from strangers is instrumental in shaping women's fear of sexual attack in public places. This may operate in two ways: fear may be produced directly by specific incidents (especially in the case of the more serious incidents), or indirectly by giving out messages that women are vulnerable in public. Sexual harassment is associated with sexual violence particularly when it occurs in public places because it is usually experienced in this location as uncontrollable. There are few viable possibilities for challenging even the minor forms of street harassment because the men doing the harassing are usually unknown, and the context seems inappropriate for social interaction. Women's evaluations of incidents of sexual harassment in public places are fluid, but clear patterns can be identified. The evaluation of incidents as dangerous or inconsequential is profoundly affected by location, situation and the presence of other people. It is also affected by personal beliefs about the motivations of men who take part in various forms of harassment.

These common experiences of harassment are crucial in instilling fear of public places, and provide an answer in part to the paradox between fear of violence and the location of violence, but this does not operate separately to what has been learnt from other sources. Instead harassment sustains images of dangerous places, and learnt images affect the evaluation of harassment. It is significant that sexual harassment is associated with particular places, people and activities in public space. These specific features mean that there are opportunities for avoidance and, to a great extent, that many women try to do this. This can have damaging effects on the quality of life, well being and freedom. The evidence provided by this research supports suggestions that sexual harassment in public places is a routine and commonplace expression of power relations and a way in which men demarcate space and women are deterred from using it.

2. Harassment and control in the workplace

As a parallel to experiences in public places, the sexual harassment of women in the workplace has been seen as having a very clear role in helping define male and female space and deterring women from competing with men in the public domain. In feminist analysis it is viewed both as the result of women's second class economic status in the labour market and also as having a role in perpetuating that inferior position; in other words, as another form of social control (Gutek 1985; MacKinnon 1979). Numerous case studies have demonstrated how sexual harassment, introduced by male workers as a condition of work or by controlling women's employment chances, adversely affects equal opportunities for women in the workplace in Britain and the United States. The effects of sexual harassment include upset and frustration in the short-term, a lack of confidence among women in their abilities in the long-term, missing out on promotion or other opportunities (MacKinnon 1979; Russell 1984; Stanko 1985).

My research presented the opportunity to examine women's experiences of harassment in the workplace in Edinburgh in the early 1990s. In the survey and interviews I therefore investigated the extent and effects of harassment in the workplace. What sort of behaviour do women consider to be harassing, and do evaluations of men's behaviour differ here to those in public space? Does it have the same bearing on women's fear of crime? Are some women more likely to be on the receiving end of harassment than others?

a) The incidence of harassment in the workplace

As I noted in Section A, when the women in the survey are asked if they had experienced 'sexual harassment at work' only a quarter say that they have, but when asked if they had experienced any of a range of unpleasant male behaviour at work, 53.0% say that they have experienced at least one (Table 5.5). The label 'sexual harassment' is clearly unpopular, and it seems that this is more so in the workplace than in reference to experiences in public places. While the latter tend to be seen as random behaviour directed at a victim, and if any blame is attributed to her it is only for being in the wrong place at the wrong time, claiming sexual harassment at work has more personal connotations. It is sometimes seen, if not by the sufferer herself then by others, to be more closely tied to the woman's effectiveness in managing professional and/or personal situations. Sometimes her sexuality is also implied. Therefore it may carry more of a stigma. Admitting sexual harassment is admitting a loss of control, and while this is an expected

condition of women's experiences of public places it may be seen by women to reflect badly on them in the workplace (Thomas and Kitzinger 1990). This seems to be particularly true in cases where men outnumber women at work. The outcome is that not only are most cases of sexual harassment not reported to bosses or officials; they may not be labelled by the women experiencing them. Thus, for example, several women began the interview by denying they had ever been sexually harassed at work, but later relayed incidents which suggested that they had been (Section A).

Table 5.5
Harassing behaviour experienced in the workplace

Behaviour	**% of respondents who report experiencing this from men at work (n = 365)***
Leering	20.8
Unwanted touching	16.6
Unwanted sexual comments	27.3
Pestering with unwanted requests	16.1
Standing too close for comfort	30.0
Someone suggested sex in return for a favour	2.4
Forced sex (or attempt)	1.3
One or more of the above	53.0

*** 365 respondents (93.8% of total) say they have worked outside the home at some point**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 3.5

When it came to interview, a higher proportion of women describe experiences such as those in Table 5.5. Thirty seven out of the forty five interviewees relate personal experiences of harassment in the workplace. The remaining six all give reasons as to why they may not have come across harassment, related to the type of work they do or have done in the past.

I never have had that problem fortunately because I work basically wi' women.
Mary, Haymarket

Well we're prominently female so that's got something to do with it. I mean the boss is female. I think if anybody has harassment at work it's more the male nurses.
Moira, Pilton

We've only got a headmaster and one male teacher so we're not really sort of - it's more like he gets harassed by us [laughs].
Marie, Corstorphine

The high level of cases reported in interviews, as opposed to questionnaires, suggests that harassment is within the experience of almost all women who have worked alongside men. There may be a slight bias through interview self-selection, although I believe this problem to be limited (Appendix B).

b) The evaluation of harassment in the workplace

In the workplace, women evaluate and manage incidents of harassment quite differently to those which take place in public space. Few of the women I interviewed say that they have felt fear of sexual attack as a consequence of the harassment they have encountered at work. Work is usually assumed to be a relatively safe place in that respect. However, women's perceptions of the intentions of the men harassing them are still central to their evaluation of situations as harassment (and thus posing a problem) or as something which is acceptable or can at least be laughed off without causing stress. As I have suggested, sexual harassment is often perceived as misdirected attempts at sexual communication - in the media, in academe and, if we were to believe these, in popular belief. Yet most forms of harassment in the workplace are more often seen by women as intentionally malicious behaviour: they have far less to do with sex than with the abuse of power.

Women are more likely to see harassment in the workplace as an attempt at sexual communication than harassment in public places; but those who do are still a minority. Nine interviewees suggest that sexual harassment is merely to do with sexual attention, a natural result of over-exuberant flirting (see Gillian and Maureen below). A few women such as Myra and Olivia also suggest that the blame lies with the women as much as the man.

[Sexual harassment is] Just well say sexual comments towards you, asking you to go out with them and if you refuse they can be really demanding. You know I mean they're only after one thing anyway half o' them.

Gillian, Pilton

[Sexual harassment is] Chatting people up and trying to um you know, sort of the girl doesn't feel anything for a person, they're sort of trying to force you to go out with them and that, you know.

Maureen, Corstorphine

I find it embarrassing. I don't believe it should come into a work situation. It just lets them down, it degrades them. You see this happens with certain people, with consent, okay, it is consent, it gets down to being consent, in front of others and I don't think that's right. If people want to start petting then that should be in private but not in a workplace.

Myra, Corstorphine

I think often it can be a bit more involved. If you believe everything you read in the papers. I think some of the young girls ask for it really and then they turn around and call it harassment. I mean you can't flirt with men and then expect them to take no notice of it can you? I think the whole thing's gone too far.

Olivia, Corstorphine

Considering recent media reports about notorious cases, perhaps it is surprising that the last viewpoint is not more widely held. The majority of interviewees, however, imply that sexual harassment is not simply about sex, more about male dominance. Although few go as far as to suggest that it increases men's power, it is generally felt to be an abuse of that power. In the workplace, many women from all backgrounds link sexual harassment with general discrimination.

It can range from people physically touching you at work or er, um down to, it works to not getting promotion, er just being overlooked, being ignored at work, for promotion and things like that.

Mary, Haymarket

Perhaps if you were at work and being asked questions that you could take one way or another. Vibes. Probably um I would say like the fact that a man gets a better job than a female.

Kate, Corstorphine

I think it's on the increase, since I've been in banking. I think women's position is getting more and more undermined. I think it's being used as away of avoiding equality. I mean it's one thing they realise can make women upset. It's one way of getting ahead.

Elaine, Haymarket

While intentional sexual advances are relatively easy to deal with and are not generally labelled 'harassment', behaviour which seems to be malicious is more upsetting. Several working women talked about receiving jibes about their appearance which they felt they could have ignored in public places. When it is part of ongoing persecution by a man or men at work it is far more likely to provoke upset.

People whistling at you and things like that, I could take in a light-hearted way. But there's a maliciousness involved at work in comments about my appearance and my abilities, a distinct personal maliciousness that is definitely well out of the bounds of anything humorous or whatever.

Alex, Haymarket

Sexual harassment at work is not the simple threat of intrusion into personal space which I described in the last section. It rarely provokes fear of a sexual attack. It is not usually perceived as a sexual threat, nor is it necessarily sexual. Harassment at work is more likely to be interpreted as malicious - an attempt to humiliate or hurt the recipient - than sexually communicative when it takes place at work. Men who sexually harass women at work do not usually appear to be threatening violence, but may have other means of exerting power through their behaviour.

c) The impact of harassment in the workplace

What are the effects of harassment at work? Is it as significant a spatial deterrent as the forms of behaviour I have described occurring in public places? Table 5.6 lists some of the effects of harassment at work. Although two thirds of women list at least one of these effects relatively small numbers feel that it has affected their choice of job or promotion prospects or have given up a job because of harassment, although for these individuals the effect is very serious. However, it is likely that these data underestimate the effects of harassment in the workplace, as they come from responses to the question 'in what ways has the possibility of harassment at work affected you?' Only a quarter of respondents say that they have been 'harassed at work' when that phrasing is used.

Table 5.6
Effects of workplace harassment

Effect	**% of respondents (n = 365)***
Aware of it as a problem I may encounter	44.5
Aware of it as a problem others may encounter	19.1
Affects the way I dress	9.6
Affects the way I behave towards men at work	12.8
Has affected my choice of job	1.6
Has affected my promotion prospects	1.0
Has meant I have given up a job	2.2
Other	1.6
One or more of the above	66.0

*** 365 respondents (93.8% of total) say they have worked outside the home at some point**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 3.5

Interview material provides far more insight into the effect of sexual harassment on women at work. In particular, it reveals subtle instances as well as the more overt. By using this material, I now want to examine how far sexual harassment plays a role in deterring women from the workplace. I will demonstrate that, although it has a parallel effect with harassment in public places, it operates differently. Again, the range of sentiments and responses among women who suffer harassment discussed in feminist literature has not always been representative. I consider the importance of the social and physical context of the workplace, and the meaning of the space it constitutes, on the effect of harassment and women's opportunities to challenge it.

i) Harassment at work from strangers

Harassment at work may be external (from contact with the public during the course of work) or internal (from known workmates). The latter tends to cause the most problems. Sexual harassment from strangers is far more alarming when experienced either outside or as an intrusion into the safety and privacy of the home. When similar incidents occur at work, they can be contextualised; women on the receiving end are less likely to find the behaviour threatening or intrusive because they are in the surrounds of their job, which is symbolically impersonal and protective. Sharon, for example, dealt with a lot of obscene phone calls at work, while Sarah was once the only adult in a children's home which attracted prowlers at night. Both are incidents which can provoke a lot of fear when experienced at home. In the formal context of the workplace, however, they may appear more impersonal and less threatening.

> Well being a telephonist I used to get quite a lot of that. But it never bothered me. You see it would worry me if it was private. If it was your own personal phone then it would make me nervous, you know.
>
> Sharon, Pilton

> Well, when you have a lot of responsibility...I think that makes you braver than you actually are, when you've got responsibility.
>
> Sarah, Corstorphine

At work, women may feel that the official persona their job gives them provides some protection and prevents a threat being taken personally. Danielle, a DSS officer, felt further that she could cope with clients' occasional sexual comments and attempts to grope her far better than she would if they happened outside. In the office, she felt she had some authority over the men who came in. If she felt an

incident might continue after she had left work, then she felt her anonymity outside would leave her far more threatened:

One time I was actually petrified to even leave the office, I thought the person was going to wait outside round the corner. I live quite near the office as well, so I did an evasive tactic and went up to my mum's who stays out in Fairmilehead actually, I didn't go back to the flat, I went out to my mum's in Fairmilehead and came back into town again.

Danielle, Haymarket

It seems that where jobs involve going out into public space, they tend to instil more fearfulness in the women who do them. One woman, a doctor, sometimes has to make night calls to housing schemes. Cat calls from groups of young men make her uneasy, while the fact that she carries drugs with her makes her feel a more vulnerable target. Travelling to and from work across public space, especially at night, is another way in which harassment can make a job threatening.

Coming out of the casino I got followed practically every night. I could never afford a taxi working there and they wouldnae supply transport home and I used to finish at four in the morning. And I had to walk all the way. But it got to the stage where I had to get a taxi because I was so frightened.

Gillian, Pilton

In the end this harassment from strangers, alongside harassment from men working in the casino, meant that Gillian gave this job up.

ii) Harassment at work from known men

However, most of the cases of sexual harassment at work were from workmates. The incidents involved may be similar to harassment in public space, but the fact that they involves people who have an ongoing and professional relationship clearly differentiates it. The same incidents may have more severe effects. Often harassment at work is long-term rather than one-off, so it can be more damaging to well being, the quality of work experiences. On the other hand this closeness to the harasser may present greater opportunities for challenging it.

The most common incidents of harassment by workmates are unwanted sexual comments, leering and unwanted touching or closeness. Repeated pestering with requests for sexual favours, physical assault and blackmail were also reported. Therefore the behaviour involved exists on a continuum, but so far as its effect goes, minor incidents which continue over time can be just as worrying as the more serious ones.

iii) Overt harassment in the workplace

At least seven women in the survey have given up jobs because of sexual harassment, and several more were considering doing so at the time of the research.

I've had hassle from bosses, two in two different jobs. And I've left both jobs in the end.
What, for that reason?
Well the first one was um, I knew his girlfriend as well, and he was always trying it on and like giving me money and stuff. Paid for me to go on sunbeds. And the other one just kept ringing me up at home. And I didn't - I just got fed up, so I left there. There was nothing I could have done because they were the top dogs.

Fiona, Haymarket

Basically there was a huge stationary cupboard and I wouldn't go in it with him [laughs]. He was a total creep, he had a history of pestering his female staff but because of his position nothing was done about it. And he'd make sort of comments and I didn't care for it. Um but I left the job. If it was the same job with a different boss I would have stayed in it.

Vicky, Haymarket

In most of the more serious cases such as these, harassment had the impact it did because the man was senior and the women therefore felt there was nothing they could do. However, contrary to stereotypes, harassment as reported to the survey is just as common from men of similar status or who are junior. One young trainee architect said that she had ended up in hospital with a nervous breakdown, partly because of continual jibes and sexual pressure from a trainee in the year below her. Hence it is male power, rather than power afforded by the advantages of occupational status, which creates the majority of cases of harassment. Many reported cases do not live up to stereotypes about social class either - professional women workers actually report higher levels of harassment than intermediate or low skilled workers, a relationship I discuss further in Section C of this Chapter. Diana, for example, is her own boss, owning and running several businesses, but she feels that this does not affect men's propensity to harass her in a range of situations.

What sort of men harass you?
Business meetings, you know. What could it be? Accountants. Whatever, you know, where you've got to deal in business, you get harassed.

Do they see you as an equal?
They do to a certain extent but they still think they're, you know - how shall I put it? You know then a man's gonna make a pass at you. It's very flattering sometimes if someone makes a pass but then stops it, right? But when it's "oh that's nice" or it's a touch or a brush past or - it infuriates me, I can't stand that.

Diana, Corstorphine

Being sexually harassed is overridingly about being female. Enjoying superior or equal status according to social class or position at work offers no promise of protection. Alex works in the marketing department of a large fresh produce firm, a traditionally male-dominated trade. She feels that the fact that she and another female worker hold both more senior positions and higher qualifications than the men who work in their immediate office makes them hostile. They regularly express this hostility with rude and malicious remarks about the women's appearance, sexuality and ability to work. Alex feels that they are often reluctant to cooperate in many work matters. Meanwhile she and her female colleague are not given the same perks as men working at their level and below it, ranging from freebies to company cars. As a result, her relations with men in the workplace are neither friendly nor professional but constitute something of a permanent power struggle. She feels all this has affected her enjoyment of work, confidence and has spilled over to affect her general quality of life, and at the time of the interview was considering changing career.

I thought that I was strong enough to cope with staying in the industry and that I would be able to personally, you know, make them change things, and I was strong enough to survive, and that whatever anybody else said I would keep going. But it really does get you down after six years of it. And I'm beginning to wonder is it really still worth fighting so hard just for the right to do your job as well as they do?

Alex, marketing executive

Elaine, as one of a small minority of female bank managers, has faced similar hostility, feeling that her ideas and views are sometimes overlooked or trivialised because she is female. She has also had problems with other senior members of staff making sexual overtures towards her and who, once rebuffed, bore a grudge against her making it more difficult for her to do her job. Elaine sees harassment like this as having a very definite role in men's attempt to keep women in their place.

Both of these women enjoy a high degree of control and independence in other areas of their lives. Yet even women of their background and status can be

seriously affected by sexual harassment, which is in this respect a great leveller. The harassment which can be experienced creates a vicious circle of deterrence from male-dominated careers, whether or not this is the conscious intention of the men who do the harassing.

iv) Subtle harassment at work

Most situations of harassment are more subtle. Over-friendly and close behaviour from men, for example, was commonly mentioned as making women feel uncomfortable in the workplace but unable to challenge it. For several women I interviewed, discussions about harassment at work also included things other than actual objectionable behaviour. A range of verbal and visible portrayals of sexist attitudes to women in the workplace are frequently noticed by some female workers, as these examples show.

The managing director said about one of the girls who worked on the admin side when she told him she was pregnant, he turned around to one of the other senior traders and said "there you are, I told you we should never have employed females in the trading office, that's all they ever do is get themselves pregnant or go and decide to leave". And that's how he looks upon his female staff you see. It's rather difficult to work in that sort of environment.

Alex, Haymarket

It's like semi-pornographic calendars on people's walls at work, I take great exception to that. Well I was just so conscious of it, I was having a meeting with one guy in particular and right behind his head was this woman wearing stockings with her bottom presenting, you know [laughs].

Christine, Corstorphine

When I was at a manager's conference last week there were four hundred and sixty five men and eleven women. And they converted all the ladies' loos to gents' loos. And they wouldn't see that as sexual harassment but it certainly was. You do feel very lonely when you're in that sort of minority.

Elaine, Haymarket

Such minor but relatively frequent symbols of inequality, and indeed many incidents of minor harassment, provoke irritation rather than directly affecting women's ability to do their jobs. But they all contribute to the general climate in which many women work: they remind women of their perceived inferior status, just as cat calls and billboard advertisements representing a certain view of female sexuality may remind women in public places of their vulnerability.

d) Opportunities for challenging harassment at work

Much of the literature on sexual harassment makes little of the responses of women, but every interviewee who had experienced harassment had developed some strategy for reacting to it. Some of these are very effective, some less so, depending on both the situation and the individual's personal resources and wider opportunities.

In some cases, the fact that the harasser is someone known with whom a woman has ongoing contact means there is more opportunity to combat it, either by reacting directly to him, or by reporting it to someone else. In particular, most women feel that they can deal with intentional sexual advances and that these may create a little embarrassment but are not a problem; it is when these continue, or when the behaviour is malicious, that concern sets in and an acceptable situation becomes harassment. Another problem is when behaviour perceived to be objectionable is very subtle. For example, jokes about women's appearance and semi-pornographic calendars are acceptable behaviour to many men, and a woman who complains may be ridiculed. For some women, tolerating or taking part in sexual banter which she finds unpleasant is part of the job, bar tending being one example. In other cases, for example in secretarial work, presenting a milder but similarly prescribed version of femininity may again be part of the role expected, and women who do not conform to this may simply be looked on as unsuitable for the work.

The problem which is most well acknowledged is how to deal with overt harassment coming from a senior worker. Today, personnel officers sometimes, although not always, deal with this, but not without repercussions for goodwill in the workplace. Rather than stirring up trouble, many women choose to put up with harassment or try to deal with it themselves without causing hostility. Generally, sexual harassment is something which many women learn to live with; an unwritten condition of work.

In a study of sexual harassment in a coalmine, Yount (1991) summarises the problems of combating harassment by putting women into three categories according to their responses. The first of these, whom she calls "ladies", withdraw socially in the face of harassment, and while this may be effective it inhibits promotion chances. "Flirts", on the other hand, play up to harassment with behaviour they think is appropriate. However, if "flirts" are seen to be using their

sexuality for preferential treatment, the harassment may become more severe. Meanwhile "tomboys" take part in jocular sexual interactions with men rather than challenge them, and teasing becomes mutual and generally friendly as long as the "tomboys" do not get too vulgar. In other words, workplace harassment is often a situation in which women can not win, and most compromise their identity to cope with it. As in public places, male ideas and rules about femininity dominate space.

In my research, the responses women employ to try to combat harassment are diverse. In a minority of cases there was a stark choice between doing nothing or losing the job.

When I first left school I worked for Edinburgh Council er and I was sexually harassed there, and because I slapped a person in the face that had sexually harassed me I was sacked.
What sort of things was he doing?
Nipping my bum and things like that. And because I slapped him in the mouth I was fired.
Karen, Pilton

It's a case of, at work, it's a case of well you can't do anything or you lose your job, so it's a bit of a bummer situation to be in, you know. So I wouldn't turn round and slap them or whatever, but I would definitely turn round and tell them I didn't like what they were doing, you know. But I think some people are scared to.
Jane, Corstorphine

Getting the help and support of other women is often crucial, and in a few cases women in the same situation had ganged up on a particular man with some success.

When I worked in London there was a doctor in the ward who seemed to think that he could come up to me and put his arm round you. However much you said to him that you'd rather he didn't do it he just carried on doing it and that was awful.
Did you feel you could do anything about it?
We were going to report him. There were a few people on the ward who he did it to, and we didn't like it. And we discussed it and were prepared to do something about it. But um around the same time he decided he didn't like any of us [laughs]. And left us on our own.
Paula, Haymarket

In other cases, women who were being harassed had gained the support of family or friends from outside. This was particularly true of working class women, whose workplaces and the men who worked in them were often fairly local.

You see I bar-tend, waitressing, you get it all the time. You know. Being in they kinda jobs you know how to handle it.
Does it ever get to the point where it's worrying you?

No I just hit them. I gie a couple of guys a belt for giving me some harassment. And as I said, having a big family, there's that many of us and I just let it be known about the big family. If things got out of hand I'd just have to speak to them and they'd sort it out for me.

Barbara, Pilton

My sister, she had a lot of - she worked in a tea factory and this laddie had just done nothing but dirty comments, and my sister I would say she could hold her own with the rest but she was really embarrassed, so it must have been some to get her embarrassed. And my mother says "I'll go down and fix it for you". And my mother put him right in his place, and he never done it again to anybody else. Because my mother embarrassed him in front of a whole group of men.

Amanda, Pilton

Similarly, women themselves occasionally turn the tables on the harasser. This takes both a strong personality and the assurance that the man doing the harassing does not have any particular power over the woman's job.

I think sometimes if you turn it back on them, if you make them feel uncomfortable, telling dirty jokes and whatever. The janitors and that, they try and be really smart with you, and if you turn it back on them they get embarrassed. Cos they dinnae ken how to cope with it.

Amanda, Pilton

So what do you do about it?
What do I do if somebody does that to me? I say "what's your game?"
Don't you sometimes find it difficult?
Nah! Nope! I says "What the hell do you think you're doing? I don't like what you've done. You want to be my friend, want to have coffee with me? Fine. Touch - no."
And does that embarrass them?
Oh yeah, it really embarrasses them [laughs].
[laughs] But you don't care.
I don't care, no. I don't care.

Diana, Corstorphine

e) Summary

To conclude, sexual harassment at work is very common. Evidence from interviews suggests that almost every woman who has worked alongside men has experienced some kind of harassment, although many are reluctant to label it as such. The behaviours involved are wide-ranging and may be overt or subtle. Most harassment from work is from known men and continues over a period of time, which makes it more worrying and stressful for those who suffer it. It is more often perceived as malicious than as an attempt at sexual interaction.

It is not possible to generalise about harassment, however: not all experiences have a negative effect, or indeed much effect at all. Some recent studies have concluded

that sexual harassment is not as great a burden as originally thought (eg Padavic and Roskin 1990). I would refine this by saying that this is because sexual harassment often becomes part of life. Many experiences become normalised and women themselves may neutralise them (Section C). Men's motivations in harassing women are not always to exert power, either individually or collectively (Thacker and Ferris 1991). However, it seems that this is frequently the effect: harassment is often harmful to women's experiences of employment. In the most serious cases women lose their jobs. Promotion chances are also sometimes affected. Most of all, harassment at work affects the quality of women's employment experiences, affecting their contentment and confidence in their abilities at work. Harassment at work rarely provokes fear of sexual attack directly, unless it comes from strangers, but it does provide another nagging reminder of female vulnerability, and reinforces women's secondary position in the workplace manifested elsewhere in terms of deskilling and lower pay, for example (Walby 1986).

It is also important to stress that none of the women I interviewed had been passive victims in the face of harassment. All women develop strategies with which to cope, some of which are extremely effective. However, possibilities for countering harassment depend on the individual's resources and also her job. Where co-operating with and communicating with male workers is an integral part of a job, harassment which arises may be more debilitating.

3. Harassment and the policing of private space

a) Sexual harassment in private space

Sexual harassment is usually discussed as though it only occurs between strangers or work acquaintances, rarely people who know each other well. However, only nine out of the forty-five women interviewed specify harassment as a problem largely of the workplace, and the most likely harassers are seen to be men who are known through work or everyday life. Many cases of harassment were reported to the survey which took place in private space; within social and family situations where harassment is internal, or where harassment threatens women in private space from outside. In both cases harassment can have significant effects.

The sexual harassment of girls and women by men they are close to has been held to have a role in socialisation into 'feminine' sexual and social identities (Fox 1977; Holland et al 1992; Lees 1986; Thomson and Scott 1990) which I discussed in Chapter 4 and, ultimately, is means of social control. One aim in interviewing, therefore, was to try to uncover the extent of harassment in private situations to explore whether it has a role in shaping women's sense of security in private space. This proved problematic as women are more likely to minimise, and less likely to label, harassment in private space. Hence it is difficult to identify, indeed it has been suggested that it has very subtle effects of which girls and women are largely unconscious (Fox 1977). It may be that commonly held notions about private space, which most women see as a sexually safe location (Chapter 3), increase the likelihood of neutralising incidents of harassment which occur there. I would not suggest instead that harassment in private space does not occur or is rare, on the strength of the evidence which has emerged from this research.

b) The sexual harassment of girls in private space

The most notable aspect of the reports to the survey of harassment in private space is that many refer to incidents which were experienced when the interviewees were adolescent or younger. Almost two thirds of the respondents report sexual harassment having occurred before they were sixteen (Table 2.3), and half of these women can recall more than one incident having happened. Much had come from men they knew. 20.1% of the women could remember being flashed at as children, in almost all cases by a stranger. But 22.1% had been sexually touched or fondled, of whom almost two thirds had been touched by a man they knew, and one third by a close relative. 17.7% of the women said that they had experienced someone 'sitting or standing too close for comfort' to them as children which, although a far

more subtle form of harassment, is unpleasant enough to be remembered, and also in most cases involved someone known to them.

The extent of harassment which schoolgirls suffer both from boys and from male teachers, and the consequences for their academic achievement and confidence, has been documented (Herbert 1989). The vulnerability of many girls to sexual harassment is a result of various conflicting pressures to conform to stereotypes about sexual roles and relationships (Holland et al 1992). Pressure comes from the media and male and female peers to make girls appear available to the opposite sex yet not be branded a slut, and to appease males without standing up to them (Lees 1986) - hence harassment can have a clear role in enforcing gender stereotypes. It also polices adolescents' sexual identities; boys who are seen as effeminate and girls who are tomboyish often earn derogatory nicknames and are more likely to be subject to harassment and assault (Harry 1992; Lees 1986).

The harassment which girls encounter from people they know is not necessarily linked explicitly with sexual attack, but is part of a learning process about sexual vulnerability (Burt and Estep 1981) which contributes to the association in later life. Just as early experiences of being flashed at suggest to girls that strangers are sexually predatory and dangerous, harassment from boys they know can shape ideas about male sexuality in general, and press home the idea that women need to be alert and take responsibility for their sexual safety.

> When I was a teenager a boy who was a bit older than me got me in a corner and started touching places he shouldn't have been touching. And that again I thought was my fault...I mean it was a church, a youth fellowship sort of thing, you know, I mean you just don't expect things like that to happen there. And I thought, well that must have been my fault for getting into that position.
>
> Valerie, Corstorphine

Few of the women in the survey had been warned about or taught to deal with harassment from people they might know. As Valerie says, 'you just don't expect things like that to happen there'. Many girls are programmed to avoid potential danger from strangers in public places (Chapter 3), but very few of the women in the survey had been warned about this sort of incident in ostensibly 'safe' space, or indeed warn their own children about it today. When physical or verbal harassment occurs, some girls lack the ability to read the associated messages which older women might pick up on, or to react assertively. As Fox (1977) suggests,

correspondent warnings and general comments about behaviour from parents may encourage daughters to be 'nice girls' - not to challenge men's dominant behaviour or the use of force - and therefore act as another form of social control in private space. Of course, not all girls are passive characters, but even for those who are more assertive, harassment from boys or men who are known, particularly if they are figures of authority, is difficult to deal with.

Although my investigation into harassment in private space is limited and may well underestimate its extent due to problems with recall, minimisation and labelling, it seems unlikely that harassment from known men and boys is universally experienced by girls. It seems probable from evidence elsewhere, however, that where harassment is experienced in private space it may contribute to women's sense of sexual vulnerability, and add to the lesson that safety is partially dependent on women's self-protective behaviour. Experiencing harassment in private may mean that feelings of insecurity are not restricted to particular places; it may thus play a part in explaining the fact that a quarter of the adult women in the survey worry about being sexually attacked in private space. As these women are disproportionately in lower social classes (Chapter 3), it may be that girls in middle class homes receive less harassment in private, although there is no evidence for this assertion in my research. It remains likely, from my examination of childhood lessons about danger in Chapter 4, that many women do not label harassment in private because the spaces and people which it involves are socially constructed as safe.

c) Harassment of adult women by known men in the home

As I have suggested, many children are subject to harassment as well as physical abuse from men they know within the home; often parents or their friends, other relatives or figures of authority. One woman described how a similar situation arose as an adult. Similar to children's experiences of harassment and abuse, where the offender is well known and trusted, betrayal and a sense of shock add to the harm caused.

I had a house down in Southampton and I had an uncle staying with me. I grew up with this uncle and he tried it on, tried to come to bed with me [when she was in her thirties]. And it was terrible. I had known Uncle Bernard as being, you know, fantastic, I could trust him and I got the fright of my life. That's when it came home to me, you know, about sex and violence and it's usually people that you know that do it to you.

Diana, Corstorphine

Other women describe sexually harassing behaviour from boyfriends. Few mention sexual harassment in more intimate adult relationships or marriage, however: it is generally felt that people who know each other very well do not do things like that. One role of sexual harassment in marriage, however, is clearly in its relation to sexual violence. In a Dutch study, 9% of women said that they had been sexually harassed by their partners or ex-partners (Junger 1987). The same research found a strong relationship between experiences of sexual harassment within the family and women's fear of sexual violence in the home. Some of my interviewees who had been raped by their partners spoke of the emotional and sexual pressure exerted on them to submit, as well as a range of blackmail measures (Chapter 3). Elsewhere the tactics women may employ to avoid aggressive behaviour from their partners has been documented (Dobash and Dobash 1992; Stanko 1990a).

Aside from this, the effect of sexual harassment between marriage or sexual partners is largely unexplored territory, and one of my original questions in the research - does it contribute to controlling women within marriage in the way that it controls women in the workplace and in public space? - goes unanswered. The fact that little emerged in this survey about sexual harassment in private, despite many volunteered accounts on other taboo subjects such as domestic violence, marital rape and child abuse, suggests that research methods might need adapting. Or simply, perhaps, that harassment between intimates is so normalised that it is not felt to be noteworthy. Becky (below) only recognises harassment from boyfriends in retrospect.

> Well a lot of my early boyfriends, when I was around eighteen perhaps, they behaved in a way which I would now consider harassment because you could never treat a man that way. I mean constant pressure to have sex is one thing and I think a lot of women get that before they learn to stand up for themselves - but also just comments about my appearance, the boyfriend saying you don't match up to my idea of a perfect woman or whatever...Well it, now it sounds a bit stupid but I did, at the time I did take it all in and believe it and try harder to please them.
>
> Becky, Haymarket

Sexual harassment may have a role in restricting some women in private space, just as it restricts many women in public space: it is a way in which femininity is proscribed, a way in which awareness of vulnerability is bred, and a way of encouraging certain roles within relationships. This is clearly not every woman's experience of private space, though, which for the majority continues to be seen as a place of escape from threatening behaviour.

d) Harassment in social situations

Almost half of the interviewees (twenty out of forty-five women) recall incidents where they felt harassed by men they knew while out socially. In a few cases this causes as much anxiety as overtures from strangers in public places.

Certainly I've been out with people I know and you just feel distinctly uncomfortable, just strange behaviour. I remember being out one time with a group of girls and there was one chap in the group and there was just something odd about him. And I just spent my time avoiding this one person. He was just strange.

Yvonne, Haymarket

It's when you suddenly realise that they're very close, and moving closer, that's when it becomes threatening and they're not paying any attention to what you're saying. Being cornered is scary. Even in a social situation it's pretty nasty to find yourself plastered up against a wall.

Jackie, Pilton

Adult women are generally less concerned about these sorts of incidents than when they occur elsewhere, and more likely to be able to recognise and prevent unwanted attention from men in social encounters than when they were adolescent. Accounts of sexual harassment in social situations taking place since the interviewees have been adult are more likely to involve behaviour which is trivial, and less likely to provoke fear than discomfort or annoyance. There is a greater tendency to tolerate harassment which would be frightening in other circumstances: pubs and clubs are seen as a more acceptable context for men to express their sexuality and to make overtures. The same behaviour experienced by women when they are out walking, shopping or at work, for example, would be more shocking. Social situations are where consensual sexual interactions take place. Although most of the interviewees draw a distinction between attention that is wanted and harassment, many accept that unwanted advances are to be to be expected.

A lot of men - I'm not saying all men, but some men - are just a wee bit dense, okay. They can't tell whether you like what they're doing or whether you're thinking "ah hell just go away, how am I going to get out of this one?" So you just learn to deal with it I think. Give them the message back that what they're doing is not on.

Jackie, Pilton

The social context of this sort of harassment can also make it easier to manage than that which comes from strangers during the day, for example. There are more opportunities for directly challenging it, passing it off as a joke, or overlooking it by attributing it to alcohol or to the idea that 'boys will be boys'.

I was up town one day and one guy asked if I had sussies on and put his hand up my skirt to see, and I turned round and slapped his face. I wouldn't just stand back and take it. It does bother me but - I mean obviously if I had been on my own somewhere and I was quiet I'd be seriously freaked out but if you're in a public place I just - I won't stand for that.

Jane, Corstorphine

I think if I was sitting with a mixed group of friends and we were all joking and someone said oh, um, I don't know, someone teased someone for having a big bum or something like that, I think you could put that in context. But I think if you were in a bar and someone came up and pinched your bum and said something in your ear about wanting to touch your bum then I think that that - I would define that as sexual harassment.

Ann, Haymarket

Och I just don't bother about it. Some men are just like that when they've had drink and if you're gonna take it as something serious it'll just make it worse. I just put it down to men being what they are and ignore it. It's different if it's someone you don't know at all and he's touching you or saying things that you don't want to hear.

Deborah, Pilton

Furthermore, most of these women feel that where they know the man involved, they find it easier to deal with.

What can you do about sexual harassment?
I'd probably have a go. Well I'd just - well it depends on if I knew them for a start, if I knew them then it would be, I would say "oh come on then stop messing around". If it was someone I didn't know I would probably like get really annoyed about it. Cos that has happened before and it is annoying.

Fiona, Haymarket

The only time I've really had any trouble was a person who had had a lot to drink, it was an office party and he came up with a comment about my breasts [laughs] you know, but I just sort of smiled at him and said "look, you know, you cut that out, I'm not interested. Don't you think you'd better go and see your wife?"

Danielle, Haymarket

This provides further support for my suggestion that an important aspect of how women monitor and react to harassing situations is where and when they take place, and who is involved. For example, harassment in a crowded bar may not be experienced as very threatening in view of all the other people around, and so is easier to overlook and minimise. In general discussions about harassment, most of the respondents agree that a situation can only be labelled as harassing by the person on the receiving end. As stated similarly in official definitions of racist harassment (eg Commission for Racial Equality 1987a:8), sexual harassment can only be defined through the victims' eyes, not the perpetrator's, nor those of

society at large. Differences between the acceptable and the objectionable may often appear slight, but are clear to the woman involved.

> Well there's some people make remarks and it's funny, and it really doesn't matter, because you know it's just their type of humour. And you can go along with that. There are other people and the same sort of remark from them is really offensive. I don't know why it should be different. Just the intent, I think.
>
> Irene, Corstorphine

Many women read these sorts of situations, and have confidence in their own judgement about men's intentions and whether something is just a bit of fun or poses a threat to their safety (Chapter 3). Hence the process of monitoring people and places which I earlier described in public space may continue to a lesser degree when in private and semi-private space. The outcome is that harassment in social situations may still lead to cumulative adaptations in behaviour. Although most of the women feel that they have become more able to counter this sort of behaviour as they have grown up, this is sometimes at the expense of taking more care with dress and their own behaviour when in the company of male acquaintance. They develop coping strategies to prevent men's attention going too far, some of which I outlined in Chapter 3.

The examples I have given here also demonstrate that notions about safe places and situations also feed into the evaluation process. Generally, harassing behaviour in social situations is seen as less threatening, yet in reality sexual assault and rape by social acquaintances are far more common than rape attacks strangers in public space.

e) Harassment in the home from strangers

For the majority of women in the survey, private space, particularly the home, is experienced as relatively safe from violent and harassing behaviour from strangers in other places. Harassment in public places provokes much concern but is essentially avoidable, however much damage the process of avoidance may cause. However, when harassment from strangers seems to be encroaching on private territory it is particularly intrusive and threatening. Within the home women have a private and individual identity, which usually has some immunity from enforced notions of masculinity and femininity which are attached to public space, and may be enforced by harassment as I have described. (The obvious exception to this is where harassment from a partner controls women's identity and activities).

Where, for example, a woman is followed home by a stranger who then discovers where she lives, she has lost what Gardner (1988) refers to as 'access information' - details about her private identity which most women wish to protect in order to feel secure. There are many common sense reasons for guarding 'access information'. I have described the difficulty of knowing how to react to harassment on the streets: most women choose to ignore it so as not to engage in an interaction which the harasser might then use to his advantage. Where harassment encroaches on private space, there is nowhere to retreat to, and a possibility that it will be ongoing and consequently there may seem to be more chance of it escalating into a violent attack. This makes it particularly frightening.

Obscene phone calls provide a commonplace illustration of this. Over half of the women in the survey report receiving at least one obscene phone call, and over a third have received them on more than one occasion (Table 2.2), making them one of the most common overt instances of sexual harassment. The telephone service watchdog OFTEL have estimated that, in 1990 alone, twenty million obscene phone calls were made to women in Britain, although this number is believed to have dropped since (OFTEL 1991). Obscene phone calls have been described as another way in which men assert power over women by frightening them (Schact 1991; Sheffield 1989; Warner 1988). Over half of all the respondents in my research say that they are 'very or fairly worried' about obscene phone calls (Table 6.2). Over half of those who have received an obscene phone call say that it made them more worried about a sexual attack (Table 6.3). There is evidence elsewhere that obscene phone calls heighten women's fear of crime (Pease 1985) as well as other provoking many other negative reactions such as feelings of humiliation and disgust (Sheffield 1989).

The fear which obscene phone calls provokes relates to the relative lack of control women feel over the harassment situation. While women may walk away from a flasher, obscene callers can not be seen nor located and repetition of the harassment may be hard to avoid, apart from by not answering the phone.

I think obscene phone calls are threatening because you have no control over it and you can't really - if someone shouts something obscene at you, you can contextualise it. Whereas with a phone call, if you're by yourself you feel almost exposed cos it's, cos it's once removed you know, the contact. You can't see where it is, who they are, how they know the number, anything like that.

Ann, Haymarket

The impingement of obscene calls on an individual's sense of her private identity is also clear. The frightening effect is not so much created by the call itself as by the idea of being watched by someone unknown, and the chance that it might eventually lead to a sexual attack.

Well the first time it didn't bother me because I thought it was a practical joke. And then what alarmed me was that they said they could see me. Now I find that alarming because that was - I mean I know now that they absolutely couldn't. But I did find that alarming.

Sheila, Haymarket

At one point when I stayed with my parents, my parents had a shop and there were calls coming into the shop at times when I was there. Obviously I had to leave the shop at some point and somebody obviously knew where I was. Which I was quite frightened about. It wasn't the obscene phone call I found worrying, it was the fact that somebody knew when I was going in the shop.

Deborah, Pilton

You try and be logical and tell yourself it's not someone who knows you personally, but you can't being worried when you go out afterwards.

Jane, Corstorphine

When you get phone calls where there's nobody there and you know there's somebody there that really scares the shit out of you. Really. As they say, silence is violence.
What does it make you worry about?
Are they watching me? Do they know what I'm doing? Where are they? Who are they? What are they capable of? Just that kind of thing.

Diana, Corstorphine

There was another guy recently, when I put the ad in [for a flatmate], twice the ad was in, and he phones up pretending - I had put female only - and he was saying "it's not for me it's for my daughter". But er he's got a young voice. And then he starts going "and she's actually a lesbian, how would you feel about sharing a room with her?

Vicky, Haymarket

On a separate occasion, Vicky (above) had shown two men around her flat and had been sent pornographic photographs from them in the mail a few days later. Several other women describe receiving obscene phone calls after advertising for flatmates in the local press. The advice from the police and British Telecom is to that women should not mention the fact that they are women living alone, either through adverts like these, name plates on doors, or by using christian names in the phone book. Women like Vicky learn from experience to keep this access information to themselves.

Although obscene phone calls provoke fear about being watched, and despite the fact that in many cases callers do seem to have some private information about the woman, many women feel that the men who make obscene phone calls pick their victims at random from the phone book and have no knowledge of the woman they speak to. However, the fact that certain women are more prone to receiving obscene calls suggests otherwise; young and middle aged women, separated and divorced women and women living in inner cities receive proportionately more obscene calls (Pease 1985). In fact, British Telecom estimate that at least three quarters of obscene phone callers are known to their victims (personal communication, British Telecom). Because the common stereotype of an obscene phone caller is similar to that of a flasher, a sick, dirty old man, and because the behaviour is so offensive and underhand, many women do not suspect people they know. Where they do, this realisation makes the experience even more frightening, as maintaining the separation between private and public identity is important in making women feel safe.

Both times my husband was away, and I've had very peculiar phone calls. I found it frightening because they both happened when he was away, he was away for the weekend and these phone calls came on Friday night. So it was almost, well I don't know if the person knew I was on my own. But I suspect it was an acquaintance who knew that he was away...I went round checking all the doors and wondering if I should phone the police.

Irene, Corstorphine

It never worried me until one in particular where it sounded like someone I knew...he sounded slightly drunk and I kept thinking, you know, maybe this is somebody I know, And they obviously knew me, that's when it got scary. Either that or he was just making wild guesses. Elaine, I suppose it's a common enough name. But that, that was very scary.

Elaine, Haymarket

One of the most annoying aspects of this sort of harassment is that there have been few opportunities to challenge it until recently. After years of criticism over the lack of help given to women who suffer obscene calls (previous advice had been to use an answerphone or change the number, both of which involve considerable expense), British Telecom introduced technology in 1992 which can trace callers easily, in the hope that this will deter future abuse of the telephone system. Most women who have received obscene calls have developed their own strategies in the interim. Similarly to verbal harassment in public places, many women feel that any sort of reaction to an obscene call will encourage the caller and gives away private access information, so they hang up immediately. Others tackle the problem by

shouting at the caller, blowing a whistle or letting off a rape alarm down the phone.

Few react as assertively as Jackie (below). The intensity and repetitive nature of the calls she received made her realise that, although her first reaction had to fear a sexual attack, that her caller was unlikely to carry out his threats. Many women would find this approach too risky and ridden with the blame falling on their own shoulders should the caller retaliate.

I had one guy, now he just wouldn't get the message. He phoned every night on the dot, saying "I see you've just got in from your boyfriend's" and asking what my boyfriend was like in bed. And he'd say all these amazing things, in great detail, that he was going to do to me when he came over. Real filth. I mean I don't know how to say this but I think he really was masturbating. Sometimes I'd answer the phone and he'd sort of groan and go "oh thank you".

I'd had one call every night for three weeks and had tried everything, slamming the phone down, telling him to piss off, the lot. One night I just snapped. I said "alright then, if you can do all these amazing things you've been telling me about, why don't' you come round?" I said, "come on, I'm waiting, I've got my black silky negligee on and I'm waiting for you." The line went dead and I never heard from him again.

Jackie, Pilton

f) Summary

In conclusion, private space is clearly no haven from harassing behaviour from men. Many incidents of harassment from social acquaintances or from strangers which encroach on private space were reported to the survey. However, only a small number of instances of harassment in intimate relationships were reported, and hence some of the evidence I have used to construct my arguments here comes from other sources. It may be that women are less likely to report harassment in private space because they are less inclined to label behaviour as harassment when it occurs in social or family situations; spaces which most have been taught is sexually and physically safe. On the other hand, rather than being blind to experiences of harassment in private, or colluding with them, women may have good reasons for minimising or neutralising them, as I suggested in Section A. This is clearly an area which requires more research.

Due to the under reporting of harassment in private space, it is more difficult to evaluate its effects on women. Certainly, instances where women are harassed in or near to their homes by strangers can create great anxiety about become a victim of

more serious crimes, as the example of obscene phone calls illustrates. In this case it is the constructed notion of the home as a safe space which makes threatening behaviour all the more worrying. By the same measure, it would seem reasonable to suggest that harassment from known men in private space is worrying. This is not always the case in social situations as the people and places involved instil some degree of confidence, and as to some extent harassing behaviour is expected and relatively easily dealt with. But harassment from men in the home, although only barely evident in this research, is far harder to deal with, challenge or avoid. There is evidence that it is experienced as a warning to women who suffer violence from partners or relatives of unsafety, and it seems likely that to others it increases feelings of vulnerability. Sexual harassment in childhood from men or boys who are known is reported at high levels to the survey, often after being re-evaluated as such in retrospect. There are suggestions in research elsewhere that these common experiences shape gender identities and roles, and reinforce girls' sense of their sexual vulnerability.

C. THE SPATIAL, TEMPORAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF HARASSMENT

1. Introduction

In this final section I want to draw together the findings from my exploration of sexual harassment. I have shown how pervasive sexual harassment is in many areas of women's lives, and that in many cases it operates as a routine expression of power relations, policing women's identity in different spaces and enforcing certain notions of femininity. The evidence of the survey demonstrates that harassment often underpins the threat of violence and as such effectively polices women's lives as feminists have suggested. The restrictions imposed by various forms of harassment can reinforce those imposed by fear of sexual violence. In public places, harassment restricts some women's movements through appearing to threaten more violent behaviour. In the workplace, it may be used as a way for men to control women's careers. In private space, it has a role in teaching women and girls about their sexual vulnerability. Harassment does not evoke fear as commonly as the threat of sexual violence, but often reminds women of a more general powerlessness.

However, I have shown that harassment is not a uniform phenomenon; it does not always operate in this way. The labelling and interpretation of harassment by women, their experiences of it, possibilities for challenging it, and its effects on women's lives, are profoundly affected by the places, situations and relationships involved. Not every woman experiences harassment in all areas of her life, but all women face it at some point. Harassment is entrenched in everyday life and interactions; so it is often experienced by women as unremarkable, and most have strategies for dealing with it which they commonly put into practice. The effectiveness of these depends on the situation, the individuals involved and the availability of social or institutional backup. In public space, women cope with harassment through strength in numbers or the avoidance of certain places. In the workplace it is more likely to require negotiation and personal skills. In private space there are fewer opportunities to challenge harassment.

In this Section, I want to make a few additional observations about the temporal, spatial and social dimensions of harassment, which support and provide some cohesion for the argument that sexual harassment is an endemic and pervasive way in which women are restricted and controlled. I then go on to draw some

conclusions about the five areas of conflict in the debate about sexual harassment which I identified in Section A.

2. The temporal dimensions of harassment

a) Harassment over a lifetime

I have suggested throughout this Chapter that statistics which show the incidence of harassment, and the relationship between harassment and fear of violence, are limited in one sense. This is that harassment can be so commonplace in people's lives that they may not readily recall it as discreet events. Everyday incidents of offending behaviour may be forgotten and not reported to surveys, or may merge together and be reported as a single incident (Genn 1988). Central in this case is the fact that harassment is often experienced numerous times over a woman's lifetime. Conventional stereotypes may have it that the victims of sexual harassment are young, attractive women, but evidence from this research points to the harassment of girls and older women, further suggesting that being female is the only qualification for being harassed. The older women in my survey were no less likely to report harassment than younger women, and I have described the high incidence of harassment which women experienced before the age of sixteen.

In a separate recent study in Edinburgh, one third of schoolgirls have reported being sexually propositioned by adult men, or being the victim of sexual offences such as flashing, within the past nine months (Anderson et al 1990b). This would suggest that the sexual harassment of children, which has always existed, might be on the increase. A much smaller but still significant proportion of boys of the same age also reported experiencing the same incidents. While the harassment of boys decreases with age, harassment of girls increases with age. One in three boys had also experienced non-sexual harassment, defined as threatening behaviour in public places. While much of this non-sexual harassment was carried out by other children and teenagers, sexual harassment was mainly perpetrated by adult men. As I have described in this Chapter, children are vulnerable to harassment in private space as well as public space, and this vulnerability stems from their powerlessness in relation to adults.

In this research, I have confirmed and elaborated upon the strong link between harassment, vulnerability and fear of crime among women, using various types of evidence. However, this still does not tell the full story of how harassment affects women. Rather than single event affecting long term behaviour, the effect of

harassment is cumulative; most women experience a range of incidents of harassment over time, beginning in childhood. Therefore the impact of harassment is far more pervasive and the way in which it teaches women to fear sexual attack from men is subtle. Gradually, these experiences create a climate of uneasiness, reinforcing public space and strangers as hostile and off-putting and something to be avoided when possible for most women (Painter 1992; Stanko 1987b; Valentine 1992a). For others, however, sexual harassment also shapes their sense of vulnerability in relation to men who are known to them.

b) Implications for the 'normalisation' of harassment

I have also identified throughout this Chapter that there is a tendency for women to neutralise, or minimise, their experiences of harassment. This too is related and inflated by the frequency of many women's experiences over time. The normalisation of sexual harassment contributes to its effect in restricting women and limiting their spatial, social and economic opportunities and hence in compounding their feelings of vulnerability. As a strategy to reduce the impact of harassment, neutralisation means that it goes unchallenged rather than becoming harmless. On the other hand, a high degree of consciousness about harassment and its impact can mean that its emotional effects, commonly feelings of anger, powerlessness and fear, are rather worse.

3. The spatial dimensions of harassment

While some local victimisation surveys have suggested that sexual harassment varies by area of residence (Painter 1992), there is no evidence of an areal or neighbourhood effect in this survey, reflecting the pattern of reports of sexual and physical violence and fear of attack outside the home. It could be that the fact that my survey asks about lifetime experiences masks differences (many respondents have not always lived in one of the study areas). However, in general the evidence strongly suggests that experiences of sexual harassment are so pervasive as to cut across many geographical and social boundaries.

I have amassed evidence in this Chapter that the division between public and private space (Chapter 4) is of more relevance in determining women's perceptions of, reactions to, and the likelihood of labelling harassing behaviour. In particular, space is central in determining women's feelings of control over different situations and interactions, of which harassment is one example. In public space, few women feel powerful in relation to aggressive or intrusive behaviour from men, and this

heightens both concern about harassment and its impact on general feelings of insecurity. In the workplace, the effect of harassment varies according to the position of the woman sufferer in relation to others; whether she feels she can gain support, and what personal and professional resources are open to her. Ongoing harassment in the workplace often takes the form of a power struggle between the harasser and the harassed. In the home, harassment may be particularly worrying as women generally feel that they have some control in private space and trust in the people who share it. On the other hand, when harassment is experienced while in the company of friends a degree of protection is felt and it has less effect.

4. The social dimensions of harassment

a) Harassment, inequality and vulnerability

Various broad social categories affect experiences of harassment profoundly. For example, many people experience harassment because of their age, sexual orientation, race, nationality or ability as well as gender. These forms of harassment relate to negative attitudes about perceived social groups as a whole, and I describe them more fully in Chapter 6. In all of these cases, harassment can be seen to be a manifestation of power relations, as I have supported is the case with the harassment of women in different spaces. It also has a role in perpetuating individuals' subordination by increasing their perceived and actual vulnerability.

To return to the concept of a continuum of sexual violence which I evaluated in Chapter 2, if common, 'normal' behaviour and attitudes are placed at one end of the continuum, violence at the other end, and harassment somewhere in the middle, the continuum is descriptive of many of these experiences of systematic abuse. I suggested in Chapter 1 that much systematic, discriminatory violence is experienced by many people as the sharp end of a general inequality in society. Harassment can be seen as the more routine way in which inequality is policed, minor in terms of single incidents but not in terms of their cumulative effect. Before going on to discuss these issues more fully in Chapter 6, I want to turn to a question which is unresolved in the literature, that of the relationship between sexual harassment and social class.

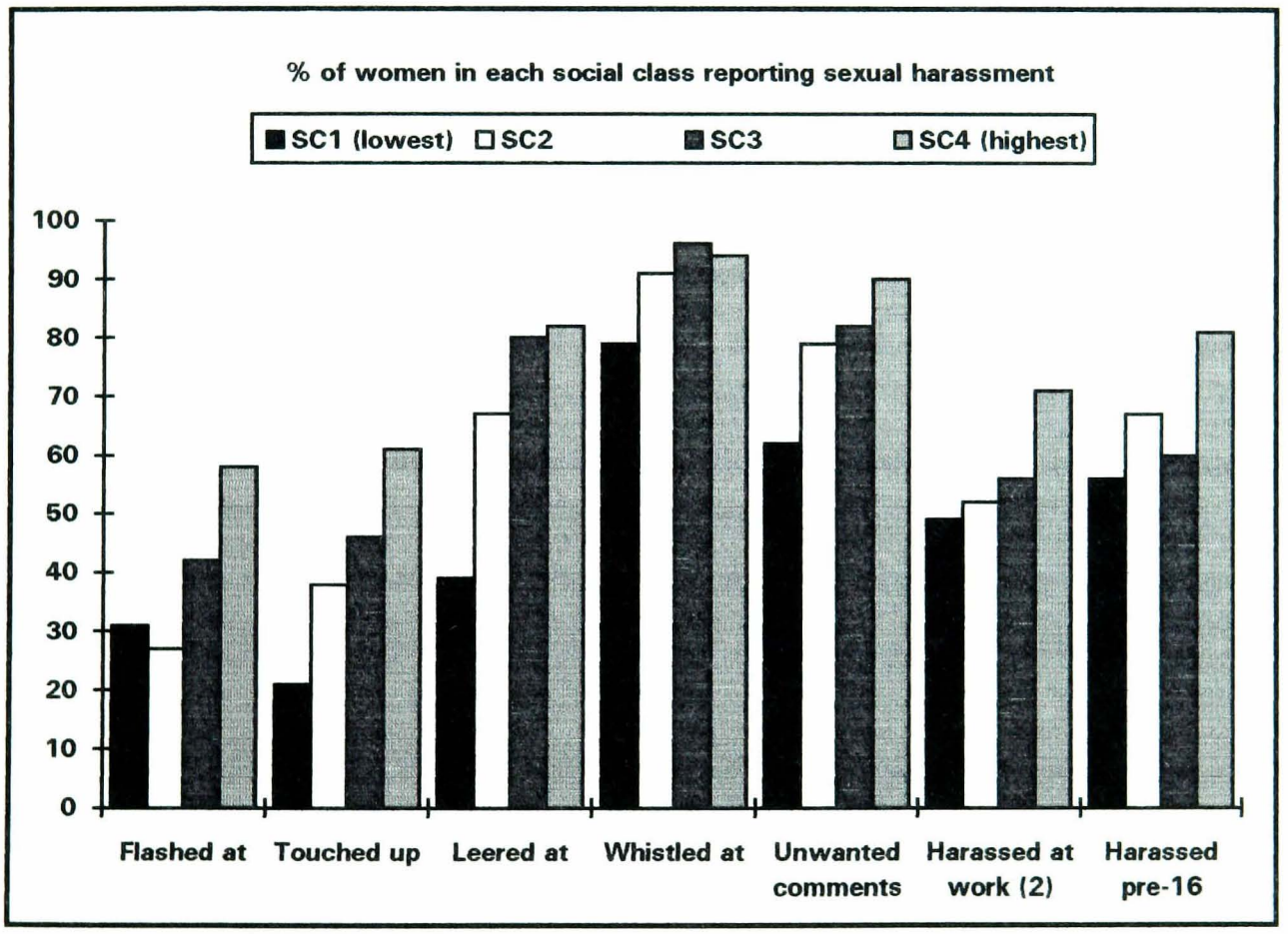
b) Sexual harassment and social class

'Class' has often been considered along with the axes of age, race, and so on in social science research as exacerbating gender inequalities (Chapter 3). However, as I argued in Chapter 3, this does not necessarily follow where women's fear of

sexual violence is concerned. I suggested that social class may distinguish women's experiences of fear but that it does not ultimately affect the impact of crime upon them: gender influences experiences of fear far more than class. I now want to discuss social class in relation to sexual harassment, partly as a further demonstration of the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, and partly to try to resolve the relationship between the two.

In my survey, women in higher social classes are more likely to report all of the experiences of sexual harassment listed than women in lower social classes (Figure 5.7), an ostensible relationship which has been replicated elsewhere (Junger 1990). In five of the ten cases of harassment, the relationship with social class is significant and marked (see also Table 5.7 in Appendix D).

Figure 5.7
Reports of sexual harassment among women in different social classes*



*** A corresponding Table (5.7) can be found in Appendix D.**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992: Questions 3.1, 3.5, 3.7

Why does this strong relationship exist? Higher rates of obscene phone calls to middle class women might be explained by the greater likelihood of their having private phones; and perhaps higher rates of harassment at work are due to a greater

tendency to compete in male-dominated careers. But in contrast, it might be expected that middle class women experience fewer incidents of harassment in public places, such as being followed or flashed at, owing to their ability to limit geographical exposure, for example through car ownership (Painter 1992).

Yet middle class women report more harassment in public space and the workplace. This might partly be due to the fact that they make 'better' respondents in surveys, more used to conceptualising and articulating events; and also they may tend to be less tolerant, more aware of any aggressive behaviour, and thus more likely to label and report it (Hough 1986; Sparks 1981). Therefore middle class women might, for example, be more aware of being followed on the streets when this happens. I found some support for these suggestions during the course of interviewing. The differences in reports of flashing (almost twice as many women in SC4 report it as in SC1) appear confusing at first, as there seems little scope for differences in interpretation of this overt behaviour. However, many women's first experiences of flashing occur when they are children, so the apparent relationship with social class may represent differences in the recall and evaluation of childhood events in retrospect, although there is no evidence to support this.

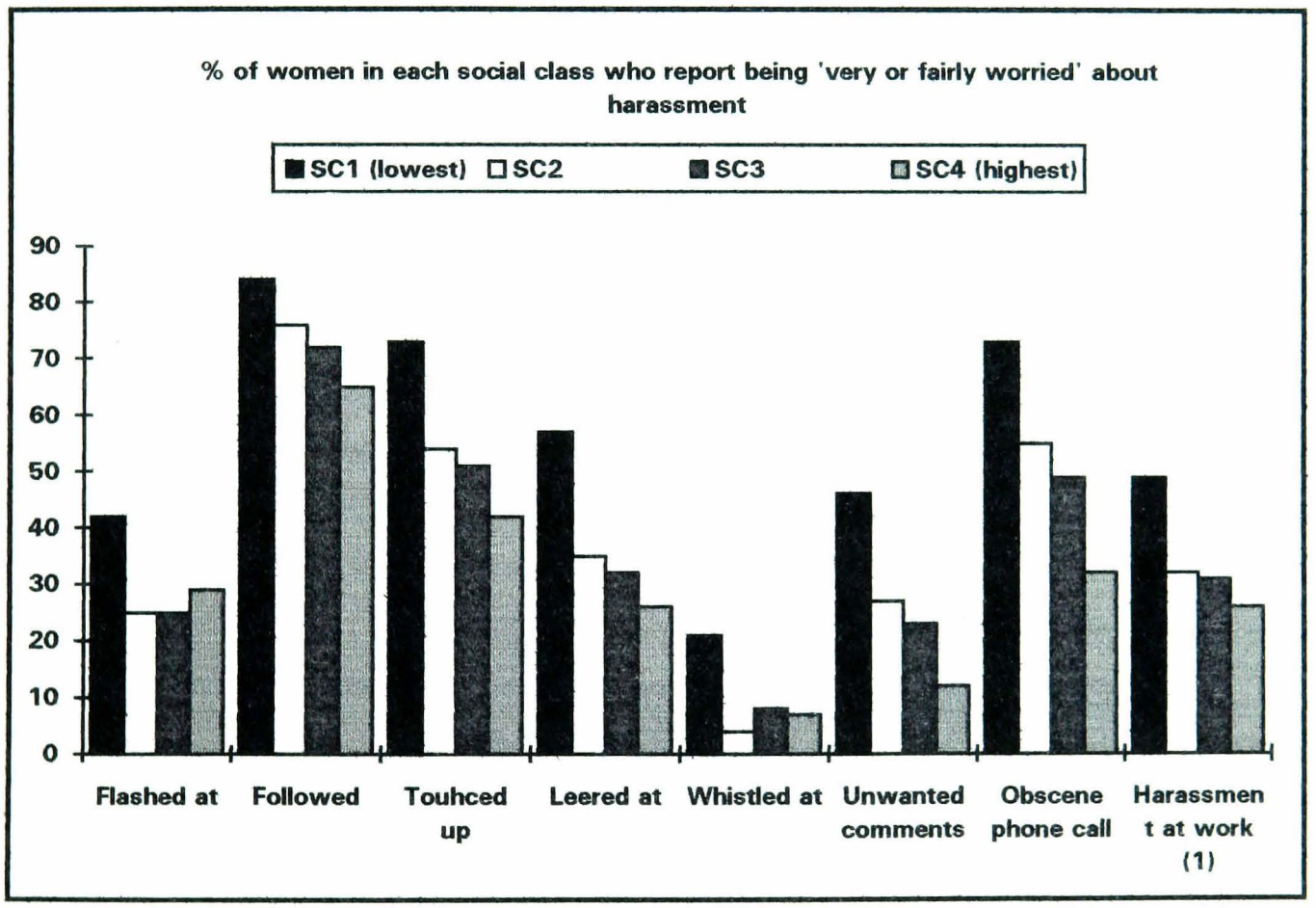
It may also be the case that women in lower social classes experience harassment in a wider range of spaces, as I have already suggested. Women in lower social classes may also have fewer resources for challenging harassment effectively. In either case, the result may be that harassment is more normalised for working class women and hence they are less likely to report it in the form of discreet events. Again, this possibility involves certain assumptions about class which are not backed up by findings in this survey and would require more research to clarify it.

After interviewing women of different backgrounds about harassment, my feeling is that the relationship with social class is less marked than these statistics suggest, if it exists at all. It seems most likely that it is a problem created by differences in how women label incidents, rather than how often they experience them. Middle class women may be more aware of sexual harassment and more likely to interpret their experiences as such (Junger 1990), although interviews suggest that middle class women actually suffer at least as much harassment as working class women, if not more.

However, as Figure 5.8 shows, women in lower social classes are significantly more likely to report concern about harassment. It seems that although middle class women have a greater tendency to label these incidents, at the same time are insulated from the same level of insecurity which they create. They may be more able to cope, just as the threat of burglary does not affect women in higher social classes as much because they feel more secure generally and are more able to bear the financial loss. In the same way, reported concern about harassment may reflect the greater levels of insecurity and perceptions of low status experienced by women in SC1 and SC2 (and especially, perhaps, in relation to men). This seems to be the best fitting interpretation.

Figure 5.8

Reported levels of concern about sexual harassment among women in different social classes*



*** A corresponding Table (5.8) can be found in Appendix D.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992: Question 3.3

The main reason for this discussion of social class is simply to demonstrate further the pervasiveness of sexual harassment. The main implication is that, again, the harassment of women is so widespread that social and economic factors relating women's lifestyles or backgrounds have very little effect. Sexual violence,

harassment and fear represent the sharp end of male domination: few women, whatever advantages they have elsewhere in their lives, seem to be unaffected.

5. Summary

The five areas of disagreement over the nature of sexual harassment which I summarised in Section A can be clarified to some extent by what the women in the survey feel about sexual harassment. First, regarding the forms of behaviour which 'sexual harassment' covers, I pointed out that it would be impractical as well as undesirable for most women to go around labelling all types of male dominant behaviour: limits have to be set, and most women hold criteria by which they draw the line between the acceptable and the unacceptable. Behaviour is held to be harassment if it has unpleasant consequences. Most women include more subtle types of behaviour in their conceptualisations of harassment as well as the more overt.

This leads on to the second point that few women view sexual harassment as genuine sexual communication: this is easier to deal with, much less of a concern and hence not usually considered to be harassment. Instead, most view harassing behaviour as a sexualised or malicious expression of power. Third, how significant is sexual harassment? Following from the second point, it is not viewed as harmless fun by any of the women, but nor is it given any great significance in policing women's lives. Generally it is viewed as unpleasant behaviour which can have detrimental consequences according to the place and situation. As I suggested with regard to fear of sexual attack in Chapter 3, dealing with harassment tends to become integrated into life: minimisation of incidents which occur to oneself, and distancing the self from events which occur to others, is part of coping.

Fourth, where does it take place? The stereotype of the young secretary being harassed at work does not reflect most women's experiences or views. Most feel that harassment can happen anywhere and to anyone, and many of the experiences related to the research testify to this. Nonetheless, the exact context can have a significant bearing on how the behaviour is interpreted, as I have discussed. Fifthly and finally, there is general consensus among the women interviewed that a situation can only be determined as harassing by the person at the receiving end.

In conclusion, definitions and considerations of harassment should take the sufferer's experience and evaluation into account, as well as the fact that

women tend to minimise or under-report harassing behaviour rather than to blow up innocent situations out of proportion. Although some women (about half of those I interviewed) show some reluctance in identifying experiences as sexual harassing, they were no less likely to have suffered experiences which they saw as unpleasant and unacceptable. For definitions to be useful, a line needs to be drawn between acceptable behaviour and what is harassment, although this presents some methodological and intellectual problems which need to be surmounted. While this research finds support for feminist conceptualisations of sexual harassment, I would argue that some analyses have been too broad to be useful, making the interpretation of harassment as an abuse of power too easy to challenge and diminish. On the other hand some alternative views have rarely been based on any serious consideration of women's experiences. It is hoped that the findings of this research present a solid contribution to the debate.

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter I have presented strong support for the assertion that the extent of harassment which women experience in their everyday lives contributes to their fear of crime. I have detailed how this occurs, both directly in being associated with sexual and physical attack, and indirectly in heightening women's sense of their structural vulnerability or unequal status in society (Junger 1987; Painter 1992; Stanko 1987b, 1988b). These findings answer some of the remaining questions raised by my analysis in Chapter 4 of how far learning about danger can explain the spatial paradox between the location of danger and the location of fear: in this research, day to day social experiences of different spaces are more instrumental in raising concern about violence than the physical or social construction of space. Subtle as well as overt instances of harassment may have this effect, and both may affect women's behaviour, appearance and sense of identity in different spaces, and limit opportunities for equal participation in the public and private spheres and the workplace.

Harassment reinforces the distinction between private and public space as safe and unsafe which many women perceive (Chapter 4). While most women recognise harassment in public places, most also fear violence in public places. The home and intimate relationships, however, are seen by the majority as refuges from violent and harassing behaviour and therefore, for most of the time, from fear. However, as for the minority of women who worry about being attacked in private space, the effects of experiencing harassment in private space may have a more

severe effect on some women's opportunities and feelings of security. Likewise, harassment reinforces the socially constructed notions of femininity which may characterise early socialisation (Chapter 4), both in childhood and in policing the sexual and social identities women adopt in later life. At the same time, learnt messages about public and private space can have a bearing on how harassment is interpreted.

I have also proposed how women define and evaluate individual incidents of harassment. Far from there being very fluid boundaries between the unwanted and the acceptable, women continually evaluate situations and interactions with men, and define them fairly distinctly. This monitoring process has the functions of risk evaluation and risk control: as it would not be practical to worry about all forms of male dominant behaviour, most women hold criteria by which they 'draw the line'. Rather than each individual having different limits at which behaviour is felt to become unacceptable, evaluation depends upon several common criteria including perceptions about the consequences of a harassing event, the motivation behind the event, and the opportunities available for challenging or dealing with the event. These criteria are affected to a large degree by place, space and situation.

Harassment does not always carry meanings about danger and vulnerability, nor is it always equated with sexual violence. Women's experiences of harassment involve more complex issues than some feminist theories (or, indeed, the competing theories I mentioned in Section A) have made room for. Although it has not previously been the subject of geographical analysis, I have shown that there is a distinct geography of sexual harassment. Place, space, time, situation and the perspectives and relationships of the individuals involved influence the meaning and effect of harassment, the likelihood of labelling it, and opportunities for challenging it. This in itself has implications for women's fear of crime and for policies aiming to reduce it (Chapter 7).

Hence the question of defining harassment, which I discussed in Section A, is critical. I have argued that definitions of harassment need to be victim-centred because, contrary to some viewpoints that feminists and women generally exaggerate harassment (eg Paul 1991), it is actually under-reported, under stressed, and under emphasised. The differences as well as similarities in experience need to be acknowledged if theory is to be of value. While some women view it as debilitating, others view it as harmless, and some are more affected by it than

others; often relating to the place and situation in which it occurs. The experience of harassment is clearly not just a blanket use of power. Many of the incidents related to the survey were experienced as fearful and disempowering; others caused amusement, some were easily rebuffed, and in some cases women were able to turn the tables. It is important to highlight the range of reaction to harassment in order to challenge stereotypes about helpless victims. It also raises the issue of the importance of individual experience, or human agency, alongside the general tendency for harassment to operate as an abuse of men's power. There is a need for explicit consideration of the importance of individuals alongside broader patriarchal structure in feminist theory (Weedon 1987), and indeed alongside consideration of spatial structure. This is an issue to which I return in the next Chapter.

Chapter 6
EXTENDING THEORIES OF CRIME AS A SOCIAL CONTROL

INTRODUCTION

In this Chapter, I want to address the theoretical issues which have been raised in my analysis of women's fear of violence so far. I aim to further the existing analyses of power and fear of crime in geography, criminology and feminist theory by looking at different sorts of violence and their effects on vulnerable individuals. Most research attention has been devoted to investigating women's socially constructed vulnerability, and I want to point out parallels with other social groups. In particular, I argue that the groups most affected by crime are those who feel at risk from various other forms of discriminatory, systematic violence. This is consequential both for the development of the theories which I have discussed so far and for practical and policy responses to fear of crime which, as I go on to argue in Chapter 7, neither address the key risks of violent crime nor the most severe effects.

Section A takes the form of a review of the impact of systematic violence on different groups, to which I contribute new empirical evidence. I aim to highlight the links and intersections between inequality and systematic violence and its effects, examining how the effect of crime on spatial experiences both reflects and reproduces existing patterns of dominance. I also want to examine, following my discussion of the spatial patterns of violence against women and women's fear, the significance of the impact of crime in private space. The whole discussion entails challenging the focus of much previous research on fear of crime. Evidence from my survey, for example, calls into question existing perspectives on ageing in human geography and criminology. I go on to examine whether violent crime is implicated in the social control of children, and I extend this analysis to people with disabilities, people of colour and gay men and lesbians. I also want to consider the impact of systematic harassment - might the same conclusions be drawn as those in Chapter 5 with regard to women's fear of crime?

I then go on in Section B to explore the more complex issues for theory which the arise from this discussion.

A. THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON VULNERABLE GROUPS

1. Introduction

In Chapter 3 I described the constraints imposed on women in general by their fear of violence, and mentioned that factors such as class and age can mediate the effects of crime. In order to extend this analysis, in this Section I want to highlight the differential impact which fear of violent crime has on older people, on children, on people with disabilities, on people of colour and on gay men and lesbians. I have chosen these social groups as examples, but do not intend to suggest that experiences within each 'group' may not be diverse, nor that fear of violent crime does not affect people who do not fit into these categories. Rather, my intention here is to draw out broad parallels in experiences of fear of violent crime, in order to further my thesis that systematic violence can impose spatial and social controls on certain vulnerable people.

In my discussion of how crime might affect older people, children and people with disabilities, I present original empirical evidence from my research. In extending the discussion to people of colour and gay men and lesbians, however, I was unable to collect new data due to reasons outlined in Chapter 1, but contribute to theory by drawing together literature from different disciplines, making consequent suggestions about the nature and impact of fear, and pointing out where analysis might go next.

2. Age

First, I want to underline the importance of age in determining fear of violent crime and its impact. Some of my findings about older women counter previous criminological research, and I argue that this is because of the pervasiveness of stereotypical ideas about ageing. Children, on the other hand, have scarcely been considered as indirect victims of crime, yet fear has a considerable effect in shaping their social and spatial lives. I contend that age crystallises women's experiences of violence and fear, and that the threat of violence acts as a social control of these marginalised groups in reinforcing existing ideologies and attitudes around ageing, childhood and the role of the family.

a) Old age and the impact of crime

i) Old age and vulnerability in the literature

The problems of older people, and especially those specific to older women, have largely been discluded from feminist and geographical discussions. A particular relationship between older people and social structures has been assumed in social science generally: they are often referred to only in terms of problems with special needs in relation to social policy (Peace 1986; Fennell et al 1988). While there is a sizeable literature on older people within the criminological literature, most of it portrays them as victims, reinforcing negative images about old age (Midwinter 1990).

Research has shown crime to pose especially serious problems for older people: both fear and the impact of crime have appeared to be greater among older people than any other group (e.g. Clarke and Lewis 1982; Hough and Mayhew 1983; Warr 1984). Within this group, older women have been found to be considerably more frightened than older men (Clarke and Lewis 1982), and older women more fearful than younger women (Gordon et al 1980). The consequences of fear of crime for older people have been described as restricted mobility, curtailed social activity, isolation and a poor quality of life (Feinburg 1981; Riger and Gordon 1981; Yin 1980). These effects can be seen to be heightened in certain neighbourhoods: in the Edinburgh Crime Survey, for example, 56% of the older people interviewed living in the city centre said that they never went out after dark because of fear of crime (Anderson et al 1990a).

Many explanations have been offered: some have argued that older people's knowledge and experience of victimisation are important factors in their fear of crime (Clarke and Lewis 1982) while others have suggested that this has little direct impact (Miethe and Lee 1984). Balkin (1979) suggested that the effects of fear are to circumvent risk, and this is why crime against older people seems to be so low. Conclusions about the effect of housing type, and particularly of 'age-homogenous' or sheltered housing, have also conflicted in various studies (Yin 1980). There is general agreement that the disproportionate representation of crime against the older in the media increases fears (Rucker 1990); and it has been suggested that, because of greater social isolation, older people may be more dependent on these unrepresentative sources of information (Yin 1980).

Why are so many different conclusions to be found in the literature? It seems that there is a desire to generalise about the relationship of older people to crime which is not always sustainable. In Chapter 1, I outlined some of the hasty conclusions which have been drawn about the causes of women's fear of sexual violence from correlations in survey results, but which have since been discredited by more in depth analysis. In a similar vein, Mawby (1988) discredits the common conclusions drawn in relation to older people. He suggests that:

> Crime is perceived to be an age war, with young offenders preying on innocent older victims...politicians have quickly, and quite unjustifiably, identified the older as particularly vulnerable to crime.
>
> (Mawby 1988:101)

He then goes on to present evidence which suggests that older people are not necessarily more vulnerable to crime or its effects. Elsewhere, the image of older people as prisoners of fear has also been challenged. Some findings suggest that in fact older people are no more afraid of crime than younger people (LaGrange and Ferraro 1987; Rucker 1990). British Crime Survey data has shown that older people are more likely to feel unsafe on the streets after dark (Hough and Mayhew 1983), but closer examination of the data shows that they are no more worried about burglary or assault than younger people. In fact the only concern they express more often is of 'being bothered by a stranger'. It is a fear of mugging amongst older people which explains their greater tendency to feel unsafe outside at night (Midwinter 1990). In other words, the fear of crime among older people is not necessarily greater overall; as with 'women's fear', it is crucial to examine exactly what constitutes it. Another methodological failing of some studies has been the assumption that just because older people perceive crime as a more serious problem than younger people, they feel personally at risk. This is not necessarily the case (Midwinter 1990).

ii) Old age and vulnerability in my research

In my research, the older women appear considerably less concerned about crime than the younger women. Of course, the survey and interviews concentrated on sexual violence rather than the crimes which tend to worry older people the most, and not surprisingly the younger women in the survey were the most fearful of rape. 83.2% of those aged 18-30 said that they were very or fairly worried about being raped outside by a stranger, compared to 39.2% of those in the over 60 age group (Figure 6.1). (The differences in fear of assault by a known aggressor are

much less: I go on to discuss private violence later). Older women are also less likely to be constrained by fear of sexual violence: women aged 18-30 are over a third more likely to avoid going out alone because of fear of sexual attack than women over 60, and significantly more likely to feel unsafe with strangers.

Hence, even if older women were more afraid of becoming victims of other crimes, younger women's greater fear of sexual violence would go some way towards cancelling out this difference. However, the younger women in the survey are also significantly more worried about being beaten up outside than the older women (see Figure 6.1). Moreover, although the data from my research suggest that older women worry about burglary more than other crimes, this does not mean that they are more afraid of it than younger women are: but simply that younger women's fear of sexual violence is greater than their fear of other crimes. Interview material supports the questionnaire results: the older women I have spoken to are less worried about victimisation from a range of crimes. In some instances this appears to be because the women spend far less time than younger women in public places, but in others it is because of their higher levels of confidence and/or resistance to the effects of crime.

I argued in Chapter 3 that the common tendency for criminologists to divide the behavioural consequences of crime into 'protective' and 'avoidance' behaviour is simplistic and often unrepresentative of women's coping strategies. This distinction has been applied to describe the difference between younger and older women's responses to crime (Riger and Gordon 1981), but there is no evidence of this from my survey. The older women in the survey are less likely to curtail their day to day activities and mobility in response to the threat of sexual violence although, as above, this is because they are less afraid of this particular crime. However, among those older women who are concerned about being attacked or robbed outside, there exists a higher degree of resistance towards giving into fear and making changes to their lifestyles. This sample of older women, at least, are more indignant in the face of fear and as likely to employ protective strategies as their younger counterparts.

That's part of the reason why my handbag is so heavy. A clonk from that would knock him out for - you know. [laughs] I always put an umbrella in the bottom of ma bag to make it extra heavy. Just in case I need it.

Sharon, Pilton

I think if I had to stay in because of something like that [fear of attack] I'd be more determined to go out, you know. I can appreciate it with people if they're feart, but I think it makes me more determined to go.

Moira, Pilton

Resistance to the effects of sexual violence amongst older women might perhaps be explained on the basis of their accounts that Edinburgh was safer when they were young. It is often assumed that older people have a rose-tinted view of the past, but there is enough consensus on women's safety in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s and 1950s among the women I spoke to to suggest that it was safer. Older women living in the outlying areas of Pilton and Corstorphine recall walking home alone from the city centre in the early hours of the morning after a night out, commonplace behaviour which is unthinkable to most young women today. Having seen the city become a more dangerous place relatively quickly, the sense of indignance amongst older women is greater. Young women who have grown up under a curfew on using public space may question it less.

Crime is certainly of great concern to the older women surveyed, but often their main fear is for the safety of their daughters, sons or grandchildren rather than for themselves. Similarly, in a study of older people and crime in Sheffield, the respondents were more likely to see crime as a general problem, but less likely to see it as a problem in relation to themselves (Mawby 1983).

It should be noted that the most disadvantaged older people, and those, perhaps, who are most likely to be affected by crime - the poorer or less able, for example - are less likely to be included in surveys of the general population than the more affluent and able. There were clearly reasons operating in my research which mean that older women were less likely to volunteer for interview. Additionally, the category 'over sixty' is not sub-divided: there is no way of knowing how old many of the 'older' women in the survey are. There can be significant differences between women of sixty and eighty in terms of their physical, psychological and structural vulnerability.

Clearly, despite being lumped together in the results of crime surveys, older people have very different backgrounds and experiences; as far as the impact of crime is concerned, older people simply have a greater chance of being prone to other factors which can exacerbate feelings of insecurity than younger or middle aged people. Fear of crime is compounded by a general sense of unease and

powerlessness (Smith 1986; see Chapter 1), and this is certainly how many older people feel they are perceived and treated by society (Fennell et al 1988). Negative views abut old age can affect the interpretation of research, in the same way that sexist notions about women have influenced 'findings' about women's fear. Thus it has been said that some researchers exaggerate the fears of older people, and this along with media publicity feeds into public opinion, giving older people the impression that crime is a particular problem for them.

> It is suggested that people at large have decided that crime is a very serious problem for elderly people; they have wished the issue on to elderly people, and substantial empirical findings, some of which have been subjected to methodological criticism, have sought to elide with the emergence of that popular view.
>
> (Midwinter 1990:38)

Factors such as gender, household type and neighbourhood usually prove to be more predictive of fear of crime than age, as revealed in an analysis of the 1984 British Crime Survey data (Smith 1989), yet much of the fear of crime literature gives the impression that old age provides an explanation in itself. In particular it is important to remember that 'the world of the very old is a woman's world': women outnumber men in the over sixty age group by two to one (Peace 1986:61). There is no doubt, therefore, that gender has a considerable influence on older people's feelings of vulnerability. By the time they have become 'elderly', women have suffered second class status for sixty years, and are less likely to have enjoyed any form of equality than their daughters or granddaughters. As I go on to demonstrate in Chapter 5, childhood socialisation has a bearing on adults' fear of crime. The historical tendency for gender roles and constraints to be more exclusive may have a role in explaining older people's fear (Sacco 1990). Cohort effects on fear are also discussed by Cutler (1980). If older women feel less secure and more vulnerable than younger women, this may well provide part of the explanation. Most, of course, will have experienced direct intimidation in the form of sexual harassment or violence too.

In short, there seems on the surface to be no reason why older people as a group should be singled out as 'special' in fear of crime discussions. Their existing prominence in the topic feeds into and reinforces negative images of old age which are challenged by, amongst other sources, my research. Indeed, it has been suggested that 'old age' should be abandoned altogether as a frame of reference (Midwinter 1990). I disagree with this for reasons which I now go on to discuss.

Instead, I would contend that a radical change is needed in the focus of attention of criminological inquiry to private space. Older people may not merit high visibility in discussions about crime in public space, but there exists a large and mainly hidden problem of domestic abuse which is a product of ageism, sexism and the low worth which individuals and society attribute to older people.

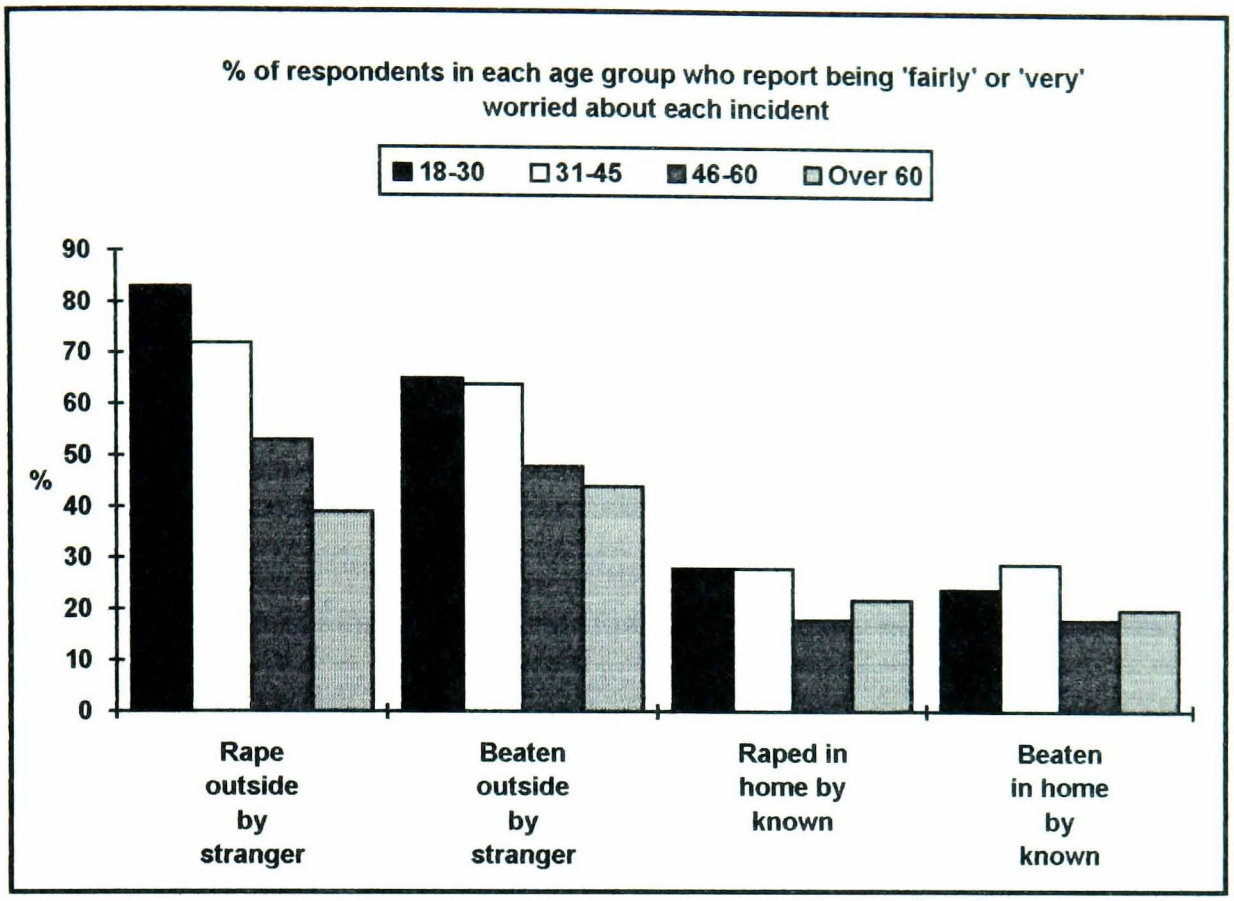
iii) Older women and private violence: the hidden dimension of risk

In common with discussions of women's fear of violence until the mid eighties, the criminological literature belies the fact that the main location of danger for older people is private space. What constitutes this danger? First, there is no reason to assume that domestic violence, commonly experienced by at least one in seven wives (Chapter 2), stops just because people get older. Retirement may mean that exposure to risk is greater as couples spend more time together alone in the home. My research has found that although older women are significantly less likely to fear attack outside ($p<0.01$), they are about as likely to say that they fear domestic sexual or physical assault from someone they know as younger women are ($p<0.3$) (Figure 6.1; see also Table 6.1 in Appendix D). Frequently these concerns about private space and men who are known are shaped by past experiences (Chapter 3).

Secondly, there is mounting evidence of a related form of systematic violence which is specific to older people and largely a hidden problem. 'Elder abuse' by informal carers (often relatives) within the home, has been identified as a widespread problem in the UK (Cloke 1983; Eastman 1984; McCreadie 1991). Research is currently limited, however, partly because this form of abuse is very hard to identify. Older people, especially those in need of care, are particularly isolated and often dependence on the abuser is a deterrent to reporting abuse (Penhale 1993). However, in a recent national survey of the general population by OPCS for the television programme Dispatches, 5% of the older people interviewed reported being abused by relatives. The definition of elder abuse is currently very wide; 5% of the older people said they had been frightened by verbal abuse from members of their family, 2% had been victims of fraud, extortion or theft by a relative, and 2% had been physically assaulted by relative. Sexual abuse is also thought to be a considerable problem. These figures are believed to represent conservative estimates because most older people would not report abuse. They also exclude the most vulnerable, the mentally impaired, who could not be interviewed (Dispatches, 19.5.93, Channel 4).

Figure 6.1

Concern about sexual and physical violence among women in different age groups*



*** A corresponding Table (6.1) can be found in Appendix D**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey, Questions 4.1 and 6.6

Society has been reluctant to admit that elder abuse exists: while there is a social precedent dictating that parents should be responsible for the care of children there is none concerning the care of older people in western societies (Penhale 1993). Like the abuse of children and women, however, elder abuse is an expression of power relations within the family unit, in this case between the old and dependent and the young. Again, elder abuse relates to the low esteem in which older people are held and the devaluation of the status of being old, but it is also exacerbated by notions about the privacy of family matters, the state's lack of support for older people in need of care and its lack of action specific to this type of violence and abuse. The increasing dependence of many of the frailest older people on care from their families has been well documented (Henwood and Wicks 1984).

These findings cast a new light on discussions of older people's fear of crime. The risk of abuse from carers in private is far greater than the risk of being attacked on the streets, but criminologists have yet to acknowledge this in the same way that they have generally accepted the problem of hidden sexual violence against

women. Instead, analyses of older people's relationship with crime continues to be based on sources such as the BCS which shows that older people are more at risk from offences by strangers, and do not point out the possibility that crime in private space is likely to be under reported (eg Mawby 1988). Following from my findings on fear of private violence among women generally, it seems likely that for those older people who are suffering or have suffered domestic abuse from partners and/or carers, concern about danger will be strongly oriented around private space. This in itself might enhance general feelings of low worth and insecurity which heighten fears about public space crimes and incivilities. Rather than being victims of fear of public space, however, the threat of violence in private must have a role in controlling older people, particularly older women, and exacerbating their subordinate status within the family. There has been no mention of this in criminological or feminist discussions and it is clearly an area in need of more research.

iv) Harassment and older people

Although the older women in the survey are no more worried about violence than the others, they do tend to be more concerned about other crimes, particularly burglary (Chapter 3). Evidence suggests that these concerns may sometimes be exacerbated by discriminatory harassment of older people in certain areas. There are several reports from Pilton respondents of children and teenagers picking on older men and women, who are seen as easy targets for minor forms of abuse ranging from name-calling to petty crime such as vandalism of personal property:

> The kids round here pick on the old folks. My mother's terrified to go out of her house because there's so many kids out on the streets and she's been a target for fun. Calling names, running round and pushing into them - there's an old lady that I visit around the back and she's had her windows broken regular, she gets the Council and gets them fixed and no sooner has their van gone away than they're smashed again. They've even tried to set her house
> on fire, I'm not kidding you, a couple o' times.
> *Why do they pick on her?*
> They pick on her, they pick on old people because they're an easy target, ken. Elderly ladies living on their own, they're seen as sitting ducks...she's terrified to go out of her front door.
>
> Sharon, Pilton

Evidence elsewhere suggests that being subject to these minor incivilities is particularly worrying for older people and can inflate fear about serious crimes (Painter 1989); such harassment symbolises older people's lack of physical and

social power. Hence, just as sexual harassment can make women more fearful of sexual violence, ageist harassment can raise levels of fear among older people.

b) The impact of crime on children

i) Crime and the social control of children

At both ends of the spectrum of age, individuals are relatively marginalised, lack power and are frequently treated as if they have no autonomous rights. Their relative powerlessness exists within the family as well as in broader society. The impact of crime on children has been subject for little research in criminology, other than the direct effects of experiences of sexual abuse which rapidly became a research and policy issue during the eighties (Morgan 1988). It has been assumed that the effect of crime on children is irrelevant because they are not 'people' in their own right; they are under the jurisdiction and control of their parents. Yet, as my findings suggest, this control can have significant consequences on children's freedom.

As I described in Chapter 2, the victimisation of children is a very real threat. Sexual and physical abuse, the most serious crimes they are at risk from, are also the most common. Just as feminists have analysed violence against women as a function of their relatively powerless position in the family and in society, child abuse can be seen as a reflection of children's position and status:

> Children constitute the quintessential victims: they are structurally powerless as well as physically powerless.
>
> (Walklate 1989:68)

The explanation of child abuse lies within the ideology of the family in which children are seen as being the property of their parents, having few rights and no personal power (Franklin 1986; Kitzinger 1988; Morgan 1988; Valentine 1992c). Hence child abuse is a manifestation of adults' power and serves to perpetuate it: there have been concerns, for example, that making the full extent of child abuse public has challenged this ideology and thus the state has made efforts to deny and keep it under wraps (see Morgan 1988).

The wider impact of crime on children, ie on non-victims as well as victims, is also created by children's powerlessness and the expression of this in family relations. My research suggests that crime has a significant impact on the social and geographical experiences of many children, and in particular that parental decisions

about precautionary behaviour aimed at protecting children from sexual and physical assault affect their spatial lives considerably. It is adults who have the duty to protect children, adults who inform children about risk and danger, and adults who restrict children's activities in response to the threat of crime. However, rather than educating and protecting children from abuse in private space, most parents' coping strategies revolve around the far less common threat of attack in public space (Chapter 3). Hence the ideology of the family as a unit which protects its own members from external threats remains unchallenged by most parents' responses (or, as I shall argue in Chapter 7, by those of the state).

I have already described the high levels of concern about child sexual and physical assault, and especially about attacks outside the home, among the women in the research who have children in their care (Chapter 3). I now want to go on to outline the constraints which are imposed on children by parental fears, and their consequences, in order to support the argument that violence imposes constraints on children's lives in parallel to those on women's, and similarly compounds their relative powerlessness.

ii) The impact of parental fears on children's geographies

The geography of children is still relatively unexplored, despite the unique way in which they perceive and experience the world (James 1990). In other social sciences, children's relations with the environment have been closely explored and, in particular, gender differences have emerged. Research has shown fairly consistently that girls have poorer spatial abilities and more limited environmental experiences and confidence (Self et al 1992). Rather than being due to innate differences, it is now recognised that this is due to the differential control of children's use of space. Parents give boys more opportunity to explore the environment, so that their territorial range is broader (Hart 1979; Moore 1986). Even a quarter of a century ago, it was noted that the main reason for the stricter control of girls was parental fears about kidnapping and sexual crime (Newson and Newson 1968).

Valentine (1989b) found that those of her interviewees who were married were as concerned about their children being sexually attacked as they were about their own safety, suggesting that similar behavioural restrictions might be in operation. She proposes that parents' control of girls' use of space, particularly after they reach

adolescence, constitutes active encouragement 'to seek the protection of one man from all men (perpetuating the ideology of the family)' (Valentine, 1992a:25).

In my research there is evidence of spatial and social restrictions being imposed on most children to a considerable extent, as a result of parental fears about sexual and physical assault. In the majority of cases these involve avoiding situations where the child is alone in public space (Chapter 3). From an early age, children receive messages about safe places and people from a variety of sources: from teachers, the police, from peer groups and most importantly from their parents. These reinforce the distinct and contrasting meanings which are attached to the home and to public space. Although the mothers I spoke to feel that they take the task of drilling in messages about safety more seriously than their own parents had, many reproduce the warnings they received when they were young (Chapter 4). Parents are encouraged to do this by the 'experts': police work in schools also focuses largely on violence in public places. The message predominantly received from all sources is that strangers, and public places, are where danger lies, as Myra elaborates:

> Cubs and Brownies and all these people are very conscientious about it. You pick literature up, like 'don't talk to a stranger' in the library, and um round schools. They go through stages of picking up stickers and things from the police, we buy them rulers and stuff with 'say no to strangers'. So I mean it's come all the way through really, from a very early age. Then we've had scares in the area and then you talk to the children about those and about what comes up on the news.
>
> Myra, Corstorphine

Many of the women say that they go to great lengths to ensure that their children spend as little time as possible on their own outside. Children are discouraged from walking through public space alone or at night, using public transport, exploring their surroundings independently, and interacting with anyone their parents do not know. All of the women I spoke to (twenty three of the interviewees have children) say that they impose some degree of regulation in response to the threat of attack, no matter how old their children are. However, the age, gender, and social class of children, as well as the separate responsibilities and time constraints of their parents, have a bearing on the degree to which they are restricted (Chapter 3). When children are very young they are rarely out of their parents' sight. As they get a little older and begin to want autonomy and the freedom to explore on their own, parents begin to impose rules. Constraints imposed on boys' activities tend to fall off once they become teenagers because of the traditional notion that boys can look after themselves by this age (see Chapter 3). Restrictions imposed on girls

once they become adolescents often tighten, however (Burt and Estep 1981); hence patriarchy and ageism interact to determine girls' spatial experiences.

By the time they are allowed autonomous mobility, however, children have learnt powerful lessons about safe places and spaces and safe times to be out of the home. Anderson et al (1990b) note that many of the children in their study had taken on their parents ideas about danger, and that girls in particular would comply with their parents' rules after a certain age and begin to regulate their own exposure to the places they had learnt were dangerous. In particular, many of the mothers I spoke to impose a darkness curfew, which means that children have to be accompanied when they are out of doors after about five o'clock in the winter, but not until much later in the summer.

I have a strong thing that people should be independent, and in the summer months we were sort of training her to go by bus...but in the winter in the dark she was unhappy and we were unhappy about her doing it on her own.

Valerie, Corstorphine (twelve year old daughter)

I don't let the kids out late, like as soon as it's dark I call them in from the streets. They have to sit in from six o'clock which isnae fair on them really. It's like an added worry because you're worried about yourself anyway, but then I don't go out at night for that specific reason...so I try and do the same with my kids.

Jeanette, Pilton (four sons aged between four and sixteen)

I worry about my children coming home now. I spend a lot of time ferrying them around. And it is for their own safety you know, once the daylight comes they walk and they get buses.

Myra, Corstorphine (eleven year old son, fourteen year old daughter)

Children's spatial experiences are also determined by their social class. All children suffer powerlessness in relation to adults, regardless of class, but private transport allows more affluent parents the opportunity to protect their children from public space entirely.

With Jamie he doesn't stop any of his activities, he goes training tonight, he goes swimming, he goes to scouts on a Friday, and if he wants to go anywhere he's dropped off and picked up. All the parents do that so it works out quite nicely, you know one mum will bring the whole lot back and then drop them back. So they don't feel different, because it's awful for a child to feel that he's different.

Kate, Corstorphine

This degree of control may well contribute to the fact that middle class women worry less about their children's safety (Chapter 3), unless, of course, their fears involve risks in private space. The structuring of the spatial and social activities of many middle class children, facilitated by a greater disposable income, affords parents greater control over where they go and who they meet: this helps to reproduce, amongst other things, their children's social class position. The effect on this of the level of risk children of different social classes face is dubious; firstly, private space is more dangerous than public space, and secondly as recent research suggests, children's social class makes no differences to their chances of being harassed outside the home (Anderson et al 1990b). The excuse that a high degree of adult protection is for the child's welfare may not always be true, but rather reflect adults' concerns (Franklin 1986). Modern constraints serve various functions in protecting children from public places and limiting their social interaction with undesirables.

iii) Stranger danger stories and social control

Why do parents impose such strict sanctions on children's use of public space, when evidence strongly points to private space being the location of greatest risk? In the past, warning children about strangers might be excused by a lack of knowledge about child abuse, which came to light during the seventies and eighties. Are parents still ignorant of the spatial risks involved?

To some extent, fear about children's safety in public space is justified by the less serious forms of abuse which most children encounter at some point (Chapter 2). However, besides the fact that many of the incidents of harassment children experience happen away from public space, often at school or in the home (Herbert 1989; Mahoney 1985), few are reported either to parents or the police although children discuss harassment and strategies to cope with it amongst themselves (Anderson et al 1990b). The content of mothers' fears and warnings do not usually include these incidents, but rather tend to revolve around far rarer incidents such as abductions and rapes in public space.

Women's perceptions of spatial risk show clearly that the mismatch between the risk of sexual assault and constraints on children is not the result of misinformed parents. Only 4.5% of respondents believe that a stranger is the most likely person to sexually assault a child, while only 6.5% think that public space is the most likely location (Table 6.2). Although the media still gives disproportionate

publicity to attacks by strangers, information about private abuse has greatly improved in recent years.

Table 6.2
Beliefs about child sexual assault

Beliefs	**% of respondents (n = 386)**
Most likely offender	
Relative	61.3
Friend/acquaintance	22.5
Stranger	4.5
Don't know	11.8
Most likely location	
Victim's home	60.1
Another house	12.7
Outside	6.5
Don't know	20.7

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 1.4a(c) and 1.5a(c)

As I identified in Chapter 3 in the case of women's perceptions about personal danger, therefore, there is a mismatch between rational knowledge and preventive action. Various reasons contribute to the disinclination of parents to base warnings on their common sense knowledge. 'It wouldn't happen to my kid' is a common and understandable reaction among those who feel that they trust their immediate family and friends, while embarrassment, difficulty in finding the right words or the desire to protect children's innocence - again, the attempt to retain traditional family values - also make it easier and more convenient to stick to the stranger danger story. I discuss how some of the difficulties which parents experience in educating children about sexual danger might be tackled in Chapter 7. However, the question which remains is why place so much emphasis on the stranger danger? The constraints which are enabled by public space warnings provide a reason why the image of the predatory stranger is still popular despite increasing knowledge about the greater extent of private abuse. James has suggested that:

> Children's places and spaces...are an artificial device created by adults...to keep the young in their place.
>
> (James 1990:282)

Children grow up with very clear ideas about danger and safety in public and private space. During discussions with mothers, a multitude of other anxieties connected with public space emerged. Fears of children being sexually assaulted or bullied outside the home is located within a wider context of hazards which seem beyond parents' control: juvenile crime, drug abuse, HIV infection and traffic accidents were all commonly mentioned. Rather than alerting children to all these dangers, however, some parents appear to use stranger danger stories to warn children away from public places, in the hope that limiting their social and spatial experiences thus will reduce all the risks. Hence the stranger has become a symbol of a dangerous world as well as of the broader moral panic; stranger danger stories provide a convenient way to express wider concerns and to control children's access to public places, without going into what is seen as a harmful level of detail.

iv) The consequences of restrictions on children's use of public space

There are three significant consequences of the parentally imposed restrictions I have discussed above. First, they have implications for children's environmental and social confidence. Recent research on children's mobility (Hillman et al 1990) concludes that children's movements are increasingly restricted due to parental worries about traffic accidents and molestation. This has consequences for children's physical development and health, as fewer walk or cycle (Armstrong 1993), and for their social and emotional progress; it is argued they are losing the chance to develop coping skills, a sense of responsibility for themselves, and to use their minds creatively (Kegerris 1993).

A second and related point is that by being subject to their parents' fears, children are in effect learning vulnerability. As fear of attack among adults partly relates to childhood socialisation about danger (Stanko 1987a; Valentine 1992a), the fact that children are growing up with highly dichotomised notions about danger in public and private space must compound the problem of fear of crime for next generation. Hence children who are protected to a great degree from public space may lack the skills to cope with danger once they are independent.

The third and most serious implication of the parental warnings and constraints on public space, however, is children's exposure to the risk of child sexual abuse. The lessons about dangerous places and people and the darkness curfew which many mothers describe do not address the most likely risk of child abuse in private. Children are more likely to suffer abuse silently if they are kept ignorant of the

spatial risks, to which the accounts of women who have been abused as children testify. These women feel that, had it been mentioned to them that abuse could happen in private too, they would have been better able to cope and to tell someone.

> In those days you didn't tell your parents things like that, so I've always encourages my kids that they must tell me. Mum told us about er strangers and we didnae take anything off strangers and we didnae talk to strangers. But - I suppose nobody really expects a kid to be abused. Everybody just says 'oh it wouldn't happen to my kid'. But it's gonna happen to somebody's kid, do you know what I mean? And I think most of the time it's people the parents have trusted that do it.
>
> Karen, Pilton (sexually abused by her uncle as a child)

v) Conclusions

> The power relations between adults and children are nowhere made more explicit than in adults' responses to children's bodies.
>
> (Ives 1986:144)

While the ideology of the family means that the physical and sexual abuse and exploitation of children often goes unchallenged and unpunished, notions about protecting childhood innocence and limiting independence mean that accurate education about sex and sexual abuse is often lacking.

As I outline in Chapter 7, responses to the spatial misinformation of children need to be realistic. Protective parents are more likely to be acting out of love and concern than malice. Clearly, despite the need to assert children's rights to information and realistic equipment for danger, they can not be given total autonomy in decisions about relative risks of crime and the precaution they take in response to it. However, I have suggested that parental strictures are not necessarily serving the best interests of children. Two important issues are the impact of children's education, and the responsibility of the state, rather than just the family to inform children accurately, to prepare them for dealing with sexual and physical danger and to provide structures of support to help them cope with it. I discuss this further in Chapter 7.

3. Ability

a) Disability and experiences of crime

Although crime surveys have taken little account of disability as a potentially relevant factor in victimisation, some recent evidence suggests that, at least in inner city areas, people with disabilities present a specific target for attackers. Recent research carried out in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham found that a range of crimes are more likely to be reported by households where one or more members are disabled. Disabled people in the survey were twice as likely to have been attacked or assaulted on the streets as the general population (Galey and Pugh 1992).

Disabled people are also more likely to be victimised in private space than the general population: three times more likely to have been attacked or assaulted at home, and more than twice as likely to have experienced harassment in the home than respondents without disabilities (Galey and Pugh 1992). It is likely that some of these attacks relate to the abuse by carers which I discussed in relation to elderly people in the previous section. Hence disability may increase risk partly because it intersects with age. Victimisation is also related to gender: women are more likely to have a disability than men because they live longer and because younger women are considerably more likely to experience mental illness or emotional difficulties than men (Galey and Pugh 1992), conditions which have themselves been linked with experience of abuse in early life (Cutler and Nolen-Hoeksema 1991). Of course, women are generally more prone to sexual and physical assault in the home than men. Disabled people are also especially prone to incidents where they feel harassed, abused or threatened because of their race, gender or sexuality (Galey and Pugh 1993). Such incidents appear to inflate fear of crime, and particularly concern about being physically attacked.

b) Disability and feelings of insecurity

Having a disability may affect the feelings of vulnerability to crime of men and women; as well as the increases in risk outlined above, this reflects the fact that like elderly people, people of colour and gay men and lesbians, people with disabilities suffer discrimination and inequality in many areas of public life. Part of the reason for heightened sense of vulnerability to crime is the physical handicap which may arise from disability. As a parallel, several women in my research said that they felt vulnerable because they were physically unfit, because of pregnancy, or because of their small stature in relation to men.

I'm five foot and a half inch, right - I'm not a big strapping person, no like quite a few o' the females round here. And there's no way I could fight off an attacker.

Barbara, Pilton

Thirty three women (8.5% of the total) in the survey say that they have a physical disability and, as interviews with some of these women bear out, this can makes women feel more prone to attack and less able to respond to it.

Well I tell you one thing see, we can't run the same. I mean I used to be, even up until a couple of years ago I was quite a good runner. But now I find my knee's so stiff I can't. And last summer, it wasn't here it was in Cardiff, I did really feel a moment's panic. I was in a back lane because it was quicker, and I heard a sound and I tried to run and I realised I couldn't, I realised my knees were going to go.

Glenys, Haymarket

Similarly Rosalind, who has a painful back condition, describes how it made her feel trapped, less able to retaliate and more worried about the incident escalating when she was groped by a man sitting next to her on the London Underground (Chapter 5). However, it is not just the physical symptoms of disability which can create more unease about attack, but awareness of attitudes towards disability. Fear is heightened directly by the concern that criminals are more likely to see them as easy targets, but the existence of negative attitudes also mean that people who are disabled may feel more insecure in general. Tricia, for example, described how she has gone through mental illness on and off for a couple of years and has spent some time in hospital. Although physically fit, she says that since being ill she feels less secure about a range of things, and particularly worried about being attacked because of the consequence it would have on her. Hence she restricts her activities to a high degree, always making sure she is back in here flat before dark.

When I came back [out of hospital] I didn't realise how frightened I was. I don't know whether it was the hospital had made me so institutionalised that - because this is my first flat, I've always lived in bedsits - bring totally on my own, not sharing with anybody. But I'm much more worried than before. I don't feel able to stand up for myself any more, or that any one else will look after me for that matter.

Tricia, Haymarket

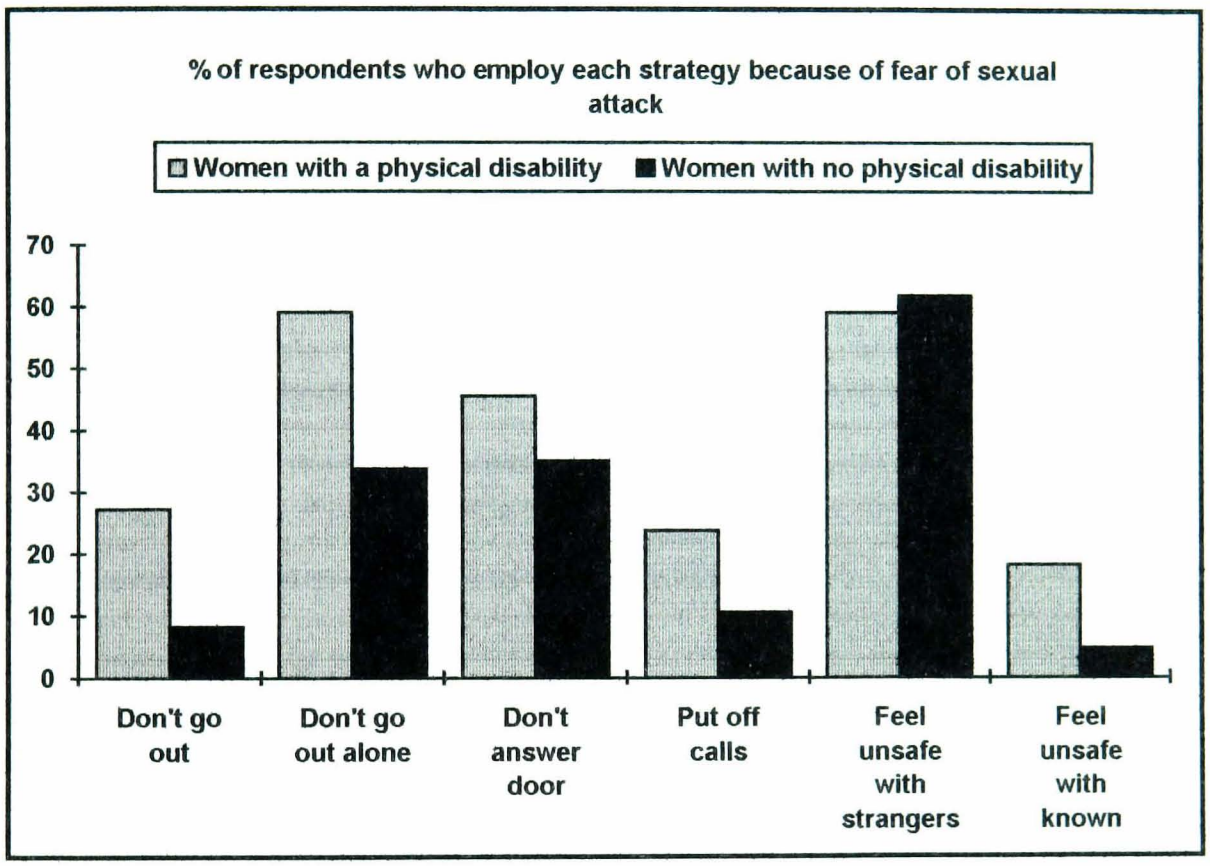
c) Effect on spatial experiences

Disability can have quite a profound effect on individuals' spatial experiences, although geographers have not addressed the problems or opportunities which this might lead to (Golledge 1993). 'The disabled live in a transformed space' (Golledge 1993:64), often as a result of reduced physical mobility and access to

resources and opportunities. A drop in income often accompanies disability and this can exacerbate spatial constraints, while those who worry that they carry a particular risk factor make them even more likely to restrict their activities in response to crime. Hence a heightened fear of attack can compound the restricted spatial experiences of people with disabilities. Half of the disabled people interviewed in the Hammersmith and Fulham research said that they never, or rarely, go out in the evening, simply as a precaution against crime (Galey and Pugh 1993).

Figure 6.3

Effects of fear of sexual attack on respondents with and without a disability*



***A corresponding Table (6.3) can be found in Appendix D**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey, Questions 6.7 and 5.1

The women in my survey who have a disability are no more likely to say that they take precautions while out on the streets than women in general. However, they are more likely to avoid certain places, people and situations altogether in response to their fear of attack (Figure 6.3). The women who have a disability are significantly more likely to avoid going out ($p<0.01$), and to avoid going out unaccompanied ($p<0.01$), than women without a disability. This can not be accounted for by the age of the women who have a disability, although they are more likely to be over sixty than women in the survey as a whole. The older women in the survey are no

more likely to say that they use particular coping strategies than the younger women, as I have already outlined.

Importantly, while there is no difference between women with and without a disability when it comes to feeling unsafe with strangers, the women who have a disability are significantly more likely to say that they felt unsafe with people who they know ($p<0.01$). Hence disability can heighten fear of victimisation in private as well as public space, and as private space dangers are more difficult to avoid, it is likely that fear of attack has more impact on women with disabilities.

d) Disability and social inequality

The effect of disability on fear of crime is not just about negative attitudes surrounding disability but also the wider issues of prejudice and social inequality which underpin those attitudes. Various forms of disadvantage can intersect: age and gender, for example, affect how likely disabled people are to be attacked in private space as well as their feelings of vulnerability. Additionally, the status of dependence which may, in some cases, result from a disability may increase the likelihood of abuse where family or partner relationships involve an imbalance of power. Research in this area is limited at present, but the evidence presented here suggests that disability currently constitutes another form of social inequality which has a significant impact on fear of systematic violence.

4. Race and ethnicity

a) Race and crime

Although people of colour are often linked with crime in the consciousnesses and perceptions of white people, in reality race and ethnicity amplify the risks of criminal victimisation. One piece of research showed that rates of victimisation are fifty times higher for Asians than for white people in Britain, and over thirty six times higher for West Indians and Africans than for whites (Home Office 1981). The greater vulnerability of ethnic minority groups is partly explained by social and demographic factors, but the risks of victimisation remain greater even when factors such as area of residence are taken into account (Mayhew et al 1989). It has emerged than many people of colour are victimised because of their racial or ethnic background, and studies have uncovered high rates of racist violence and harassment (Commission for Racial Equality 1987a, 1987b). Again, violence can be placed on a spectrum. Racist harassment is a serious problem in Britain (CRE 1987a; Bowes et al 1990), and like sexual harassment it may range from one off

encounters to ongoing victimisation. At first it was assumed from local studies that racial violence is pocketed, a particular problem in certain localities such as disadvantaged housing estates, but analysis has shown that it is geographically widespread:

> The geography of racist attacks lends support to the view that racism is more deeply entrenched in British society and more pervasive than is commonly supposed
>
> (Jackson 1986).

Official figures on racially-motivated attacks are disproportionately low, partly due to under reporting. However, another bar to representative data is the categorisation of crimes at the point of recording. Many racial attacks, if reported and recorded, are simply classed as 'assaults'. In 1992, 7,793 incidents were recorded as 'racial attacks' nation-wide, a figure which other sources suggest is grossly underestimates the extent of racial violence in Britain. From the most recent British Crime Survey, for example, it has been suggested that there are at least 130-140,000 racial attacks per year, more if minor offences taken into account (Guardian 30.9.93). Racially motivated attacks are clearly linked to racist attitudes which are prevalent in British society (Commission for Racial Equality 1987a). Research has suggested that images of white working class masculinity, the myth of superiority inherited from colonialism, and economic factors lie behind attacks (Carey 1985, 1986).

b) Racism and fear of crime

Race has been found to be a strong predictor of fear of crime. Despite the direction of most racist attacks, many white people report being frightened of people of colour to crime surveys (eg Moeller 1989; Taub et al 1984). This tendency to link race with crime (eg Smith 1982) underpins findings that white people living in mixed race neighbourhoods are often amongst the most fearful. Media coverage disproportionately reflects images of people of colour as criminals (Smith 1984a), and just as women focus their fears of male violence onto stranger danger targeting people of colour is a way of managing and negotiating danger (Smith 1984b). Labelling criminals with certain social identifiers thus increases personal feelings of power, and the way in which this process is structured reflects the inequality of certain groups generally (Smith 1984b).

More importantly, however, high levels of fear are also created among ethnic minority communities by the very real risk of racist attacks (Commission for Racial

Equality 1987a), which can be also be conceptualised as a consequence of existing power relations, and a way in which some whites seek to maintain their dominance. Fear of victimisation must be particularly great for individuals and families who are subject to ongoing attacks from local parties; this means that danger is less random and therefore risk is less controllable. Situations where people of colour living in mainly white neighbourhoods have become prisoners in their homes, frightened of going out, making the journey to work or school or everyday errands (Bowes et al 1990; Commission for Racial Equality 1987a; Cooper and Pomeyie 1988). Hence spatial experiences and patterns can be severely restricted by racial violence. Fear of crime may be offset by the presence of strong community organisation; this has been shown to be the case among British West Indians (Kail and Kleinman 1985) - although, tellingly, this feature had no effect on females' fear of crime. While racist attacks are predominantly an external threat, women of colour are at risk from violence within the family too.

c) Gender, racism and fear of crime

Thus racism is especially salient to women's fear of crime. One facet of this is the tendency of white women to relate race with rape: many of Valentine's (1989b) interviewees expressed particular fear of black men, relating to the historical racist image of black men having an uncontrolled and violent sexuality. It goes without saying that white women are far more at risk from white men. Similar stereotypes about women of colour and sexuality mean that they may experience extra vulnerability to sexual violence and harassment (MacKinnon 1980). In Hall's (1985) study of sexual violence, she found that many black and immigrant women had been targets of abuse because of their race or nationality: half had been verbally abused and over a quarter physically assaulted because of this reason. 7% of the black and immigrant respondents reported that they had been sexually assaulted because of their race or nationality. Women of colour are seen as sexually available and the property of men, particularly white men - black women's oppression in Britain today lies within an imperial as well as a patriarchal context (Mama 1989). Also as a consequence of this compounded oppression, women of colour report higher levels of fear of rape (Gordon and Riger 1981).

Although the black family has been seen as bastion of support from the external threat of racism, and a site of resistance for women (Hooks 1984; Carby 1982), relations within any family are not always equal. In fact women of colour who have been victim of domestic violence may particularly experience a lack of

support, or condemnation of their partners, from family and community (Mama 1989). They are also less likely to receive institutional support than white women due to a web of additional disadvantages, ranging from gaining access to housing to escapee violent partners, the racist attitudes of police, and a hugely underfunded black voluntary sector (Mama 1989). Hence racism can compound the impact of sexual and physical abuse on women, as well as being the cause of a parallel form of discriminatory violence.

5. Homosexuality

a) Homophobic violence

Homophobic violence, or violence against gay men and lesbians because of their sexual orientation, also has significant implications for fear of crime, and there is a need to acknowledge this fact and draw it further into theory. Homophobic violence relates to the general conceptualisation of systematic violence I have discussed so far: it exists on a broad spectrum, it manifests and reinforces dominant values, and the ideologies and attitudes which it reflects are legally reinforced.

There have been considerable methodological problems with measuring the extent of homophobic violence; it is virtually impossible to sample gay men and lesbians representatively as many choose to keep their sexual identities private (Comstock 1991). Many existing surveys have been carried out by distributing questionnaires through formal organisations, hence they are most likely to sample people who are open about their sexuality and therefore may not be representative (Berrill 1992). Among this group, however, it seems that victimisation on account of sexual orientation is common. The mean finding of several US surveys is that over half of the gay men and lesbians surveyed had experienced homophobic violence (Comstock 1991). On average, 44% of the respondents to such surveys have reported being threatened with violence, 3% being chased or followed, 25% being pelted with objects, 17% being victims of physical assault and 13% being spat upon. (Berrill 1992). Men generally report more of these incidents than women. Lesbians are twice as likely to experience violence as women in the general population, and gay men four times as likely as men generally (Comstock 1991). Sexual violence may also be related to the victims' sexual orientation: 3 to 16% of gay men and lesbians say they have been raped, regardless of gender (Comstock 1991). While being gay heightens the risk of sexual violence considerably for men, women's vulnerability to sexual and physical abuse is already heightened by virtue

of being female. There is far less information on the extent of homophobic violence in Britain although the evidence which has been collected indicates that it is equally widespread (Meldrum 1980).

Similar to the other forms of systematic violence I have discussed, homophobic violence exists on a spectrum. Verbal harassment and intimidation on the basis of gay men or lesbians' sexual orientation are extremely commonplace (Gardner 1993). In one survey, for example, 19% had experienced violence because of their sexuality but 94% had experienced some form of harassment or violence (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 1986). Therefore, while it may be true that most gay men and lesbians have not been victims of violence because of their sexuality (Bell and Weinburg 1978), it seems likely that the majority have experienced minor forms of intimidation which reinforce a legally sanctioned climate of hostility. Discrimination against gay men and lesbians is structurally and institutionally embedded; 'firmly rooted in British social history' (Meldrum 1983:62; see Galloway 1983). The legal inequalities suffered by homosexuals include disparities in the age of consent, no employment protection, no rights to childcare, marriage or inheritance, and a lack of legislation providing protection from homophobic violence. Meanwhile homosexual behaviour in public places is legally restricted and any sort of activity here has been subject to police harassment (Bayley 1974).

As to where homophobic violence takes place, research has suggested that gay men experience more violence and harassment because of their sexuality in public places, partly because they are more visible publicly (Berrill 1992). On the other hand lesbian women experience more violence within the family (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 1986), and are particularly vulnerable to abuse from their partners if they are married (Meldrum 1980). Anti-lesbian violence may often be indistinguishable from anti-woman violence and harassment which are experienced across space (Von Schulthess 1992). Traditionally, homosexuality has been a covert phenomenon, and legislation exists which restricts social and sexual activity to private space. Homophobic violence can be seen to reinforce this separation between public and private by policing public places.

b) Effect on spatial experiences

The literature about homophobic violence includes some mention of the fear invoked and consequent restrictions, but there has been little consideration of its spatial implications. Meanwhile geographers have begun to focus attention on the

spatial experiences and impact on the urban landscape of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals (eg Adler and Brenner 1992; Bell 1991; Lauria and Knopp 1985). Although gender is a closely related issue, the feminist geography literature has rarely considered different versions of sexuality previously (Bondi 1991); in many ways it remains the last taboo. Clearly, however, sexual orientation affects experiences, perceptions of and attachments to place (Valentine 1993a and 1993b).

What conclusions might be drawn about the impact of homophobic violence on the spatial experiences of gay men and lesbians? High levels of fear have been reported to the surveys carried out so far. In one survey, 83% of respondents said that they expected future victimisation on account of their sexual orientation, whether had been victimised in the past or not, and 62% said that they feared for their safety (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 1986). Women tend to report fear more than men, partly, perhaps, because they are more likely to admit to such feelings to surveys. It may also be related to the greater vulnerability which women experience in general (Berrill 1992). The vast majority of perpetrators of homophobic violence are male: while a man may feel he has more chance against a single attacker, women's insecurity is heightened by a general fear of male violence.

Almost half of lesbians and gay men surveyed say that they have made modifications to their lifestyles in order to reduce the risks of victimisation (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 1986). Coping strategies reported include taking care with appearance, avoiding certain places at certain times and not showing affection to partners in public (D'Augelli 1989; National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 1986; Von Schulthess 1992). Because, like sexual violence against women, homophobic is seen to be discriminatory - certain people in certain places at certain times are more at risk - precautions taken to avoid it are harmful to quality of life. In a study of lesbian geographies, Valentine notes that the threat of homophobic violence and harassment influence lesbians' lifestyles, formation and character of social networks and sense of identity (Valentine 1993a, 1993b). In the same way that sexual harassment affects women, then, the verbal abuse of gay men and lesbians 'challenges the victim's routine sense of security and invulnerability, making the world seem more malevolent and less predictable' (Garnets et al 1992: 213).

Perhaps the most widespread response to the attitudes which occasionally manifest themselves in violence, and the most psychologically damaging, is the tendency to hide sexual identities in public and private. In the case of gay men this covertness may actually increase the chances of becoming criminal victims, whereas participation in lasting gay relationships and community can provide more support and safer places to go to (Miller and Humphreys 1980). In fact physical security is one reason why there is a well defined separate gay scene (Meldrum 1983): gay clubs and pubs provide relatively safe spaces (Valentine 1993a). There has been little research into homophobic violence and discrimination in private places although, like restrictions on women because of their gender, the social control of gay men and lesbians operates across space.

c) Gender and heterosexism

Gender is central in determining gay men and lesbians' spatial experiences as lesbians are more likely to be additionally restricted by lack of capital, childcare responsibilities and fear of sexual attack (Adler and Brenner 1992). Lesbian women are also particularly vulnerable to victimisation in private places. Hence it has been argued that the effects of anti-gay violence are greater for lesbians (Von Schulthess 1992).

Images of masculinity enmesh with notions about heterosexuality with the result that men or boys who do not fit with 'norms' are penalised with violence or threatened violence. Adult men who are gay, or who appear to be, generally experience homophobic assaults less frequently than boys and adolescents, although the seriousness of attacks increases with age (Harry 1992). For young men, demonstrating commitment to the male gender role continues to be crucial, and hence most perpetrators of homophobic violence are in late adolescence or their twenties (Comstock 1991). Women tend to have less negative attitudes towards homosexuality (Herek 1984); the development of their sexual identity is policed, to a lesser degree, by men. Thus the institution of gender and its relationship with cultural heterosexuality is important in providing strictly defined male and female roles. Homosexuality challenges proscribed versions of masculinity and femininity, while homophobic discrimination and violence reinforce them (Meldrum 1983)

'Compulsory heterosexuality', described by feminists in relation to its effect on girls and the female gender role as they grow up (Chapter 3), also affects attitudes to people who are openly gay or lesbian. Most people's socialisation about

homosexuality is strongly negative and relates to learning about danger (Stanko 1990a). Children learn about homosexuality as they learn about gender roles, usually that the former underpins the latter. In order to gain the approval of peer groups and parents, most children are encouraged to adhere to narrow versions of masculinity, femininity and sexuality. This ongoing social enforcement of the heterosexual role model has been described as 'cultural' or 'compulsory' heterosexuality (Herek 1992; Rich 1981). Heterosexuality can be viewed as a political institution: it proscribes sexual identity by offering few positive homosexual images and imposing strictures on those who deviate from the 'norm'.

In conclusion, it seems that homophobic violence plays a key role in the oppression of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals; reinforces the strict separation between public and private which many may experience; and in the control of men, women and gender roles more generally.

6. Summary

I have highlighted the fact that it is not only women who are at risk from systematic violence and harassment and their effects; other forms of discriminatory abuse exist which can have severe consequences for the social and spatial activities, well-being and opportunities for equality for those who are or who feel themselves to be at risk. In each of the cases I have identified, the effect of systematic violence on people's spatial experiences is both manifested in and reproduces existing patterns of dominance in public and private relations. It is not the condition of being old, or disabled, or gay, which leads to systematic violence and its effects, but rather the widespread existence of broad, institutionalised discriminatory attitudes and practices. In Chapter 7 I consider some of the policy implications of this.

My research has contributed new evidence to the development of considerations of fear of systematic violence. I have shown that, although it is rarely mentioned in the criminological literature, older women are as likely to fear private violence as public violence, and private space may indeed be the location of greatest risk. Women with disabilities, meanwhile, are more affected by their fear in public and private space. I have also shown that the spatial and social activities of children are increasingly controlled by parental fears about child abuse, yet that most of these constraints do not address the location of greatest risk. I have also considered the

effects of racism and homophobia on experiences of fear of violence and spatial constraints.

Much of this evidence challenges the focus of previous research on fear of crime in human geography, criminology and feminist theory. Previous analyses have tended to concentrate on particular crimes, particular spaces, and particular social groups (or have over-generalised their arguments). I have shown that systematic violence may be one of the most significant factors influencing patterns of fear of crime and its damaging consequences. However, my discussion so far raises several questions reflecting many of those which have emerged from my previous analysis of women's fear of male violence. It is these theoretical difficulties which I want to go on to address now.

B. A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

1. Introduction

While my discussion so far has found empirical and theoretical support for conceptualising fear of systematic violence and harassment as a spatial expression of patterns of social and political dominance, it has raised certain theoretical difficulties, and in this Section I want to outline these and suggest how they might be resolved in future research. Here, I summarise the parallels between women's fear of sexual violence and other forms of systematic violence and point out the exceptions to general patterns and other theoretical difficulties, arguing that these must be dealt with within the broad theories of geography, criminology and feminism.

2. Systematic violence and fear of crime: some parallels

The aim of the preceding reviews has been to demonstrate the wider relationship between power, social relations and fear of crime by drawing parallels between women's fear of sexual violence and ageist, racist and homophobic violence. Where these broad axes of social control intersect, for certain individuals fear of attack is heightened; I have outlined the relationships between gender relations and heterosexism, and between sexism, racism and ageism in order to illustrate this. I have also emphasised the parallels which exist between these various forms of systematic violence. The key areas in which fear of crime among these groups may be conceptually related may be summarised as follows.

First, social inequality and marginalisation can be linked to high levels of fear for certain people, and this is manifested in constraints on their social and spatial activity patterns in the form of action to avoid or negotiate danger. In this way crime compounds powerlessness and inequality for individuals who are or who feel vulnerable to systematic violence.

Secondly, socially constructed notions about safety and danger in public and private space have a central role in maintaining oppression through images of and responses to crime. I have shown that women, children and older people tend to employ coping strategies in public space, while private space is the location of greatest danger. As I go on to illustrate in the Chapter 7, this strategy is encouraged by many current crime prevention policies. Violence in private space, meanwhile, is less well policed than violence in public, and notions about the

privacy of family matters as well as discrimination against older people, people of colour and gay men and lesbians means that these groups, and others in non-traditional relationships, are additionally vulnerable. For others, private space is often experienced as a haven from threatening public space, and thus violence reinforces the existing separation which many experience between the private and public domains and the consequent shape of roles and identities in public life.

Thirdly, more minor forms of intimidation and discrimination such as sexist, racist, ageist and homophobic harassment can act as precursors of danger and thus effectively reinforce the spatial sanctions which the threat of systematic violence enforces. These crimes of prejudice are a product of and reinforce existing forms of social or structural vulnerability; I have discussed the examples of old age, childhood, disability, race and homosexuality here.

In Chapter 1, I mentioned some early explanations of fear of crime, which tended to concentrate on the physical vulnerability said to characterise women and older people. More recently it has become clear that it is more appropriate to concentrate on individuals' structural vulnerability. Mawby (1988) suggests that vulnerability has three relevant dimensions: the extent of victimisation, the implications of fear of crime, and the impact of crime on victims. In each case, it is marginalised and less powerful social groups, whose experiences I have discussed here, who are most vulnerable. In each case, too, systematic violence and fear of it can be conceptualised as the consequence of individuals' low status in society, and these three dimensions of vulnerability as having a role in perpetuating their unequal access to resources and power.

Mainstream academic discourse has made certain assumptions about the relationship between marginalised groups and fear of crime. I have demonstrated this, for example, by presenting evidence on fear of violence amongst older women which contradict previous findings both on the relative incidence and location of their fear of violent attack compared with younger women's fear. The findings also conflict with some previous assumptions about the effect of social class on women's fear of crime, which I discuss in more detail below. The most consequential conclusion is that 'vulnerable' social groups should not be considered as exceptions to the general patterns of fear of crime in cities, but rather the centrality of their experiences and the strong relationship between fear and inequality should be underlined in future analyses.

Hence feminist social control theory can be extended to any form of systematic violence rooted in social inequalities alongside gender. Geographers' explanations might similarly take greater account of this distinct link between the use of space and broader social inequality.

3. Problems for theory raised so far

As well as drawing these broad parallels, it must be recognised that every individual's experience varies; while everyone is affected to some extent by their relation to the broad structures of power and associated ideologies which I have mentioned so far, there are many factors which mediate on a smaller scale. Feminist, geographical and criminological analyses of fear of crime have in common that they have linked disadvantage with fear of violence to some extent, yet they have not fully accounted for the existence of abuse which does not follow the simple up-down direction assumed in theory. I now want to outline some of the problems posed for the theory of social control and spatial constraint which I have put forward.

a) Systematic violence and fear of crime: the diversities

Although some degree of generalisation in theorising is inevitable, it carries the danger of misrepresenting the full scope of individual experiences. Yet in relations between individuals, power does not always reflect broader patterns of social dominance. This may seem a self evident point but it is one which theories such as those I have been concerned with here rarely acknowledge. While patriarchy, ageism, racism, heterosexism and ablism shape relations in public and private space to a considerable extent, it does not always follow that these forms of power and their expression through the use of threat or violence is unidirectional.

The fear of crime literature has tended to assume the existence of traditional roles and power structures. I outlined this, for example, in describing early explanations of women's fear in Chapter 1. I have also challenged the construction of older people as hapless victims of fear. Traditional discourses have been challenged with a literature on crime and inequality partly arising from local crime surveys which showed clearly the influence of social factors (eg Jones et al 1986; Crawford et al 1990). The feminist theories about sexual violence as a social control which I have discussed here link up with these analyses, as do human geographers' recent analyses of the spatial constraints imposed by fear. However, there are instances where these challenges to traditional discourse have been similarly simplistic.

There is little discussion in the literature on domestic violence, for example, of victims being anything other than female (or, for that matter, white, working class and heterosexual). Such assumptions about who victims are (as well as who offenders are) are often reflected in support and preventative services.

In Chapter 2, in arguing that the idea of a continuum of violence is misleading, I suggested that one reason for this is the disparities in women's experiences; some women's lives are untouched by aggression while others have experienced almost lifelong violence. The fact that a minority of women have suffered violence from intimates clearly does not mean that the majority are affected by this through fear in their relationships and in the home, yet explanations for fear have not come to grips with this fact to date. Many male-female relationships are not unequal despite a common societal context of patriarchy. To aid understanding of sexual violence, it is important to emphasise the differences in women's experiences as well as the similarities. It is also important to acknowledge the social changes with regard to women's equality which have recently taken place and examine their effect. I have suggested, for example, that although middle class women demonstrate a greater ability to distance and negotiate danger, their fear of violence and its effects upon them are no less in consequence.

Recently other concerns have become increasingly visible within feminist discourse. In particular, assumptions about gender relations have been challenged by a growing awareness that men are sometimes the victims of sexual violence, and that women are sometimes the perpetrators. Male rape, for example, which is becoming more conspicuous as a public issue, does not match common assumptions about sexual violence. The victims of male rape face especial problems and are particularly unlikely to report it, often facing the discrimination and stigma attached to gay victims of sexual violence (King and Mezey 1992).

The impact of men's fear of physical attack also requires further investigation. Recent research shows quite high levels of fear among men and some evidence of resultant spatial constraint (eg Hay 1993). In the last section I presented evidence that boys are constrained and controlled by parental worries about their safety, and the fact that there are more constraints on boys' freedom now than there have ever been (Hillman 1993) might have serious implications for their sense of vulnerability when they grow up. Stanko and Hobdell (1993) describe how hegemonic masculinity can shape men's experiences and fears about physical

assault, pointing to the spectrum of men's relationships with masculinity and to the fact that men's fear, like women's, may be mediated by their class, race, age and so on. This may well have implications for men's experience and use of private and public space. It should be stressed that research has always shown that rates of fear among men do not match those among women, but there is clearly need to consider the effects of gender role constraints and inequalities on men's spatial and social activity patterns as well as on women's.

It has also been recognised recently that the sexual abuse of children by women may be better hidden and more widespread than has been previously acknowledged (eg Elliott 1993). Of all the violence reported to my survey (one in three respondents report being physically or sexually attacked), none involves abuse by women. Nor was any sexual abuse or harassment against men mentioned outside light-hearted comments. However, a survey of men in Edinburgh might have told a slightly different story. In one study of hospital casualty admissions after incidents of domestic violence, one in five were men beaten by female partners (Forty Minutes, BBC2, 21.3.91). Sexual, physical and emotional abuse within same-sex adult relationships similarly challenges common assumptions about gender relations, but goes largely unacknowledged in discussions about private violence. Its extent in relation to that between heterosexual couples is unknown but evidence has shown that it is fairly common (Renzetti 1988; Schilit et al 1991; Waterman et al 1989).

As the climate of greater openness which now surrounds discussion of male violence against women is lacking, abuse which does not fit into the traditionally conceptualised gender framework might be seriously under-reported. While it is important to keep it in context, it is necessary to integrate the reality of abuse by women into feminist theory (Kelly 1991). Criminologists' and geographers' analyses of the social and spatial patterns and processes underlying fear of crime similarly need to acknowledge and make sense of violence which does not fit the 'systematic' mould; ie violence which seems at odds with the broader patterns of dominance and vulnerability with which academic discourse is concerned at present.

Social theorists' analyses of power have tended to be more flexible, providing broader conceptualisations of power which are useful in this context. Giddens, for example, has suggested that the imposition of power does not necessarily mean

using threat or force: power is not inherently oppressive in itself nor is it always linked to wider conflict (Giddens 1984). While power is an integral constituent of social relations, it can be defined simply as:

> The capacity to achieve outcomes. Whether or not these are connected to purely sectional interests is not germane to its definition.
>
> (Giddens 1984:257)

Although it seems that most forms of power do find expression in force, coercion, threat or violence, the premise that power does not automatically take this shape is useful. In terms of the numerous structures which compound the discrimination against and marginalisation of women in society, for example, the threat or use of force is only the thin end of a broad wedge. Neither is power always purposefully manipulated through the threat of force (Smith 1986). This may be a side effect rather than necessarily arising from a sense of collusion, collectivity or consciousness by individuals that violent events are going to be active in asserting their own power.

This provides a backdrop in which the use of power may be variable and reflexive. If the use of force is not necessarily a conscious form of oppression, or collectively motivated as Brownmiller and her followers argued, then it should not be viewed as anomalous that deviations from the more usual patterns occur. This leads to a further issue, that of the relationship between the violent individual and the state. If the role of the state is, as feminists have argued, to buttress the use of force by individuals, then it makes little difference whether the individual seeks to maintain power through the use of force: this will follow if violent behaviour is not adequately condemned or punished. In this context, then, the idea of collectivity makes some sense.

b) Reconciling structural and individual forces

Another theme recurring throughout the thesis has been the relative importance of individual and structural forces on fear of crime. In Chapters 3 and 5, for example, as well as pointing out the similarities in women's reactions to violence, I have highlighted the range of women's responses to fear and to harassment, and made it clear that there may sometimes be more individualistic explanations underlying fear. Upbringing, personality and attitudes may vary widely despite the more general pattern of socialisation I identified. The need for explicit consideration of the importance of individual behaviour alongside broader patriarchal structures in

feminist theory has been brought to attention (Weedon 1987), and the same is clearly true of consideration of the processes affecting spatial processes.

State responses demonstrate that it also appears to sanction systematic violence, as feminists have argued with regard to violence against women, through the institutionalised discrimination which has been identified. The lack of support which homosexual victims of violence receive from the criminal justice system has been documented, for example (Berrill and Herek 1992; Comstock 1989; Meldrum 1983), and the official response to older people's fear of crime is often similarly inappropriate. The same might be said of the abuse of people with disabilities. Again, the higher incidence of violence against this group in public and private, and fears specific to them, have not been seen as meriting intervention (partly because research is at such a preliminary stage). I discuss some recent policy responses to systematic violence in Chapter 7 and argue that the current approach does little to challenge existing imbalances of power.

Hence inadequate support from the state underpins systematic aggression against certain disadvantaged groups, and future analyses of fear of crime must take explicit account of this. At the same time, however, it is important to examine how the state relates to the use of force by individuals. Giddens links the roles of 'structure' and 'human agency' by suggesting that as the influence of the state grows, individuals are seeking and formulating new identities. In part, greater organisational control facilitates greater reflexivity of the forms the self can take (Giddens 1991).

In the context of systematic violence, the state response, or lack of it, has the effect of offering perpetrators an opportunity to retreat behind individualistic explanations rather than broader implications of motives for their actions. Individuals who abuse power in this way are aware that a safety net is provided for them, and in this sense, as I have suggested, it is not relevant whether or not they are conscious of the wider effect of their actions, ie widespread fear, or not. Of course, abuse relates to the position of vulnerable groups too; consecutive political administrations have done little in terms of empowering marginalised groups, and indeed the current administration has been marked by a political climate of intolerance towards gay people, and the repression of gay rights. In Chapter 7 I go on to describe how the ideology of the family, promoted through the media, the welfare system, schooling and public policy stands in way of preventive action on

systematic violence. Hence a political climate exists in which violence by individuals may be seen as the sharp end of a broader wedge of active discrimination by the state (Segal 1990).

This is not enough to explain the diversity in individuals' participation in violence or patterns of victimisation. There is a need to bridge the gap between theory and experience and, through empirical, experiential research, to look at the relationship of individuals to broad structures of power, and to crystallise the differences and similarities between various forms of violence.

Some existing explanations for the 'exceptions' to broad patterns in systematic violence and fear fit with existing power-based theory. There is some evidence, for example, that where women abuse children their role is often that of co-perpetrator, or in ignoring abuse which they know to be going on, rather than being the key actor (Kelly 1991). Violence in lesbian relationships may be due to inequalities within the relationship, particularly, research suggests, if one or both have experienced violence in past (Schilit et al 1991). Male rape can be seen as an assertion of heterosexism and hegemonic masculinity, as many perpetrators are heterosexual (Meldrum 1983), and hence can be drawn into existing discourse on gender. As for women's violence, women do not live outside patriarchal ideology and practice (Kelly 1991), and might be considered as perpetrators of oppression too: especially over the groups they have power over (eg children and older people). Because women experience more control in private space than in public space, the violence perpetrated by women mostly occurs in the former.

The diversity of experiences between individuals must also be placed in the context of a changing world in which social relations are dynamic. Even if the full extent of various forms of violence were known, patterns and incidence could not be expected to remain constant. Masculinity and femininity, their associated roles and demands are in a constant state of flux (Brittan 1989). Female aggression against men may, for example, reflect their growing power in certain areas. In particular harassment at work has been a recent subject of media attention, although at present there is little research evidence on which to draw even the most tentative conclusions. However, just as it has been suggested that one consequence of changing gender relations is that some men might become more violent in an attempt to reassert their power (Gartner 1990), there might also be a shift in the direction of violence. However, despite it being important to remain aware of these

possibilities, evidence shows that most violence perpetrated against men by women is not as serious as that which men carry out against women, and often reflects an attempt to equalise rather than dominate relations (Saunders 1988).

The feminist theory of sexual violence as a social control which I outlined in Chapter 3 is clearly too simplistic, but I have contended that the basic ideas about power, social relations and violence remain a valid framework for analysis. The theory needs to be refined and updated in light of what is known about other forms of systematic violence and must account for exceptions to general patterns. This might best be accomplished by focusing on variations and dynamism in the control and use of space by different social groups and by individuals.

CONCLUSION

In Section A I demonstrated with my findings that it is not only women who may be controlled by the threat of systematic violence, but also older people, children and people with disabilities. The ideologies of age, ability and patriarchy intersect and notions about the privacy of family matters and conformity of sexuality compound the problem. I have suggested that people of colour and gay men and lesbians' spatial experiences are similarly controlled by fear of systematic violence, and that this fear effectively limits their opportunities to challenge their marginalisation in society.

In Section B I summarised the broad parallels between various forms of systematic violence, and the implications of this for the meaning of vulnerability. I have suggested that theories of systematic violence as social control need to account for the relationships and intersections between them, as well as the diversities which exist in experience. While broad structures of power may shape people's spatial experiences, individual experiences and permutations in power relations also have an impact, and there is a need to recognise this explicitly. I have suggested that the social construction of space, involving notions about safety and danger in public and private, is central to the process by which systematic violence acts as a control on the lives of vulnerable people. By linking all these forms of systematic violence in one framework, I have indicated the path which future analysis in feminist theory, geography and criminology might take.

Chapter 7
CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

In this final Chapter, I want to draw together the conclusions of the research and discuss their wider implications. In Section A, I outline the main conclusions with regard to patterns, processes and theory. Section B comprises an evaluation of a range of practical strategies which have been or are currently being implemented with the aim of reducing of the problems I have been concerned with here, in the light of my research findings. I include a discussion of the political, economic and ideological setting of policy-making. In Section C, I go on to make recommendations concerning policy and potential areas of study, theoretical developments and methodological applications for future research.

A. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

1. Pattern: the extent and effects of fear of violence across space and society

This research has provided the first large-scale study exclusively concerned with women's fear of violence, and is the first to use both quantitative and qualitative methods. It has confirmed that fear of sexual and physical violence are widespread among women, and are far more worrying than other types of crime. The extent of fear of public space attack varies little by area of residence, nor are there differences between women of different social and economic backgrounds. Women's fear of violence appears even more pervasive across society and space than previous research has suggested.

However, a principal contribution to knowledge has been made in this research by drawing a spatial distinction at a broader level: between fear in public space and fear in private space. While the former is so widespread as to cut across the usual, fairly well-defined 'boundaries' identified in patterns of fear of crime, the latter varies significantly according to women's social class. It is women in lower social classes who are most fearful of being attacked in private by known men, and although the evidence here is not conclusive, research elsewhere suggests that this may be related to a greater incidence of private violence.

This research also indicates that the effects of fear of violence on lifestyle, well-being, independence and opportunity are greater than recent research has suggested, and in this sense supports early feminist theories of violence as a social control of women. The effects of fear, or the use of coping strategies, are dispersed across space; they can be identified in private space, and intermediate spaces such as the workplace and social settings, as well as in public space. The effects of routinely fearing violence are pervasive and deep-seated, and may be psychological and emotional as well as behavioural. Overall, the effect of fearing violence can be to limit everyday routines, mobility, employment opportunities and leisure and social activities, and therefore it hinders the ability of many women to participate on equal terms with men in public, social and private life as feminists have argued. Where fear revolves around domestic violence or rape, it can work to control women to an even greater degree. Although women who have not experienced private violence distance this threat from themselves and tend to view it as avoidable, it is not experienced as such in practice.

Despite the identification of private space fear among around a quarter of the respondents, for most women there remains the 'spatial paradox' of fear to which geographers have pointed. There is a mismatch between the location of most women's fear (public space) and the location of greatest risk (private space).

The research has also highlighted other relevant and possibly growing worries, particularly fears about sexual harassment and fears for children's safety. Sexual harassment is a commonplace experience for the majority of women, both in childhood and adulthood, regardless of women's socio-economic backgrounds or areas of residence. Again, by looking at harassment across space rather than simply in public places, it is clear that it concerns women considerably more than other types of crime, that it imposes wide-ranging constraints on behaviour, and that it affects both the quality of life and equality of opportunity of many. Concern about children's safety from sexual and physical abuse presents another constraint on the spatial and social activity patterns of those who care for children. Evidence suggests that for the minority of mothers whose fears for their children also include private space, these limitations are even greater.

The research confirms criminologists' recent suggestions that fear is not equally distributed across society but tends to follow certain patterns of inequality, but also challenges some existing assumptions about these and highlights the value of a spatial analysis. The effect of social class, for example, is not to exacerbate all of the constraints imposed by crime, but rather this depends upon the spatial context of crime. Middle class women are as likely to employ coping strategies in response to the threat of violence which, although they may involve different tactics, still impose considerable constraints. However, as working class women's experiences of fear are more dispersed across space, their sense of their ability to control danger by linking it with space and hence the degree to which violence controls their lives may be less.

Likewise, the research shows that old age does not heighten women's concerns about violence, nor are older women more likely to employ precautionary behaviour in consequence. Older women are considerably less concerned about physical and sexual violence in public space than younger women, but they are equally concerned about physical and sexual violence in private space. Age is more relevant to the impact of crime where children are concerned, as there are strong indications that fear of violence affects children to a high degree. Considerable

restrictions are imposed on many children by their parents, who use the concept of vulnerability to justify their control of children's spatial and social activities. Again, there is a spatial mismatch between warnings and constraints, and the most likely location of violence, which has serious consequences for children's own feelings of security, for their exposure to risk and for the reproduction of adults' fear of crime.

The findings also suggest that disability can exacerbate vulnerability to crime and to the effects of crime, as fear of violence affects women with disabilities more than women in general. Significantly, this is equally true of women's responses to crime in private space as in public space. Following these suggestions that broad patterns of social inequality influence the spatial effects of fear, I have also drawn together an argument contending that race and ethnicity and sexual orientation may have the same effect in heightening women's and men's fear of crime and their sense of vulnerability in public and private space.

2. Process: explanations for fear

The research has sought to evaluate various explanations for women's fear which have been suggested by criminology, geography and feminist theory, and to posit new explanations as appropriate. The thesis that high rates of violence against women account for the commonness of fear has been examined. At least a third of women in the survey have experienced some form of sexual violence (defined in this research as aggressive behaviour involving physical contact). On closer examination of the spatial and social patterns of violence alongside those of fear, however, the first can not be held to explain the second. This is particularly true in the light of the spatial paradox: the majority of women fear violence in public space, yet most of the minority of women who have experienced violence have suffered it in private space.

While fears about private violence among a minority of women are therefore well justified by rates of private violence, the high degree of concern about public violence among the majority many women is less simple to explain. I have suggested that the powerful and distinct notions about the safety of public and private space which clearly exist require examination. Evidence suggests that a number of aspects of the social and physical environment have some role to play in shaping women's fears.

Many women express concern about features of the physical neighbourhood environment such as visible incivility, formal social control and the design of the built environment. However, I have shown that these are a way in which fear of violence is expressed rather than a root cause of it, suggesting that the social construction of space is more meaningful to explanation of the spatial paradox.

Influential notions about safety and space are constructed for many women by childhood socialisation: most women recall only being taught that strangers and public places pose sexual and physical danger. I have argued that this is not enough to explain the strong attachment between public space and danger which many women continue to make in adulthood. One reason for this contention is the fact that experiences of violence in childhood, like those in adulthood, are far more likely to involve men who are well known and ostensibly 'safe' private spaces.

More importantly, the research has also investigated geographers' claim that misinformation accounts for adult women's misplaced fears about sexual and physical danger, and has found that this can not be held to explain existing patterns of fear. The origins of perceptions about different spaces are complex. Not only are many women well-informed about the fact that violence is most common in private space, it is clear that this knowledge does not affect their feelings about their own safety. This finding is clearest by looking at perceptions about danger among women in different social classes. Middle class women tend to have more realistic perceptions about violence than working class women, ie they are more likely to express the opinion that it is most likely to occur in private space; yet this does not affect the fact that they are equally afraid of strangers and public places and equally likely to gear coping strategies only to this concern.

Clearly, many women not only invalidate their own experiences of violence as feminists have suggested, but also distance violence from themselves as a means of fear management. Women may distance violence from themselves socially or spatially, by linking it with attackers and victims in other social classes and areas, or by linking violence with the places and relationships which they as individuals feel they have some degree of control over. Distancing takes place regardless of the common sense knowledge which many middle class women in particular have accumulated about sexual and physical danger. Women's experiences of violence demonstrate that this feeling of control facilitated by distancing is illusory, while

the pervasiveness of coping strategies suggest that it is a damaging response to violence.

Hence the research has highlighted that there is a fourth and key paradox which needs to be tackled, one between rational knowledge and instinctive feelings about violence. This underpins the paradoxes I have already identified; that between levels of violence and levels of fear, that between experiences of violence and experiences of fear, and that between the location of violence and the location of fear.

The research has highlighted the necessity of exploring women's day to day experiences of danger in different places to understand why knowing that private space is more dangerous than public space is relatively safe does not follow through to believing and acting upon it. The findings have provided strong support for the suggestion that the common occurrence of sexual harassment in public places reinforces socially constructed notions about strangers and public places as dangerous. In this way, harassment often operates as a routine expression of power relations. In extending this thesis, the research also provides evidence that harassment has a parallel role in policing women's behaviour in private places and the workplace and thus has a significant and wide-ranging impact on the equality of opportunity.

However, experiences of harassment, the meanings they carry and their impact on women are diverse, and fear of violence is not always the outcome of individual encounters. Evidence from the research helps to modify the thesis of harassment as a blanket control of women by emphasising that the spatial, social and situational context influences exactly how it is experienced. The geography of sexual harassment has a profound effect on women's evaluation and the outcome of events, and hence on fear of violence. The existing and variable social relations in space may therefore be more important in explaining the paradoxes between the risk and fear of male violence as those which are expressed in the design and policing of and the symbolic and learnt messages attached to public and private space.

I have also considered possible explanations for high levels of fear of violence among other disadvantaged social groups. I have argued that particular forms of discriminatory, systematic violence mirror patterns of social inequality, and may explain a large part of the social variations in fear. Just as sexual violence and

inequality underpin disproportionately high levels of fear of crime among women, the impact of crime on older people, children, people with disabilities, people of colour and gay men and lesbians relates to specific forms of systematic abuse and control. In each case, violence reinforces notions about social relations in certain spaces, with the result that the 'false' distinction between public space as dangerous and private space as safe is upheld. Women, children and older people tend to avoid public places, whereas the risks they are prone to are considerably greater in the home. Homophobic violence and racist violence effectively police public space and exacerbate existing inequalities, while discrimination in the policing of violence means that less support is available for victims of private abuse. Racist, homophobic and ageist harassment have a parallel role to sexual harassment in maintaining control of certain spaces and further restricting the social and spatial activities of those who are or feel vulnerable to crime.

Hence feminist explanations of violence as a social control describe the experiences of other marginalised groups alongside women; by imposing spatial constraints, different forms of systematic violence reinforce existing patterns of social dominance. In conclusion, 'vulnerable' social groups should not be considered as exceptions to the general patterns of fear of crime in cities, but rather the centrality of their experiences and the strong relationship between fear and inequality should be underlined in future analysis.

3. Theory: contributions to geographical, criminological and feminist analysis

a) Geography

The research has demonstrated the importance of spatial analysis in descriptions and explanations of fear of crime. Areal and neighbourhood boundaries are far less pertinent to description of patterns of violence than to those of other types of crime. A broader conceptualisation of space is central to women's perceptions about sexual and physical violence, to how women learn about violence, to their reactions to violence and to their experiences of minor abuses. Powerful notions about space influence feelings of safety heavily, and the research findings support the conceptualisation of public and private space as distinct in many women's consciousnesses and activity patterns. However, while previous geographical research has concentrated on women's use of public space, this research has highlighted the fact that violence and fear can also impose considerable constraints in the workplace, in private and in social situations.

Previous explanations of women's fear in geography have been challenged by closer examination in this research of the spatial and social patterns of fear. In particular the notion of a spatial paradox between risk and fear has been modified by specifying who is most fearful, when and where. The research confirms, however, that many women's coping strategies are misplaced and has identified reasons as to why this continues to be the case, which ultimately has implications for the risks of violence women face. Conceptions of safe and dangerous spaces are dynamic and analysis in this thesis has accounted for this; in the face of improving information about violence, women's sense of control over their safety still relates to their sense of control over different spaces.

This research has introduced the impact of harassment as a topic for geographical analysis. Although it has not previously been the subject of geographical analysis, I have shown that sexual harassment has a geography which has a profound effect on how women experience place, on their sense of their vulnerability and on their fear of violence.

I have also drawn together different considerations of the impact of crime, spatial constraints and inequality by considering the spatial experiences of other social groups to which geographers have paid little or no attention - children, older people, gay men and lesbians, people of colour and people with disabilities - in the context of fear of crime. Again, the research confirms that in several cases private space as well as public space is a significant location for the risk and fear of crime. I have demonstrated how patterns of dominance are manifested in and reproduced by social control of different spaces.

b) Criminology

The research has challenged traditional conceptualisations of fear of crime and contributed to recent reconceptualisations through considering the nature of risk, fear, and vulnerability. I have highlighted some of the terminological and conceptual difficulties with 'fear of crime', suggesting based on the findings that it should best be understood as a constant or intermittent sense of anxiety. In an extensive exploration of women's reactions to sexual harassment, the research has demonstrated the importance of these minor abuses to feelings about crime. It has also suggested that the location of interest of criminological work on fear should involve private space as much as public space. The research has extended the concept of vulnerability to crime by demonstrating that experiences and fear of

violence and harassment relate to broader patterns of inequality, a point which is illustrated by drawing parallels with other disadvantaged social groups. A particularly important contribution to criminological discourse is the demonstration of the importance of fear of systematic violence in explaining the social and spatial patterns of fear of crime, while pointing out the need to recognise and acknowledge that individual experiences do not always reflect broader identifiable patterns. Finally, I have made consequential suggestions not only about the nature of risk but also, in an analysis of women's perceptions of and reactions to 'real' risks, about how risk is managed and assimilated into people's lives.

c) Feminist theory

The research has found broad support for the feminist view of violence and harassment as having a role in controlling women's lives and restricting their opportunities for equality. It also suggests that existing theory requires modification in several areas. First, I have argued the case for maintaining a distinction between sexual violence and sexual harassment, and for recognition of the fact that the impact of individual experiences can vary widely, in order to remain true to women's feelings and experiences. I have demonstrated that there is a need for theoretical understanding of the specific differences as well as the broad similarities in the ways in which men's power is asserted.

Secondly, the evidence strongly supports the claim that sexual violence acts as a social control on women's lives. However, I have expanded this basic theoretical position, in order to account for other forms of systematic violence and structures of inequality, ie for the intersections of race, ethnicity, age, class, ability, sexual orientation and gender; to explain the fact that systematic violence may act as a social control of other vulnerable individuals too, including some men; and to acknowledge the existence of exceptions to the general patterns in society and space.

Thirdly, I have evaluated feminist socialisation theory with empirical evidence. Although the research shows that childhood experiences have a bearing on adult fear of crime, the theory requires modification to account for the dynamism of social change both within individuals' lifeworlds and society more generally. In particular, I have intimated that the influence of individual factors must be reconciled with the broader structures of power with which feminists have been concerned.

d) Linking disciplines

The research has pointed to the relationships between these three bodies of theory and has illustrated how they might be linked up. Focusing on the importance of the expression of vulnerability in spatial constraint, a geographical approach has been linked to the discussions of inequality and crime of feminists and criminologists. In particular, drawing out the similarities and intersections between different forms of systematic violence as manifestations of power provides a meeting point and an avenue for future development of the theories I have discussed here.

B. AN EVALUATION OF PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

1. Introduction: the political context of crime prevention

Women's fear of sexual violence has attained the status of a social problem and has become a policy issue addressed within various central and local government initiatives. In the discussion which follows this introduction I go on to evaluate some of these. In this Section, I want to outline the broader context of crime prevention policy in Britain which has had a considerable effect on specific responses to the problem. Indeed, in many cases this political context has been more influential on policy responses than research findings and critiques, as I conclude at the end of the Section. Many policy responses to women's fear of crime can be criticised for providing superficial remedies or for being ineffective; at best for aiming to reduce the symptoms rather than the causes of fear, and at worst for exacerbating the problem by further restricting women and their opportunities. Some current policies aimed at reducing women's fear may actually heighten feelings of insecurity, and thereby are tightening the controls imposed on women's lives by male violence with which I have been concerned. Yet some initiatives continue to be implemented despite the fact that these inadequacies have been brought to light.

Current crime prevention policy is rooted in the political and economic context of the 1980s and the Conservative government's overall strategy on crime. Crime prevention developed as the central strand of this strategy over the last decade (Heal 1987), with the Crime Prevention Unit (CPU) of the Home Office being established in 1983. Rapidly rising crime rates, and disillusionment with traditional responses involving policing and punishment spurred the CPU on to devise new policies (Tilley 1993). The range of situational crime prevention initiatives which were recommended had several attractive features in the eyes of the Conservative administration:

> They did not entail "softness" towards offenders; they were uncritical of aspects of the social world which might otherwise be deemed to create criminality; and they removed responsibility for failure to control crime from the police.
>
> (Tilley 1993:43)

Thus a certain style of crime prevention policy has developed which, as I shall demonstrate, has been particularly inappropriate for tackling women's fear of

sexual violence. In particular I want to focus on three relevant contextual features as follows.

First, many crime prevention policies are based on a particular definition of crime and version of offenders and victims (Walklate 1989), and in certain cases this can curb their effectiveness. As victimisation surveys have indicated, the official operational version of 'crime' is far from its reality as experienced by the people of Britain; criminal behaviour is more widespread, more diverse, and less restricted in space than the official version acknowledges (eg Crawford et al 1990; Jones et al 1986; Kinsey 1984; see Chapter 2). This variance is especially relevant to violence against women which is far more widespread than is officially acknowledged, is experienced as involving a broad spectrum of behaviours including some which are not criminal in law, and the incidence and effects of which are not limited to public places (see Chapter 2). Yet the version around which the majority of prevention policies operate is that sexual violence is relatively rare, and that the fear evoked by isolated incidents is more of a problem than the crime itself. The evidence which has amassed over the last decade that this image of crime is flawed does not fit in with the overriding philosophy of crime and so, it has been argued, it is not surprising that this evidence has largely been ignored by policy-makers (Young 1988). The persistence of conventional images of crime in crime prevention policy means that major problems such as domestic and racist violence are largely overlooked (Stanko 1988a; Walklate 1989).

A second and related feature of crime prevention policy is that it is founded in the ideology of the right: it reflects the wider social goals of the British government since the 1980s. In particular this can be seen, as I go on to demonstrate, in an emphasis on the ability of individuals, families and communities to ward off crime which is essentially seen as an external threat. An interest in the family and traditional family values developed within the Conservative party since the 1970s which can be related to concern over changes in family structure and the breakdown of traditional moral standards. Hence there has been a general move towards family policy in social policy, and there is concern that this undermines the rights of individuals within the family, particularly women, children and the elderly (Franklin 1986; Wicks 1987). This is especially pertinent in the context of crime prevention for, as I have suggested, all three of these groups are most at risk from crime within the family. I go on to discuss this further with reference to particular policies. Meanwhile, while central government policy tends to uphold

the traditional image of the family, it denies the structural causes of much crime such as poverty, unemployment, sexism, racism and ageism.

Third, many crime prevention strategies reflect the broader economic context in an era where much public policy is aimed at lifting the financial burden from the state. The changes to family structure which I mentioned above have increased the burden on the welfare state and hence it is an aim of family and social policy generally to ease this by encouraging people to draw together and support each other rather than depending on the state. The responsibility for tackling crime, for example, has been delegated to communities, families and individuals, and more recently further extended with the partnership approach to involve local businesses (Home Office 1991). Again, the assumption is that family ties are not implicated in insecurity about crime.

Therefore, for reasons relating to its current context, crime prevention policy has yet to establish an approach which recognises the private nature of much victimisation (Stanko 1990a; Walklate 1989). Instead, many existing policies appear to legitimise the public nature of many women's fear of crime as I go on to illustrate. In Chapter 3 I presented the argument that sexual violence against women and children acts, through imposing fear, as a form of social control in restricting their behaviour and opportunities. In Chapter 4 I discussed some of the means by which women and children are educated about danger, and suggested that education about violence also has a role in maintaining these spatial restrictions. Similarly, crime prevention policy serves to maintain, rather than challenge, the dominant structures which oppress women (Stanko 1990b), and hence can be seen as another way in which women are kept in their place.

I now go on to expand this critique by evaluating examples of policy in action. I examine a range of issues and debates around the ways in which women's fear might be tackled which have arisen in recent years. I evaluate various strategies in the light of my findings, and also within the political setting which I have outlined here. Some of what is said also applies to crime prevention with reference to the other high risk groups I have identified, such as older people, people of colour and gay men and lesbians. However, there has been little if any attention to the specific needs of these groups in crime prevention policy and this constitutes a further source of disadvantage. At the end of this Section I conclude by assessing how far social policy can be expected to contribute to reducing fear of systematic violence.

With these reservations I then go on to present the recommendations arising from this research which would address the structural causes of crime and fear of crime which current policy precludes.

2. Safer spaces: fear reduction in public space

a) The design of public space

It has been suggested that urban design has a considerable impact on women's fear of attack in public places (Chapter 4). During the 1980s, various interest groups stressed the need to actively reduce women's fear of male violence by this means; often in the context of a range of benefits which might come from challenging the design of traditional housing environments based on traditional male and female roles and a distinction between public and private space (Chapter 4). Improving women's safety in the built environment has been widely discussed alongside general issues such as community, mobility, facilities and space for women (eg Kelly 1986; Mazey and Lee 1983; Metrac 1990; Womens Design Service 1988), and examples of consequent policy recommendations include improvements to lighting, more efficient repair programmes, greater care in housing allocation, and changes to estate design and public transport with women's safety as a priority. Several local councils have made efforts to improve the design of housing estates with the reduction of women's fear of attack as a specific priority (see Valentine 1991), and it continues to play a part in Safer Cities Schemes (Trench et al 1992). Manchester City Council is fairly typical of the larger urban local authorities, having had a Women and Planning Group since 1986 which oversees the incorporation of women's safety issues into the broader planning mechanisms of the council. The group has produced a planning guide for this purpose and has devised several environmental improvement schemes.

The success of many such schemes have not yet been evaluated, and indeed testing their effectiveness would be complicated. However, despite the existence of evidence which provides support that environmental improvements can improve general feelings of safety from crime, my research suggests that changes in the built environment are less effective in reducing women's specific fears about violence. Research elsewhere also suggests that social cues in the built environment are more important than design to women's perceptions of danger (Painter 1989; Warr 1990; see Chapter 4). The experience of harassment in public places is a particularly important example (Chapter 5). Making changes to the built environment is no solution to the threats and intimidation routinely received by

women in public places: fear of sexual violence is not restricted in space, nor is the female condition of being 'universally vulnerable' (Stanko 1987b). A more generalised sense of insecurity which relates to fear of crime and may dog women in different areas of their lives is only most expressed most visibly in public places. Hence, and this is particularly true of women's fear of sexual violence, reductions in fear of crime through changes to environmental design can only be achieved as part of a wider package of social and economic measures (Stollard 1991).

However, urban design remains a relatively attractive policy solution to women's fear. As a remedy to fear of crime, it offers the opportunity of presenting a relatively simple solution, and of reducing the problem to a purely technical one, without tackling the underlying causes of fear (Smith 1983; Womens Design Service 1988). As a preventive policy it is also underpinned by the assumption that most crime is opportunistic (Walklate 1989), in contrast to which violence against women (and, as I have argued, other forms of systematic abuse) is more often systematic and based on more deep-rooted inequalities.

A final point is that it is not just women who experience fear of attack in public places, and it is questionable how realistic a goal it is for urban planning to address the concerns of those who feel disadvantaged by their age, disability or race. Likewise, would tackling the newly recognised problem of men's fear of attack through employing design strategies conflict with the concerns about the women in my research? Safety from violence should not be seen as a special need; the creation of relatively safe enclaves for certain groups within cities carries the danger of removing attention from the requisite that all places should be safe.

b) <u>The policing of public space</u>

In Chapter 4 I described the dissatisfaction with levels of visible policing in Edinburgh among women in each of the three study areas. This general feeling about the police ranges from minor irritation in Corstorphine to anger and fear among many women in Pilton. The general perception is that there are few police to be seen on the streets, and that the tendency to use cars rather than patrol on foot means they are far less effective in acting as a deterrent or apprehending criminals. In Pilton concern is particularly great, partly because of its higher crime rate but also owing to the timelag experienced by many women on calling the police to incidents of burglary or vandalism. The police are commonly perceived by women in Pilton as frightened themselves of the visible incivility in the area: two women

describe the police staying in their cars while teenagers from rival estates fought in the middle of Pilton. Overall, women feel unprotected. Although there is no evidence that tough measures such as increased policing work to reduce victimisation (Walklate 1989), a large literature confirms the link between public confidence in policing and fear of crime (eg Allen and Payne 1991b; Baker et al 1983; Box et al 1988; Brown and Wycoff 1987; Kelling 1987; Kinsey et al 1986; Maxfield 1987; Pate et al 1986). A recent study of contact patrol programmes in London and Birmingham suggests that fear is not reduced directly by initiatives designed to improve policing, but that they can lead to increases in neighbourhood satisfaction, ties between neighbours and between the public and the police, all of which contribute to residents' feelings of security (Bennett 1991).

In the context of women's specific fears, the visible policing of public space is not always relevant as many women also fear crime happening in other places, as well as worrying about more minor incidents of harassment which are not officially defined as criminal. My research shows that women generally have low confidence in the ability of police and legal system in apprehending and punishing sexual violence offenders. This opinion does not appear to be linked to levels of fear of sexual violence (see Chapter 4), but may influence the general sense of security and status which underpin fear of crime.

One problem with policing initiatives is that they carry the danger of 'fostering an orientation of protectionism rather than autonomous safety for women' (Stanko 1990b:181). Increased local policing is very unlikely to reduce violence against women, and has so far done little to reduce sexual or physical violence or fears about it. However, in the eyes of many women, policing is a symbol of the formal control of public space (Valentine 1989b), and as such there exists the possibility of policing instilling a degree of confidence in women. Particularly in areas such as Pilton which are out of control at certain times, improvements in policing might have a role in giving women greater access to public places. This proposal for change is certainly very popular amongst the residents I interviewed.

Although the Conservative government has given symbolic support to the tough approach to crime, no extra resources have been made available for increased police patrols in local areas. It should be noted that the quality as well as the quantity of policing has a bearing on residents' feelings of security (Smith 1983); local policing initiatives which have been community oriented have had

considerable success (Cordner 1986). There is clearly something of a conflict between the tough policing of public spaces and sensitive community policing which is likely to make people feel safer in those spaces. In relation to women's fear of attack outside the home, the second form of policing may well be more valuable in fear reduction.

c) Community involvement in public space

Increasing the participation and involvement of individuals in crime prevention has had a major role in current crime prevention philosophy and policy relating to the shift in ideas about responsibility which I have mentioned. An important aspect of this has been the attempt to foster community spirit. Research suggests that the less people like living in an area, the more vulnerable they feel to crime, and vice versa (Smith 1983). In my research I found that women who have social or family ties in an area and are friendly with immediate neighbours tend to feel safer than those who do not. As well as the security of knowing that there is 'someone to go to if anything happened', it also engenders a sense of belonging. This sense of community is noticeably less in Haymarket, where respondents' average length of residence is shorter than in Corstorphine or Pilton (Figure 1.6). In Corstorphine, owner-occupancy may well contribute to residents' general sense of security (Smith 1989), while many women in Pilton have long standing friends and family in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, local ties are of little help when violence is taking place in the home. Most of the women who have suffered domestic violence say that they tried to conceal it from their friends, family and neighbours.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes, one of the main spearheads and symbols of crime prevention policy, work on the basis that the existence of community spirit can reduce crime and make residents feel safer. Research has shown, however, that they have had little or no impact (Bennett 1987). Moreover, they are most likely to be successful among middle class, white owner-occupiers (Donnison et al 1986): in areas where fear of crime is high but actual risks are low. In Corstorphine, which has the highest uptake of Neighbourhood Watch schemes among the women in my research, interviewees said that it had made them feel a little safer initially. The schemes were generally well-received as a welcome chance to meet the neighbours, but involvement tended to tail off after first meeting. In less affluent areas, mutual protection and 'looking out' for each other more often carry on without this formal bond, and indeed Neighbourhood Watch may be viewed with more suspicion. However in areas where crime rates are high (and, therefore, prevention is most

important) the threat is often not external, but crimes are committed by people living in the same area. Many women in Pilton, for example, know of or have themselves been victims of crimes committed by men and boys in their own or adjacent tenement blocks. Although the identity of local criminals may be common knowledge, it can not always be proven to the police. Hence these women's fears about being burgled or attacked are heightened.

Despite the evidence that Neighbourhood Watch schemes have little effect in reducing crime or fear of crime, they continue to play a key role in local crime prevention policies; they fit a philosophy of crime in which families and communities are encouraged to bind together to ward off a supposedly external threat.

d) Summary

'Safe space' initiatives, some of which I have outlined here, work on the assumption that the threat of crime comes from outside the community, outside the family, and outside the individual's home. In Chapters 2 and 3 I demonstrated that this is not true for many women, either in terms of their experiences, their fear or their perceptions of crime. These initiatives are based on the premise that if public space is made to seem less hostile, fear of crime will be less. However, women's fear of sexual violence is well-founded on the basis of the risk of attacks and harassment which occur across space, and to which the initiatives discussed so far are of little relevance. Although it has been assumed in the past that women's fear and the risk of violence against women are unrelated and should be tackled separately (Young 1988), it is clear that fear will not be reduced until policy is aimed at violence itself. I now go on to look at some strategies by which this is being done.

3. A safe society: offender centred initiatives

In past decades there have been many criticisms over the way in which the state deals with the offenders and survivors of sexual violence. As I outlined in Chapter 3, it has been widely argued that sexism in rape law reflects and perpetuates sexism in society (LeGrand 1977), and that the state's 'rhetoric of protection' has failed to protect women from violence (Hanmer and Stanko 1985). Over the last decade a shift in attitudes can be identified which constitutes a new social movement for change in regard to violence against women (Dobash and Dobash 1992). This has come about partly in response to growing public awareness of the shortfalls of policing, the judicial and penal systems with regard to sexual violence. I discuss the impact of this shift in attitudes at the end of this Section. Here, I want to look at some of current initiatives aimed at reducing violence against women, and at the state of policy with regard to the prevention of other forms of systematic violence. Concerning the reduction of sexual violence, two main initiatives can be identified in Britain; those which are aimed at encouraging women to report sexual crimes and thereby convicting more offenders, and those aimed at preventing offenders from repeating their crimes.

a) Encouraging women to report sexual violence

The police have been criticised in the past for insensitive treatment of women who report rape and sexual assault, for belittling survivors' experiences and for putting less effort into recording and following up crimes than might be expected (London Rape Crisis Centre 1984). In response to this, 'rape suites' were introduced to some police stations in 1985, special units where rape survivors were assured of more sympathetic care and treatment. By the end of 1992, 28 of the country's 43 police forces had one, and this may have contributed to the recent increase in reports of sexual violence (Chapter 1).

Similarly, in response to criticisms concerning an apparent lack of interest in domestic violence as a crime by the police and other authorities (Binney 1981; Hoff 1990; Mama 1989; Pizzey 1974), a number of domestic violence policing units have been introduced since 1990. With these mainly city based units has come greater commitment to take domestic violence seriously, to charge violent men if their wives or girlfriends ask it, and to implement a range of alternative measures such as issuing deferred cautions to frighten offenders into stopping violent behaviour. The presence of these units have contributed to an increase in

reported domestic violence in certain areas (although, as with rape, reports still represent a minority of attacks). Their success in deterrence is not yet clear.

These changes are not intended to tackle the causes of violence against women, but by encouraging women to report attacks the aim is to deter and punish offenders. However, my discussions with women who have experienced violence as well as those who have not suggest that ultimately the effect on reporting levels by improvements such as these will be small. Of the six interviewees who discussed their experiences of domestic violence, two had reported incidents to the police. Of these one, Diana, had gone on to court but was only able to gain an injunction to prevent her husband from seeing their child, not to prosecute him for the severe violence he had inflicted on her. The second woman, Ulrike, was encouraged by the police not to press charges. Two other women who had been sexually attacked by a stranger and a male friend had chosen not to report to the police. Most of these attacks took place before the recent improvements to the treatment of complainants (although it should be noted that Lothian and Borders Police do not yet have a domestic violence unit). However, the women's reasons for not reporting were more to do with wanting to avoid trauma and fear of reprisals than concern about the quality of treatment by the police. Many other women who are aware of the recent changes still say that they would not report rape if it happened to them.

> Although women are supposed to be treated in a special way now, you know they're taken into special rooms and there are women police constables there to question them, I think a lot of women are still put off reporting things. Women do feel that if they report then they still have to be questioned an awful lot, and they may have to be questioned about things like um their sexual history and sexual activity, relationships and everything, really which is irrelevant.
>
> Rebecca, Corstorphine

Rebecca's concerns reflect a core problem of under-reporting: that court proceedings have not improved in sexual offences cases. A recent Home Office study showed that court proceedings still favour the defendant in rape cases - 75% of cases which come to court fail to win a conviction (Grace et al 1993). Moreover, rape survivors' sexual history is often used to discredit them (Soothill and Soothill 1993). Although Section 2 of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976 was passed in an attempt to end the harassment and humiliation of rape survivors in court, it has not succeeded in practice. A recent examination of Scottish sexual offences trials confirmed that women's sexual histories are still

frequently considered relevant to their willingness to consent to sex (Brown et al 1992). The majority of the women I interviewed are well aware of these shortcomings and felt unprotected by the legal system.

It's often like the woman's to blame, that's the impression I get. It's er, she's sorta put in awkward positions like she's the guilty one, she's got to prove that she's innocent. While he's innocent and it's got to be proven he's guilty.

Amanda, Pilton

I think that for a man, and for a judge, or for any man to say "well she asked for it", I think that's just - oh I really can't describe it, but I really don't think in this day and age, if women have to go around and think "now can I walk up this street, and if I'm raped am I asking for it?" - I think that's ludicrous. And to say, another way is "well, she's asking for it, look how she's dressed", is another way. I mean it's just - I really think it's an easy get out for men and for judges to justify sentences that are next to nothing. I honestly do not see why a man should get off after he's done it, he gets off with even a year or two - even five years in prison - is nothing compared to what the woman has to live with for the rest of her life. And I mean if my husband heard me he'd say I was a right feminist [laughs] but no, I think that's right and I've always felt that.

Nell, Corstorphine

Some further inadequacies of the system when men have actually been convicted are demonstrated by Barbara's experiences. She has lived in fear for over twenty years after going to court to help convict the man who raped her when she was twelve:

I still hear about the same guy getting in and out of prison just like that. There were seven girls involved at the time, it wasn't just myself, and it was like as if he got one year for each girl. And he got out three years later cos they only serve a third of their time if they're on good behaviour. Now when it happened to me my hair was down there [waist-length] and I still had long hair when my mother showed me the piece in the paper that he got let out. I had all my hair chopped off, I was terrified he would come and look for me ... He is sixty years old now. He was thirty two when it happened to me. And he's still doing it.

Barbara, Pilton

Barbara's concerns are that the jail sentence her rapist was given was far too short, and that being in prison has not deterred him from reoffending.

Without a fair legal system underpinning the improvements in the way that sexual violence is policed, they remain limited in effectiveness. The relevant changes to legal proceedings might not reduce the number of attacks, and over-emphasis on their importance masks the fact that the actual causes of offending go far beyond the individual to the societal and structural (Walklate 1989). However, changes to

the legal system would have a bearing on women's confidence and, again, their sense that the state is condemning violence and is on their side. This symbolic protection is the main policy change which the women in the survey said that they would like to see, ahead of changes to the built environment, educative measures or policing.

b) The rehabilitation of offenders

Because of long-standing concerns that imprisoning sex offenders postpones rather than eradicates their reoffending (see Barbara's account above), a comprehensive policy to provide psychological treatment in British prisons was introduced in 1990. Treatment typically involves trying to arouse offenders' sympathy for their victims and encouraging them to identify the factors which led to the offence. There is some evidence that this can reduce the likelihood of reoffending after release. Similar programmes to 'reform' men who have committed domestic violence exist, such as Lothian Regional Council Social Work Department's Domestic Violence Probation Project. While offenders are on probation, they undergo an obligatory course which aims to make them face up to their violence and its effects. Although it was intended to reach all prisons, the sex offender rehabilitation scheme has been underfunded and some prisons have had to withdraw due to resourcing problems. At first the scheme was offered to every sex offender serving four or more years: since then the lower limit has been raised to those serving seven or more years (Guardian 23.9.92). Only one British prison, Grendon Underwood near Oxford, operates a comprehensive therapeutic regime.

Aside from this lack of commitment from central government, the problem with such schemes as one of the leading strategies in a violence reduction policy is that they only reach a tiny minority of violent men. Only around 3000 men are imprisoned for sexually related offences in UK (Guardian 23.9.92), most men charged with rape do not go to jail (Grace et al 1993), and most rapes are not reported in the first place; therefore although probation and prison schemes may be useful in the short term, they miss the majority of offenders and are based on the premise of cure rather than prevention. Long term strategies which target men before they commit offences are clearly necessary for a significant reduction in sexual violence. This is especially true of private violence reduction, which is failed by current practice; men who are known to the women they rape are far less likely to be convicted than men who are strangers (Grace et al 1993).

c) Policing the private

Hence there is a need for policy to focus particularly on policing and preventing private violence. There is a locational bias in the sexual attacks which are reported, and many women feel, justifiably, that the response to reported attacks taking place outside is more likely to be sympathetic and effective than those taking place in private situations. Although husbands' immunity from prosecution for rape ended in 1989 in Scotland, and in 1991 in England and Wales after an historic test case, problems are still to be expected in reporting, charging and convicting men for marital rape. Most of the strategies I have described above have the best chance of working for violence between strangers. Among the women I interviewed, and from remarks written on questionnaires, there is a great deal of anger about issues of policing and punishing rapists (and considerable support for castration as a punishment); but again this mainly applies only to stranger rape.

I think you've got a very different situation when you're accusing a husband of raping a wife, I think that's a very different situation there. It's also very difficult to prove. But when somebody's raped on the street there certainly should be um more uniformity and more understanding of what the woman's going through.

Myra, Corstorphine

Well I know I would have castrated my ex-husband, I'll tell you that, if I got away with it.

Diana, Corstorphine (marital rape survivor)

Meanwhile voluntary bodies such as Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Centres and counselling services are presently experiencing serious resource shortages. These services provide important crime prevention measures in helping women to escape from violent men.

Strategies for the improved policing and prosecution of child abuse offenders, both strangers and known adults, have improved far more. Firstly there exists a bill of children's rights in the form of the 1989 Children Act; multi-agency codes of practice have been devised for investigating child abuse; counselling for child sexual abuse survivors is readily available; and the trauma of giving evidence in court has been lessened by the introduction of video links, so that a child giving evidence does not have to be in the same room as the attacker. The most recent development is an information pack to prepare children of different ages for the trauma of court proceedings. Although belated, these measures have been widely welcomed. The fact that adult women who suffer sexual abuse do not receive the

same degree of official support appears as a sign that less importance is attributed to their experiences and that condemnation of their attackers is less.

d) Policing systematic violence

There is less support still for survivors of other forms of systematic abuse (Chapter 6). Here policy responses, or the dearth of them, can be seen as a similar reflection of the value in which society holds certain people. Although crime prevention policy has at least taken on sexual violence against women and children, few initiatives are aimed at the specific problems created by elder abuse, homophobic violence, racist violence or the particular concerns which they may create.

Policy responses to older people's fear of crime tend to focus on public space although, as I argued in Chapter 6, violence in private space may be a greater concern. Safety advice is disseminated to older people by police forces and by central government which does not acknowledge that, where it is a problem, older people's fear of crime might be a product of broader insecurities, but is based on the assumption that older people actually believe they are very likely to be attacked outside. Hence, the literature gives assurances to the tone of 'there is not a lot of crime against elderly people; they remain the least likely of all victims' (Scottish Office 1990), but still recommends a list of public space precautions which are damaging to personal freedom or which involve greater expense than many older people can afford.

Action on elder abuse, by contrast, has been slow. Here, again, the current emphasis on family-oriented policy is counterproductive to the detection and reduction of violence against older people. In particular, recent community care reforms may exacerbate the vulnerability of some older people and hinder the detection of elder abuse by informal family carers (Cohen 1993). Elder abuse has not been taken on by the media or policy-makers in the same way that child abuse has (Penhale 1993), and health workers and local authorities lack the same legal powers to protect people who are known to be at risk. However, the government issued national guidelines in the summer of 1993 which are aimed at raising awareness and cover the identification of the problem and how to deal with it. The officially touted solution to elder abuse remains respite care, which rarely works (Penhale 1993); this approach assumes that abuse caused by over stressed and over worked carers. Instead, the problem lies in abusive relationships and inequalities of power.

The policing of anti-gay and lesbian violence is less evident still. Although the Metropolitan Police in London have six homophobic violence units, have been monitoring attacks for the last two years and trying to improve relations with gay communities to encourage the reporting of attacks, in general the attitude of the police has been criticised for a lack of interest. Outside London there are few such initiatives, and no schemes exist in Scotland despite several highly publicised attacks on and murders of gay men in recent years.

Local authorities, police forces and social services have also been accused of a lack of support for victims of racist attacks. This is changing gradually; some housing authorities now have coherent policies for dealing with racist attacks, police officers are better trained, and more cohesive working guidelines exist which facilitate inter-agency intervention. However, criticisms remain that, in the face of an increasing problem, nothing has been done to tackle the causes of racist harassment and violence.

One problem, as elsewhere, lies with the categorisation of assaults. The discriminatory nature of many assaults against gay men and lesbians, or people of colour, is rarely acknowledged in official crime statistics. In July 1993, the government rejected calls for the creation of new crime of racial assault, in the context of increasing reports and widespread concern about racist violence. As long as racial and homophobic attacks and attacks against disabled people are dealt with under existing laws on assault, the extent and causality of much systematic violence remains hidden. Racism also permeates mechanisms which should help people of colour escape from violence (Ginsburg 1988; Mama 1989), and local initiatives to combat racist violence have tended to concentrate on reacting to violence rather than prevention (Cooper and Pomeyie 1988).

e) Policing harassment

As most forms of harassment, both of women and of other vulnerable groups, are not officially perceived to be criminal despite creating much concern, there are limitations to how far it can be policed. There are problems with its criminalisation, mainly concerning the definitional issues I discussed in Chapter 5. The harassment of women, for example, is sometimes seen as bearing close relation to the 'acceptable' ways in which men and women interact. Sexual harassment has recently been criminalised in France, albeit in a narrow context: it is a jailable and finable offence if a superior uses his or her rank to seek sexual

favours in the workplace. The experiences of the women in my research suggest that this definition only covers a minority of cases of the harassment women commonly suffer.

In Britain, there exist mechanisms by which women can complain about sexual harassment but there are many common sense reasons why women often do not take formal action (Chapter 5). It is very hard to prove; harassment at work is only unlawful if the sufferer can prove subjection to detriment, for example dismissal or being passed over for promotion. Otherwise she or he must prove that 'a reasonable woman worker in the same situation would or might have taken the view that she had been put under a disadvantage in the circumstances in which she had to work' (Grewal 1990). This is clearly problematic. Moreover, my research has shown that harassment is not limited in space, in the sorts of behaviours or relative positions or relationships between those involved. Much harassment takes place in public space and, evidence suggest private space and is very rarely reported in these circumstances.

There is clearly a need to re-emphasise what sexual harassment means in terms of women's experiences and to counteract its invisibility in policy and trivialisation in general. The women in my research all expressed keenness that it be taken seriously: at the very least this might provide those who suffer harassment with the confidence to tackle it themselves.

f) Summary

That many inadequacies remain in the policing and prosecution of the perpetrators of systematic violence and abuse in Britain is also a function of geography: several other western countries are further ahead in providing symbolic and practical support for survivors. Canada, for example, passed a national declaration on violence against women in 1990, has banned the use of women's sexual history as evidence in rape trials, has 24-hr social workers attached to police stations to deal with domestic violence, and a well-developed sex therapy programme for offenders. Such interventions do not address the causes of violence against women. However, given sufficient political will it seems that policy can encompass some of the concerns which have been raised by the feminist movement, although there are always differences in opinion on the best way to tackle violence and the introduction of such legislation is rarely unproblematic (Addis 1989; Edwards 1990; Los 1990). Britain lags behind partly owing to a right wing administration

which offers rhetorical support for a tough approach to crime but whose philosophy of crime still provides a stumbling block to many initiatives, whose cuts in public spending have curbed available resources, and whose lack of action on other issues of gender equality have meant violence is less likely to reach the political agenda.

4. Safe conduct: victim centred initiatives

If environmental interventions are unlikely to have much effect on women's fear of violence, and as the political will to tackle the causes of violence is lacking, where has policy been concentrated? The third area of crime prevention I want to consider here is those strategies which are aimed at victims of violence or fear. Emphasising the importance of the individual's role in crime prevention has been a major tenet of policy in recent years, and since the late 1980s the government has recommended and publicised action which people should take to avoid becoming a victim of crime. Information on how to protect property is often presented under the same cover as how individuals (especially women, children and the elderly) can prevent personal attack. Yet this latter advice has more serious consequences; as I described in Chapter 3, measures taken to protect houses or cars do not have the same implications for freedom and the quality of life as protecting the self. I now want to discuss official attitudes towards how women can avoid violence, and how they ought to react when threatened.

a) <u>The official safety advice</u>

In Chapter 4, I demonstrated that the advice which adult women received when they were children differs little from what parents teach their children about sexual safety today. I suggested reasons as to why parents continue to give an inaccurate and incomplete stranger danger message. Schools and the police also play an important role in safety education, and it would seem reasonable for parents to want to follow the 'official' line; but until very recently the message given has also been focused on avoiding strangers rather than dealing with the possibility of abuse from known adults.

Work on sexual abuse in schools is part of a broad programme of police educational liaison work informing children about various dangers, which is taken up by the majority of schools, curricula time allowing. The current campaign, 'Stranger Danger', was launched in 1989, although it has had similar predecessors for decades. Beginning with five year old children, it is an ongoing programme at varying levels of input through the primary years. It is described as 'the main plank

of educational liaison work' and 'very relevant in the context of the dangers facing children and welcomed by the vast majority of schools' (internal document, Lothian and Borders Police).

My discussion of child sexual assault in Chapter 3 shows that while this programme may be relevant to parental fears it is far less relevant to the dangers facing children. While it is the 'main plank' of the police work in schools, it makes no mention of child sexual assault by known adults, which is far more common. That stranger danger continues to be given such priority in children's safety education justifies parents' warnings and therefore the legitimacy of the control frequently asserted in restricting children's access to public places. While the 1989 Children Act which was brought in by the Conservative administration has improved children's rights in some areas, the right to accurate and representative safety advice is not being met. The stranger danger message suits the right wing ideology of the family, which I have already referred to, as much as parental concerns.

Away from this main backbone, education about private as well as public dangers is beginning to improve. Recently some police forces have introduced the 'Feeling Yes, Feeling No' programme alongside 'Stranger Danger'. This originates from a Canadian scheme and has been developed in Britain over the last few year by a multi-disciplinary team. It is targeted at preventing sexual abuse by giving children the relevant skills and includes some reference to known adults as well as strangers. The advice given to children is similar to that from Kidscape (see below). Follow up programmes have demonstrated some success; children who have undergone the programme were significantly less likely to go with strangers in tests than those who had not been trained (personal communication, Lothian and Borders Police).

Kidscape, a private organisation, has been active in preventing various forms of abuse since 1984. Its ten point code contains simple guidelines which can be taught to children of any age; the advice contained is aimed to be applicable to any threatening situation with other children, strangers or known adults. They counter stereotypes of strangers; teach children that it is alright to say no to adults, run away or shout; and teach the difference between good secrets and bad secrets (see Elliott 1986). Kidscape's guidelines have been incorporated into the work of some schools, but because the teaching tools, publications and videos are a stretch on

scarce resources many schools have preferred to take up the police programmes. The Kidscape advice can also be found in the most recent Home Office and Scottish Office crime prevention literature. Advice for protecting teenagers, however, again refers only to stranger danger, and stresses the importance of protecting teenagers from public space at dangerous times (Scottish Office 1990).

Therefore, while there is some information about private risks in educational programmes, by no means all children are exposed to it. The 'Feeling Yes, Feeling No' programme has not yet reached full capacity and is only aimed at children above ten years old, by which time preventive advice comes too late for many victims of sexual abuse. While there have been calls for safety education to become an integrated part of school curricula (Stanko 1990b), at present not even basic sex education is obligatory under the National Curriculum. The onus for education is left to parents which, as my research also suggests, means that many children are inadequately informed about or prepared for the risk of private sexual danger.

The possibilities of large scale campaigns to educate women about sexual danger are fewer, as there is no captive audience such as that provided by schools. Adults' existing perceptions about danger come from personal and second-hand experiences, childhood education and the media (Chapter 4). Despite this, the main strategy of both the police and the Home Office in preventing crime against women has been offering safety advice in booklets and videos which most women in my research had not come across. The reasoning behind much of this literature is to allay women's fears about violent attack, a policy based on early crime surveys from which it was assumed that women's fears are irrational because actual rates of sexual violence were found to be low (eg Hough and Mayhew 1983). Accordingly, women's fear and violence against women have been treated separately rather than as being intrinsically linked (Crawford et al 1990).

The official advice for women shares the same stranger danger emphasis as much of the advice aimed at parents of children. However, while children's education is beginning to improve there are no centralised schemes or policies for informing, warning and providing support service contacts to women about private abuse. Stranger danger advice, on the other hand, is burgeoning. There are now numerous booklets offering guidance on how best to avoid being raped, mugged or physically

assaulted in public space. The emphasis is on avoiding stereotypically dangerous situations and behaviour considered appropriate to women:

Don't take short cuts through dark alleys or across waste ground.

(Home Office 1991a)

Try to walk in the centre of the pavement.

(Metropolitan Police 1987)

Think about the impact your clothes may have on others.

(Department of Transport 1991)

The Metropolitan Police's most recent leaflet 'Positive Driving' covers safety in a wide range of driving situations, despite the fact that attacks on women while driving are extremely rare. In common with all the police booklets, the advice goes much further than information on how to deal with potential attackers: the high degree of precautionary information contains clear messages about femininity and images of senseless, impractical females in need of protection:

Find out where the jacking-points are, and practice changing the wheel under supervision until you are confident.

(Metropolitan Police 1992)

In a critique of this crime prevention strategy, Stanko (1990b) has described its shortcomings as follows. The literature contains reminders to women that they are very unlikely to become a victim of violent crime, rarely mentioning the reality of private violence. Meanwhile they give assurance that the advised precautions will reduce victimisation, ignoring the fact that the majority of women take many such precautions in their daily lives anyway and they have little if any impact on victimisation. Other precautions can be criticised for involving considerable expense, such as installing phone extensions, security locks or using private transport. Overall, the message confirms women's fear that the responsibility is on them to avoid attack.

The aim of the crime prevention literature is to reduce women's fears about violence in public places, but it seems more likely that it increases concern. The level of resources and effort put into this campaign may have the effect of appearing to women to legitimise and justify 'irrational' fears. In my research, 15.9% of the women say that their fear of sexual attack has been increased by warnings or advice from the police (Table 4.7), despite most of the women in the

survey not having come across any of the advice. The safety advice heightens images of a relatively small public space threat.

Again, ignoring the real dangers of private violence in safety education reflects the right wing belief in the privacy and legitimacy of family matters. The image portrayed in the safety literature is of families pulling together and warding off an external threat. Instead of challenging harmful behaviour which is a major drag on many women's freedom and opportunities, this approach furthers the controls on women's lives which I described in Chapter 3. The Home Office is currently considering updating its literature, but despite the criticisms of it, no significant changes are expected. In the future, the safety advice will be general rather than specifically referring to women. There is likely only to be a passing reference to domestic violence; the Home Office does not see itself as having a role in educating women either about the extent of intra-family violence or about how to deal with it (personal communication, CPU, Home Office).

Knowing that the majority of attacks take place in private may not reduce women's fears (Chapter 4). However, accurate education about the spatial risks involved in sexual and physical violence is a right which would enable women to make better informed choices about the coping strategies they employ. At present many women's coping strategies are misplaced, curtail freedom, and may breed further insecurity.

b) <u>The self defence issue</u>

Many women in the research say that the main reason why they are fearful of attack, and indeed he main reason why they employ so much precautionary behaviour, is that they feel physically vulnerable to male aggression. In some cases this is because of perceived or actual disadvantages in terms of strength, stature or ability (Chapter 6), but often it is because women do not feel that they have the necessary skills to deal with danger. Girls are commonly taught to suppress aggressive feelings, and not be violent. Hence a common structural vulnerability, partly constructed by the learnt messages which I discussed in Chapter 4, compounds the physical vulnerability which a few women feel.

My worry I suppose is could I, would I be able to react appropriately? Would I be able to fight a man off who let's face it is probably going to be bigger and stronger than me, would I be able to hit him? Because I have never hit anyone to my knowledge. You know, so I'm not used to reacting in that manner.

Ann, Haymarket

I feel that I don't know how to react if someone attacked me. I definitely wouldn't know how to fight back at someone. Though I don't know if that's the right thing to do anyway, sometimes it might be better just to go limp or engage them in talking or whatever.

Mary, Haymarket

Although this aspect of fear is clearly a leading concern, it is not addressed by current policies. The focus of the safety advice which I discussed above is on avoiding danger rather than confronting it. The findings of my research, and of those elsewhere, would suggest that avoiding perceived danger in this way is harmful to women's lives. On the other hand, learning how to cope if anything does happen offers the possibility of getting on with everyday life with more confidence, less effect on the quality of life and fewer restrictions on opportunity. However, there is a silence in all the safety literature on self defence: despite the fact that self defence courses for women are now widely available, this positive approach to danger is not officially sanctioned. For years, police advice has been that women should not fight back when attacked; the assumption is often that self defence does not to help avoid attack, that being beaten up trying to escape is worse than submitting to rape (although most women would disagree), and moreover that innocent men may suffer if women go around being aggressive.

All of the precautionary tactics that are officially sanctioned are based around a traditional female role, and fall short of actual defence with force (Bart and O'Brien 1985). But as well as the fact that evidence of a struggle is central to successful prosecution in rape cases, self defence is the only strategy which has been consistently shown by research to help women avoid rape (Bart and O'Brien 1985; Block and Skogan 1982; Sanders 1980). Not surprisingly, my research shows that formal self defence training is far less widespread than the use of other precautionary behaviour. Only 4.9% of the women in the survey have learnt self defence (see Table 3.14). However, several interviewees say that they would try to defend themselves using informal knowledge if they were attacked, and a couple of these women had successfully fought off attackers.

There were one or two times when somebody was coming up to attack me, I pretended I'd done self defence and that seemed to be enough. Just sort of leapt in the air and took a

stance, yelled at the top of my voice. So I looked like a very convincing kung-fu but I wouldn't have known what to do next!

Elaine, Haymarket

Other women were worried that they would not know what to do if they were attacked, or that although they had mentally prepared strategies they would freeze and react badly in a real situation. 8.0% of the women in the survey say that they carry a rape alarm or something with them which they could use as a weapon, and 18.5% actively protect themselves with their dogs when they go out (Table 3.14). Far greater percentages of women in the survey employ strategies to avoid danger rather to be protected when they confront it, however (see Table 3.8). Rape alarms are the only 'weapons' carrying the approval of police, who suggest that their role lies in deterrence. A Consumers' Association test showed that rape alarms rarely elicit a response from passers-by (Which? Magazine, November 1990). Few of the women in my research have used them; some say they have carried them for a time but given them up after becoming aware of their drawbacks.

What I do think is unfair is that they try to discourage women from taking anything with them apart from one of these alarms. Er I don't know if you've ever heard any of these alarms going off but it's like a car alarm, nobody pays any attention.

Irene, Corstorphine

When I first moved away from home my mother got me a rape alarm, and that made me more worried.

That made you more worried?

Yes. Because I had it in my pocket and that made me more conscious, and in the end I had to stop using it because by carrying it it made me more aware of what might be happening and more suspicious of anybody [laughs].

Yvonne, Haymarket

I think I would rather go for something like carrying a small can of hairspray. Because if it comes down to it I think you're your own - you're the one who's going to be responsible for your own defence, not the knight in shining armour rushing to your aid. I would rather spray somebody in the eye with a can of hairspray.

Sheila, Haymarket

Research has shown that free hands, along with feet and social skills, are more likely to get women out of potentially dangerous situations. Yet rather than actively encouraging women to learn self defence, which reduces fear more effectively than the existing safety advice, the Home Office line is not to voice an opinion. The CPU is currently commissioning a survey of the available research evidence (personal communication, Crime Prevention Unit, Home Office).

In Edinburgh there is a unique 'Women's Safety' course, run jointly by Lothian and Borders Police and the Council's Community Education Department, for which local demand is very high. The four week course mixes self defence skills training with contextual information, advice on avoidance behaviour and a talk aimed at allaying fears about reporting violence to the police. One valuable aspect of this particular course is that it aims to give women a range of options from which they can choose. However, its content illustrates some of the shortcomings of existing courses. First, the involvement of the police might be questioned; although their presence may improve some women's faith in the formal control of violence, for others it may be off-putting or confusing on the basis of the past record of the police on self defence issues. Second, that advice on avoidance behaviour, which is counterproductive, has no place here. Third, although the women I spoke to said that self-defence training had improved their confidence, it clearly needs to be ongoing to be effective. For this reason and because children are also at risk, there is a place for arguing that self-defence training should be part of safety education in schools. Fourth, however, self-defence training is mainly geared around encounters with aggression in public space. Although its proponents may argue that the techniques are useful anywhere, they are not a realistic way of escaping violence from someone who is known and with whom contact is close and ongoing. Physical tactics are also, of course, of less value to the very young, the very old, or anyone with a physical disability.

c) Summary

The precautionary behaviour which the police and Home Office advise women to employ is about avoiding rather than confronting male violence. Although individual responsibility is the pivot of crime prevention policy, women are only encouraged to take action which is appropriate to a traditional code of male/female behaviour. Thus current policy can be seen to reinforce the structural oppression which is itself the main cause of the risk of violence. It typifies a crime prevention 'victim blaming' policy which...

> ... not only misses the point of the causation of crime, but has the effect of heightening the victimisation process.
>
> (Walklate 1989:161)

Although self defence skills are clearly more use for encounters in public places than in private situations, as a violence reduction policy teaching self defence is positive in that it empowers victims. However, it also carries the drawback of

detracting from the root causes of violence, the social constructs of masculinity, femininity and sexuality.

5. Social problems, research and social policy

a) 'Social problems'

In the Introduction in Chapter 1 I mentioned that one of the motivations behind this research was to produce practical knowledge which might contribute to social policy. One value of the type of research I have carried out is that it can highlight common areas where women would like to see policy intervention. I have identified several such areas in the discussions above, and I go on in the next Section to consolidate the findings of the research into recommendations. However, it is clear that however research findings are disseminated, the transitions to policy and social change are not always realisable, and this problem needs to be acknowledged at this stage. It is clear from my discussion of the political context of policy making, and from my analysis of the shortcomings of some current crime prevention initiatives, that there are considerable limitations on the ability of social policy to reduce fear of violence. The difficulty is not that fear of crime, nor women's specific fears about sexual and physical violence, are not now being targeted by social policy. It is rather that existing policies have not had much visible success. Indeed, some seem retrogressive; I have suggested that the safety advice, the main response to women's fear, may actually increase fearfulness and inaccurate spatial perceptions about violence.

Social policy has achieved little success over decades of social problem intervention in general (Manning 1985). 'Social problems' requiring policy attention often only emerge at the point when solutions seem to be imminent, but those solutions are rarely fully met (Manning 1987). Key events and certain time periods can be identified which have led to domestic violence, rape and child sexual abuse achieving the status of public issues and social problems (Dobash and Dobash 1992; Morgan 1988; Walklate 1989). Yet the step from this recognition and committed governmental action is a still greater quantum leap. Dobash and Dobash (1992), in an update of their ground-breaking work on domestic violence and support systems for survivors over a decade later, demonstrate that despite the strength of calls for cultural and institutional change, many innovations are still blocked due to the less supportive wider context in which change takes place. Clearly:

If social problems are an ideological expression in appearance of an altogether different reality, then policies based on an understanding of the issues only at the level of appearance will fail.

(Manning 1987:21)

Crime prevention policies in the area of fear of violence, which are based on political ideology rather than the reality of experience as identified by research, are likely to fail. In particular, it seems unlikely that the current administration will acknowledge any of the structural causes of much violent crime such as sexism, racism, homophobia and ageism. My research findings suggest that successful policy responses will need, in addition, to acknowledge the location, incidence and spectrum of systematic violence and harassment; tackle the spatial and social effects of fear; recognise that patterns inequality and disadvantage breed violence and fear; emphasise individual rights rather than family support; and be backed by firm economic commitment.

At present, no major changes are due to be implemented in crime prevention policies which target women's safety, and therefore it can be argued that current state policy continues to sanction sexual violence as a social control of women (Hanmer 1978; see also Chapter 3):

The ideological mechanisms which run through how criminal victimisation is viewed...ultimately serve to maintain a particular social order.

(Walklate 1989: 173)

As I have sought to illustrate, this remains true not only for women whose lives are constrained by the threat of male violence, but has ramifications for the equality of others who feel at risk from systematic violence.

b) The role of research

Where does this leave the function of research? Research findings which challenge existing social policies are not necessarily taken account of if they seem to contradict current ideological dogma (Young 1988). Is research still important? The battered women's movement has very clear ideas about what is needed to protect women from abuse, for example; the main block to progress is political will and financial backing (Dobash and Dobash 1992). I would suggest that the issues I have dealt with here around fear of systematic violence would benefit from more research, however, and I put forward my recommendations in Section C of this Chapter. I would also point out that there are many cases where research

findings have been used by sympathetic local government initiatives, as I have mentioned. My own research contributed to gaining funding for and to the implementation of a public education project on violence run by Edinburgh District Council. Local initiatives may therefore hold the best chance of political goodwill towards research findings, and carry the advantage of being sensitive to local conditions and local problems. A difficulty continues to be cuts in local public spending and the resources available. It remains important that researchers work towards the goal of social change and make efforts to utilise their work, however small a contribution in relative terms it is possible to make.

With these reservations and prospects in mind, I now go on to present policy recommendations arising from the research. As I point out, some are ideal policies and in the current context are unlikely to be taken seriously. While it is important to press for the value of these, others are clearly more realisable in the short term.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

1. Policy implications

a) Introduction

The following recommendations arise from the research findings and my review of practical strategies. Aside from the difficulties with implementation which I have outlined, there exists a problem in existing policy in the focus on reducing the effects of fear which is common to many existing strategies. Although I believe that this should stand as the ultimate aim of policy in this area, initiatives implemented directly to this end can have serious shortcomings.

First, strategies aimed at reducing fear directly may disempower people, and thereby compound the problems associated with fear of crime. There is no evidence that this type of approach improves people's confidence; in fact, as my research suggests, it may well be that it increases fear of certain types of crime. Instead, preventive strategies must seek where possible to empower those who are most affected by fear of crime as the most likely way to improve feelings of confidence and security.

Secondly, fear and crime must be tackled together. I pointed out some of the drawbacks in treating them as having separate bases in Section B. I have shown, moreover, that in the case of systematic violence fear is closely related to risk (Chapter 2, Chapter 6). Hence, the recommendations which follow are all aimed at reducing violence and fear concurrently. Most are intended to be relevant to other forms of systematic violence as well as the sexual abuse of women and children, and focus on violence and intimidating behaviour in private space as well as public space.

Thirdly, I do not intend to suggest that any clear-cut, unproblematic solutions exist; the recommendations are accompanied by some comment on their shortcomings as well as their potential benefits. The recommendations I make first are most realisable within the current political context (although barriers to their implementation still exist). The later recommendations stand as little more than ideals in the current political context. While recognising this, it remains valuable to highlight the necessity of social change at the most deep-seated level.

b) Policy recommendations

i) Education about danger

There is a clear need for a public programme of re-education about sexual violence to counter the inaccurate information which many women and children receive about the spatial and social risks involved in sexual and physical danger.

Recommendation A

Public education campaigns to alert women and men to the extent and usual location of sexual and physical violence against women. Information should include details of the support available to victims. Similar campaigns need be staged which address violence against other disadvantaged groups, e.g. the abuse of people of colour, gay men and lesbians, and elderly people.

The function of such campaigns about sexual violence should ideally be to validate women's fear without frightening them further (Stanko 1990b). I have described the political barriers to this sort of initiative which exist; crime prevention policy tends to cling to the ideology of the family as a safe and protective space. However, this narrow version is being challenged and there is reason to believe that this will be increasingly successful. In 1992/1993, Edinburgh District Council ran 'Zero Tolerance', a public education campaign which was aimed at raising awareness and condemnation of violence against women and children, and emphasised private abuse. The success of this measure has not yet been gauged but it represents a promising forerunner for similar local initiatives. The main difficulty facing this programme was securing funding.

Public education campaigns focusing on other forms of systematic abuse, particularly racist violence, homophobic violence and violence against older people, also have an important role to play in fostering awareness, condemnation and action on systematic violence. These crimes are, however, less visible public issues to begin with and therefore the emphasis should differ in each case, as will the chances of securing funding and political backing.

For such educational initiatives to be effective, they need to be ongoing, or repeated frequently. It would also be beneficial if they were backed up by information coming from other sources; in particular, I discuss recommendations for children's education about sexual danger below. However, the main source of information about crime for many people, the media, is beyond the control of co-

ordinated strategies. Although the balance of media reports between private and public violence against women has improved (see Chapter 4), sensationalist and misrepresentative articles still appear frequently. One way to address this might be for professionals and policy-makers dealing with issues of violence to seek to influence journalists and editors. An awareness of private violence against women, children and elderly people could be raised through the media, following the example of certain newspapers. Reporting a more accurate picture of violence against women need not conflict with journalistic requirements: the co-ordinators of Edinburgh District Council's public education campaign worked closely with the local newspaper which ran a concurrent campaign stressing the commonness and varied nature of sexual violence.

In the face of the misinformation which has gone on, both by informal and official sources, the availability of accurate information about violence is a basic right. It also has a role in working towards the ultimate reduction of violence through awareness raising, stigmatisation, and improving the capacity of individuals to challenge violence. However, education is by no means a panacea for the problem of fear. Alerting women to the risk of private violence may, instead, increase concern about it, while informing women that public space is far safer than they believe will not necessarily reduce their concerns about using it, as I have suggested.

In part, this fear stems from childhood learning. There is also a need for educational strategies to address what children are taught about sexual and physical danger. As I discussed in Chapter 3, this might also play an important role in reducing the risk of the victimisation of children.

Recommendation B

Accurate education for children about sexual and physical danger. The focus should be on dealing with potential danger, and it should be made clear where children can get support and help.

Several features are important to the success of this strategy in improving children's safety, as follows. It should aim to engender confidence rather than fear in children, it should be an ongoing part of curricula with various levels of input from a young age, and the overall message should be co-ordinated between all the agencies which have a role in educating children about danger. This means,

primarily, schools and the police, but information about the risks of abuse should also be targeted at parents along with advice on how to pass the message on to children without frightening them. If information only comes from the home or only from school, it is less likely to be effective.

Such schemes need to redress the balance in children's safety education by emphasising the risks of abuse from people who are known. However, opposition is likely to be met from parents who do not want their children to be informed about private abuse; several of the women I interviewed said that they opposed this. Difficulties also lie in the light of the current policy climate which places so much emphasis on relatives and friends as rescuers rather than offenders. Hence children also need to be supplied with information as to where they can get independent help should abuse be happening to them. There is also a need to address parental fears about public space, and this is unlikely to work simply by contradicting them. The various risks need to be put into context on the basis of what is currently known about spatial patterns of violence so that parents and children are given the chance to make independent decisions about the coping strategies they employ. In schools, however, the emphasis should be on empowering children to deal with danger in different places, along the same lines as the Kidscape recommendations.

ii) Equipment for danger

As well as improving knowledge and raising awareness of sexual violence, there is a need to provide women and children with the skills to deal with danger. The employment of other coping strategies, especially avoidance behaviour which is a problem in itself, should be left to individual judgement rather than prescribed by official advice, but alternatives need to be provided. There is a need to put forward the idea that women can take positive steps towards safety, rather than relying on protection from those who already hold an imbalance of power (Stanko 1990a). Again, this goes against current crime prevention ideology which, although it encourages individuals to take some responsibility for their victimisation, focuses on avoidance rather than self-equipment. Sexual and physical aggression is too widespread to be ultimately avoided, but there are skills which increase the chances of challenging it.

Recommendation C

Freely and widely available self defence and assertiveness training for women and children.

Techniques which anyone can use to increase their chances of scaring off or briefly incapacitating an attacker are well-developed (eg Goodman 1988; Grosner et al 1992). Self defence courses have already been harnessed into crime prevention schemes locally, such as some Safer Cities projects, and this locally sensitive approach should be encouraged: although courses for women are increasing in number, supply tends not to be able to meet demand. As I outlined in Section B, the skills which are taught should not be oriented only at attacks by strangers.

A more general assertiveness also proves valuable in dealing with aggression in private space. The women I interviewed who had suffered domestic violence and rape say that negotiation and social skills were far more important to avoiding violence (Chapter 3). Strategies to increase the availability of self defence training must therefore present it as part of a broader assertiveness training. Assertiveness training itself is not only valuable in equipping girls to deal with aggression, but various other forms of social pressure too (Holland et al 1990).

iii) Action on violence

It is clear from the evidence presented in this thesis that women's fear of sexual violence will only be significantly reduced when the risk of sexual violence has been reduced. Action to tackle all forms of systematic violence must form the central core of fear reduction strategies. Improving the information received about violence and equipping those at risk with the skills to challenge it, as I have described above, have a part to play in this reduction. More direct measures also need to be taken to reduce all forms of sexual violence including rape, sexual assault, wife battering and child abuse, and all forms of harassment of women and children. The same commitment should be applied to reducing the problems of racist violence, homophobic violence, violence against elderly people and those with disabilities.

Recommendation D

Action to reduce all forms of systematic violence, including greater efforts to police, convict, and rehabilitate offenders; full resourcing of the support

services for survivors of violence and those at risk; and measures to prevent men from developing abusive behaviour.

First, and as I argued in Section B, it is important to provide symbolic support for those who suffer and fear violence in the form of improvements in the policing of violence and the efficacy of the legal system in dealing with it. Although this may have a relatively minor effect on the occurrence of systematic forms of violence, it would provide some degree of validation and confidence for those who feel themselves to be at risk, as well as increasing the chance of getting out of violent situations. This greater commitment to tackling violence needs to be reinforced by the training and introduction of guidelines so that all relevant professionals - police, health and social service workers - recognise and act on violence. Second, the full resourcing of support services to survivors of violence must be a priority. Providing survivors with the means to escape ongoing violence in the form of rehousing and refuges is an important crime prevention strategy in itself, while counselling and other support services help to reduce the impact of violence. Third, and perhaps most importantly, there is a clear need for crime prevention strategies to focus on men and the construction of masculinity, and in particular the development of aggressive and abusive forms of behaviour. This is an area requiring more research, but it might be achieved, for example, through early education about sexuality, relationships and handling conflict, and therapy for those men who have developed violent patterns of behaviour.

That these strategies are aimed at reducing violence in private places is crucial, as at present crime prevention strategies overemphasise public space violence. However, the actual risks of violence in public places for women, people of colour and gay men and lesbians also need to be addressed, as well as the deep-seated fear of public places which many people have. My research suggests that strengthening some of the indicators of formal control in public space might, at the very least, free people who are concerned about attack in public places to use them more. This might be achieved by increasing the visibility of police officers on the beat and improving relations between the police and the community, in which direction policing is currently turning. Signs of incivility such as minor street crimes and harassment need to be tackled if people are to be encouraged to use public space more. Improving the aura of public space and people's attitudes towards using it should be approached with caution, as a heavy handed approach to making formal social control of public places visible might have the effect of putting more people

off using them. Offering people a positive education about crime, rather than the self-defeating prevention literature which currently exists, might help achieve this goal.

If strategies aimed at tackling sexual violence in this way are still at a rudimentary stage in Britain, those which specifically address racist violence, homophobic violence, elder abuse and violence against disabled people are virtually non-existent. New legislation is required which acknowledges the extent and damage caused by these forms of abuse, and prioritises and specifically addresses them. The retraining of police officers and other professionals involved, and equipping them with more power to intervene is crucial to seeing that this commitment is carried through. That this is achievable is demonstrated by the inter-agency approach to child abuse detection and prosecution which has been developed. However, as I discussed in Section B, other forms of systematic violence have barely made it to the stage of becoming recognised policy issues: this is an area in which further research could contribute. A final point is that although these measures to tackle violence fit the current government's claim of toughness on crime, they inevitably entail a greater level of resourcing than exists at present.

The recommendations I have made so far in the areas of education, self defence training, and violence reduction are realisable in the current policy climate, in that they would require the extension of existing policies and initiatives and a higher level of funding to areas already covered. The recommendations I go on to make are less likely to be achieved, as long term strategies which focus on the structural causes of systematic violence and fear.

iv) Action on harassment

First, it is clear that sexual, racist and homophobic harassment also require action alongside more serious violence itself. My research has illuminated the wide extent of harassment in society and over space, and has demonstrated that there is an urgent need both for preventive strategies, and for the provision of help for those who suffer. These minor forms of abuse have serious consequences in themselves as well as being intrinsically related to violence.

Recommendation E

The criminalisation of sexist, racist and homophobic harassment. Legal changes should be backed up by supplying training, guidelines and advice for

women and men on dealing with harassment in the workplace and elsewhere, and the integration of information about the extent and effects of different forms of harassment into education programmes.

One of the main functions of this strategy would be to stigmatise harassment. At present, media attention (particularly that given to sexual harassment) has had negative effects in trivialising harassment and ridiculing those who say they have suffered it. My research has shown that women who are distressed by incidents of harassment currently feel isolated and afraid to speak out (Chapter 5). Racist harassment has received more condemnation but little action, while the harassment of gay men and lesbians is not a visible public issue.

Attempts elsewhere to establish national or workplace strategies to tackle harassment have been problematic. It is obviously important to establish definitions, which might be based around what is suggested from this research and other projects. While there is a need to 'draw lines' around harassing behaviour, definitions should be broad in terms of where it might occur and who victims and offenders are. Working definitions of sexist and homophobic harassment would do well to copy the example of definitions of racist harassment, which stress that the victim's evaluation of the event is crucial (eg Commission for Racial Equality 1987a), although racist harassment is not yet formally a crime either. Definitions can never be clear-cut, or hope to cover all instances of harassment, and there is also the need to face concerns over unfounded claims (even if, as is the case, they are very rare) if legislation is to be passed. These problems, however, should not deter the priority of action.

The introduction of criminalisation of harassment, in the workplace, for example, needs to be backed up with training and guidelines along with clear advice on the action which should be taken by those who feel they have been harassed and those who feel they are being unfairly accused. This advice should offer a range of strategies for dealing with the situation, so that individuals can decide how far to take a complaint according to their evaluation of each situation. It is also important to foster an atmosphere of support from co-workers at all levels as well as the knowledge that complaints will be taken seriously. Anecdotal evidence from women in the survey who have suffered harassment at work suggests that this firm approach may well act to deter many cases from occurring.

Policing harassment in public and private places is more problematic. Educating boys and men about harassment may have a role to play in reduction, as part of the education campaigns I discussed above. Crime prevention literature, for example, should be aimed at men rather than women. The criminalisation of some forms of harassment in public places behaviours might also encourage people to view it as a serious issue, while self defence and assertiveness training would equip women with ways of dealing with harassment.

However, it must be recognised that both systematic violence and harassment are ultimately functions of unequal power relations. While many short term strategies to tackle violence and fear of crime are urgently required, there is also a need for long term strategies which foster social and structural change and may provide the only means of significantly reducing the risks of violence.

v) Challenging systematic discrimination

This would mean tackling the discrimination against those who are particularly vulnerable to systematic violence, which is a related but more widespread manifestation of inequality.

Recommendation F

Empowering those vulnerable groups in society who are presently powerless; working to end discrimination and foster positive attitudes.

I have argued that systematic violence is the expression of negative attitudes such as sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia and so on; tackling these is therefore the only crime prevention strategy which focuses on its root causes. Stigmatising violence through education and legal changes might have a role, as described above, but for social change to take place the broader constructs of masculinity and femininity, heterosexuality, age and race also need to be tackled. The positive representation of homosexuality in schools and colleges, for example, is one way of combating prejudice (Serdahely and Ziemba 1984). The fact that in Britain under Clause 28 any such 'promotion of homosexuality' is now illegal demonstrates the huge barriers to implementing these sorts of policies.

It seems likely that focusing on those at risk - empowering vulnerable people themselves more generally in everyday life - would represent a major step forward

in crime prevention. Policy should therefore be oriented towards fostering greater equality as, for example:

> Promoting women's safety means promoting women's autonomy from men.
>
> (Stanko 1990a:154)

It has been argued that offsetting the economic, social, political and sexual inequalities which are the background to many women's lives offers the possibility to combat violence on several bases. Confronting the power of men in the family and at work might redress the sense of loss of control which some women feel, increase individuals' confidence and thereby reduce the effects of fear. A similar effect might be achieved by improving rights, access to services and ending discrimination against gay men and lesbians, people of colour and those with disabilities. However, increasing autonomy also means facilitating independence from those who they are at risk from. In the case of women and older people, financial independence and the freedom of choice means less forced dependence on the family. Hence rather than current family policies such as community care initiatives, health and social care requires more rather than less state intervention and available support for individuals where necessary. This might include refuges for battered women, greater provision of formal social care for older people and so on.

Harassment and violence curb the ability to participate in and influence public life as well as well as spatial and social opportunities. Ideally, greater political muscle for disadvantaged groups would help to reduce violence and harassment, and vice versa. It has been pointed out that giving gay men and lesbians equal rights, for example, may have the effect of a short term increase in violence as the powerful attempt to reassert their power (Herek 1990). Similar suggestions have been made about the effect of the feminist movement on women's safety (Garnets 1990). Therefore it is crucial that strategies aimed at increasing the autonomy of vulnerable groups go hand in hand with educational measures fostering acceptance and tolerance.

Finally, all of the crime prevention strategies I have suggested here need to be

implemented in such a way as to ensure maximum access and effect. As I mentioned in Section B, many current initiatives operate around stereotypes of typical offenders and typical victims. The strategies I have set out here need to be developed in a way which counters this, and this includes acknowledging the fact that the direction of power relations and violent encounters are not always predictable.

Recommendation G

Crime prevention strategies should address the fact that those at risk from violence and fear of crime may come from different ethnic and social backgrounds. Education, advice, training and so on should be tailored to this.

2. Implications for future research and the development of theory

My discussion of fear of systematic violence has highlighted some of the existing links between geographical, criminological and feminist theory, as well as new areas which future analysis in the disciplines might cover further. I now want to summarise my suggestions for future research and the development of theory.

My research has built upon recent moves to reconceptualise the nature of fear of crime, risk and vulnerability in criminological and geographical research which I discussed in Chapter 1. I have broadened analysis in terms of the definition of criminal behaviour, the spaces where crime occurs, and in terms of the effects of crime on people's lives. I have focused on the risks of sexual and physical violence as they affect women's lives, concluding that risk is socially and spatially widespread, and embedded in social and political structures. It is this interpretation - emphasising the links between fear of violence and social inequality - which can usefully be broadened to include the other forms of systematic violence. Further research and theoretical analysis within this framework would be beneficial.

First, there is an urgent need to improve information on the extent of all forms of systematic violence and associated intimidating behaviour. Little is known about the extent of homophobic violence, elder abuse or violence against people with disabilities, for example. Documentation of violence would have direct implications for policy (see Section B) as well as for the growth of knowledge and understanding. The aim of such research, therefore, should be to raise awareness and encourage the transition in each case from hidden problem to an issue for

social policy attention, following the example of feminist researchers who have highlighted the problems of violence against women and children.

Which areas require attention? Although there has now been a considerable amount of research into the extent and effects of sexual violence against women and children, there is a need for it to continue. One priority is the monitoring and evaluation of success of some of the violence or fear reduction schemes currently in operation, as well as rates of reporting, prosecution and conviction. Public and state attitudes to violence against women have shifted: has this had positive outcomes? As I have discussed, traditional ideologies about women and the responsibility for avoiding violence run deep, and hence research might aim to counter some of these by exploring positive ways to reduce fear. Women's fear of violence in private space clearly needs more research, as does the extent and effects of harassment in this location. In this rather elusive area the development of qualitative methodology may be advantageous. Finally, the relation of experiences of violence and harassment in different spaces among women in different social classes, and the reasons behind variations, require elucidation in order that policy can be targeted more specifically.

Fear of discriminatory violence against gay men and lesbians, people of colour, older people and people with disabilities has largely been ignored in academic research, particularly in Britain. Geography, criminology and feminist theory have barely begun to take account of heterosexism, race, ethnicity, age and ability, despite the general acknowledgement that crime clearly has implications for the spatial experiences and experiences of inequality of some groups more than others. Questions for research might include, for example, how do these factors affect perceptions of risk? How do perceived risks match up with actual risks? How far does fear of various forms of systematic violence shape spatial experiences, and what other factors mediate its impact? How do varying notions about safe and dangerous spaces affect fear of crime amongst different people? Again, research should focus on fear of violence in private space as well as public space. One difficulty that researchers should attempt to avoid is the labelling of certain groups as 'victims'. Research into the problems of people with disability, for example, frequently sees disability only in terms of a disadvantage (Morris 1993). Positive responses to crime need to be highlighted.

There is also a need for further in depth research into how men are affected by crime: men's feelings of vulnerability to sexual and physical attack, as well as the indirect effect of concern about their partners and children, requires attention. In one sense this problem does not fit tidily into existing theories about violence and social control, but it has been demonstrated recently that by focusing on gender rather than women, and on the constructs of masculinity and femininity, men's fear might be analysed in the same way (Stanko and Hobdell 1993).

The implications of fear for individuals' spatial and social experiences and relation to power would benefit from further research and might be drawn into existing theories of fear of crime, along the lines which I outlined in Chapter 6.

In reconceptualising 'risk', research should seek to uncover the full extent of vulnerability. As I have indicated, there is considerable scope for examining how negative attitudes towards age, homosexuality and disability tie in with violence and harassment, and how these perpetuate the disadvantaged position experienced by these groups. This approach necessitates consideration not only of the structural inequality and discrimination faced by such groups, but also a depth of focus on the effects of crime to the emotional and psychological as well as behavioural. The widest interpretation of individuals' sense of security, as I discussed in Chapter 1, should be sought.

Finally, the expression of power through violence needs to be better understood, hence there is a need for research to focus on offenders as well as victims: why do some people abuse power in this way while others do not? How does the role of the state continue to relate to the use of force by individuals? What are the theoretical implications of the changes in some women's status which continue to occur? Is social control theory still a useful framework? If so, it must account for these differences, and focus too on individual situations and factors.

What should the role of spatial analysis be in future research? My research challenges some previous notions about fear of sexual violence and space discussed in feminist geography, but confirms that space and place have a crucial role to play in explanation. I have shown that the 'spatial paradox' is far less substantial than previously suggested, and that women's fear, like sexual violence and harassment, cuts across the spatial boundaries in women's lives. However, my research also confirms that these boundaries are significant in that many women carry very

different attitudes towards safety in public places and private places. Although private space is by no means a haven from fear for all women, it remains a relatively safe space for many. Violence and harassment operate to control individuals in private space as well as public space, and the processes involved would benefit from more research.

3. Implications for methodology

a) Experientially sensitive research

Many of the findings of this research have challenged previous conclusions based on less sensitive research methods (see Chapter 2). There is a need, therefore, for related projects in the future to be carried out in an experientially sensitive manner; the experiences, perceptions and opinions of individuals should form the central focus of methodology, analysis and recommendations. While it would be helpful to better understanding if the theoretical grounding proposed here for the topic of crime and social control was to be developed further, my research experience strongly suggests that theory should originate from empirical findings. There is support for 'bottom up' development in this field of research; for attaching significance first of all to the impact of crime on daily lives and experiences, before looking beyond this to the broader structures and relations in operation. This would help to counter many of the stereotypes about social relations which exist in criminological and geographical research in general, and in theorising about power relations in particular. I have also demonstrated that experientially sensitive research offers the possibility of basing recommendations for policy on what people have experienced, what they want and what they feel would work.

b) Methods

In Appendix B I outline the successes and failures of the dual methodology used in this research, concluding that my experience shows that qualitative and quantitative methods may be used together effectively. Indeed, for a complex topic such as fear of crime there are positive benefits in doing so over and above those engendered by employing one methodology alone. Researchers must, however, remain aware of the particular value and shortcomings of certain methods regarding specific applications, and that the use of contrasting research tools can lead to some conflict in analysis of results.

As I mentioned above, there is still a great lack of aggregate, quantitative data on the extent and effects of systematic violence and harassment. Homophobic violence

and elder abuse are two pressing examples; large scale surveys which address this need for information would make a valuable contribution to getting these issues onto the public agenda, as well as in laying the foundations for further in-depth research aimed at greater understanding. I have stressed the need to balance research methodology between the requirements of rigorous, meaningful research and those of gaining wider exposure and acceptance for research findings (Chapter 1). One particular strength of using self-report questionnaires is that they facilitate the collection of large amounts of information on sensitive topics (see Appendix B). The willingness with which many women gave (and often volunteered) accounts of child abuse, domestic violence, rape and harassment in answering the postal survey suggests that the same method may be effective for future research into other forms of abuse. The success of future questionnaire surveys aimed at gathering personal information from members of particular social groups might depend on careful design, and tailoring in order to address particular difficulties or vulnerabilities about participating in research.

Qualitative methods, meanwhile, also have great value in relation to several of the recommendations for future research (see section on evaluation of methodology in Appendix B). Not only do they have an important role in 'bottom up' and experientially sensitive research, they are also valuable in drawing out some of the differences in experience between individuals. Qualitative research has a central role in consolidating how individuals experience and react to power structures in their everyday lives. They can also have an important role in the evaluation of the research process, and of quantitative material (and vice versa).

One feature of my research which could be usefully repeated in the future is allowing an interval of time, in this case between the survey and follow-up interviews. All too often social research, whether employing quantitative or qualitative methods, begins cold, the respondent having had little time to consider the issues involved or to tap their memories before the research begins. The effects of fear of crime run very deep; in Chapter 3 I discussed the importance of the emotional and psychological consequences of fear as well as the more straightforward behavioural adaptations. The fact that the two stages of research were over a time period provided the chance for a greater level of awareness around these and other issues to develop. Interviewing respondents more than once (see Kelly 1987), or engaging in some form of participatory research, might fulfil the same function.

c) Commitment to social change

Finally, in the light of my discussion of current policy and its social and political context, research investigating systematic violence and fear of crime ought to accompany an active commitment to using the findings to promote change. In Section B I outlined on some of the difficulties in bridging the gap between knowledge and action, but I also highlighted instances where positive outcomes have come about. Addressing the various gaps in knowledge about systematic violence and its effects can clearly benefit those people whose lives are damaged by it, as has been demonstrated by some of the changes resulting from improving information about violence against women and children over the last decade. On a more informal level, disseminating information which results from research through the media and other organisations can play a small part, for example in the re-education process which provides means by which fear and crime might be combated. This research goal has implications for the questions which are asked and the methods which are used. At the same time the danger of 'packaging' research for certain purposes to the extent of losing sight of academic considerations needs to be addressed.

Just as research has the potential to influence social change, the broad social context in which research takes place is always changing. This research was aided by the fact that sexual violence, even that which takes place in private, is becoming less taboo. In some ways, press coverage of sexual violence continues to be harmful to women's perceptions of male violence as public place attacks are reported disproportionately. But at the same time, much of the publicity in the last few years given to child abuse, domestic violence and marital and date rape has been sympathetic and condemning of attackers rather than victims; a positive outcome of the concerted, long term efforts by various groups in the women's movement. This outcome needs guarding closely; there are signs of a media backlash similar to that I described with regard to sexual harassment, particularly, at the time of writing, concerning the issue of date rape.

Nonetheless, I believe that in general the climate is undergoing significant changes and that this will have benefits today and in the future. The publicity given to sexual violence has encouraged many women to reconsider past and present experiences, with the result that they are more likely to discuss it with other women and more willing to pass on information to researchers. Several of the

women I spoke to said that they had only recently told close relatives and friends of past experiences of violence; some have begun counselling years after abuse in what they feel is a more sympathetic climate.

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Appendix A
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Table A.1
Demographic information about questionnaire respondents
% (n = 389)

	Overall	Corstorphine	Haymarket	Pilton
1 Length of residence in area				
0-2 years	21	4	45	17
3-5 years	20	12	25	25
6-10 years	17	15	14	22
11-20 years	18	33	4	12
Over 20 years	25	36	12	24
2 Type of dwelling				
House	43	88	2	30
Flat	57	12	98	70
3 Floor of flat				
Basement	3	-	6	-
Ground	27	53	11	41
First	31	32	32	30
Second	23	16	27	17
Third	14	-	21	9
Fourth or above	3	-	3	2
4 Tenure				
Owner-occupied	69	97	53	50
Council rented	14	-1*	2	41
Privately rented	13	-	34	2
Housing Association	4	-1	6	2
Other	3	1	4	-1
5 Shared accommodation				
Live alone	14	11	25	7
Live with others	85	89	73	93

(continued over)

Table A.1 (continued)

6 Age group				
18 - 30	35	16	58	35
31-45	29	33	20	36
46-60	24	35	11	24
Over 60	11	17	11	5
7 Physical Disability				
Yes	9	7	7	13
No	91	93	93	87
8 Marital Status				
Single	25	13	47	16
Married	56	74	24	66
Living together as a couple	8	1	16	8
Divorced	5	4	5	6
Separated	4	3	6	2
Widowed	3	5	2	2
9 Ethnic Group				
White	99	99	99	100
African Caribbean	-1	-	-1	-
Indian	-	-	-	-
Pakistani	-1	-1	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-	-	-
Chinese	-	-	-	-
Other ethnic group	-	-	-	-
10 Income per annum				
Less than £3,000	29	19	28	41
£3,001 - £6,000	19	18	16	23
£6,001 - £10,000	19	23	14	20
£10,001 - £15,000	22	21	34	11
£15,001 - £20,000	5	7	3	5
Over £20,000	6	12	5	-

(continued over)

Table A.1 (continued)

11 Age on leaving full time education				
Under 16	25	28	15	32
16	26	25	13	40
17-18	19	23	14	19
19-20	3	3	6	2
21	12	9	25	2
Over 21	12	11	24	2
Returned as an adult	8	11	8	4
Other	1	-	2	2
12 Occupational Status				
Employed full time	37	34	51	27
Employed part time	22	29	9	25
Unemployed	6	3	6	11
Retired	12	18	11	7
Full time housework/childcare	16	14	5	29
Student	9	4	21	2
13 Occupational grouping				
Never worked	5	5	3	8
Low skilled manual	15	6	7	35
Personal service/skilled manual	27	33	17	31
Routine white collar	26	28	35	14
Employers/managers/intermediate	8	5	16	4
Professional	18	24	21	7
14 Sexual orientation				
Heterosexual	99	99	100	98
Lesbian	-1	-	-	-1
Bisexual	-1	-1	-	-1
15 Social Class				
SC1	17	12	9	34
SC2	47	54	38	48
SC3	27	23	40	17
SC4	9	10	13	1

*** -1 = Less than one percent.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 6.1 - 6.15

Table A.2

Demographic information about interviewees

Name*	Area**	Age	Marital status	Children	Usual occupation	Social Class
Christine	C	20s	Married	None	Personal assistant	SC3
Diana	C	30s	Divorced, living alone	One	Business owner	SC4
Irene	C	40s	Married	Adult	Technician	SC3
Jane	C	19	Single, living with mother	None	Cashier	SC2
Joan	C	70s	Married	Adult	Housewife	SC2
Kate	C	30s	Married	Two	Technician	SC3
Kathy	C	20s	Married	One	Accountant, now childcare	SC4
Marie	C	20s	Single, living with parents	None	Teacher	SC4
Maureen	C	50s	Married	Adult	WP operator, now unemployed	SC2
Myra	C	40s	Married	Two	Dental nurse	SC3
Nell	C	60s	Married	Adult	Dental nurse, now retired	SC3
Olivia	C	30s	Married	Two	Midwife, now childcare	SC4
Rebecca	C	30s	Married	One	Teacher	SC4
Rosalind	C	50s	Divorced, living alone	None	Training administrator	SC3
Sarah	C	50s	Married	Adult	Social worker, now unemployed	SC3
Valerie	C	30s	Married	One	Teacher	SC4
Alex	H	20s	Living with partner	None	Marketing executive	SC4
Ann	H	20s	Single, living with flatmates	None	Teacher	SC4
Becky	H	20s	Single, living with flatmates	None	Student	SC3
Brenda	H	70s	Widowed, living alone	None	Shop assistant, now retired	SC1

(continued over)

Table A.2 **(continued)**

Danielle	H	20s	Married	None	Local government officer	SC3
Elaine	H	40s	Single, living alone	None	Bank manager	SC4
Elizabeth	H	70s	Widowed, living alone	Adult	Housewife	SC1
Fiona	H	20s	Single, living with flatmates	None	Student	+
Glenys	H	70s	Single, living alone	None	Local government officer, retired	SC3
Mary	H	50s	Divorced, living alone	Adult	Clerical officer	SC2
Paula	H	20s	Married	None	Staff nurse	SC4
Sheila	H	30s	Living with partner	Two	Charity assistant	SC3
Ulrike	H	30s	Divorced, living with partner	Four	Housewife	SC2
Vicky	H	30s	Single, living alone	None	Artist/office worker	SC2
Yvonne	H	20s	Single, living alone	None	Student	SC3
Amanda	P	30s	Married	Four	Cleaner	SC1
Barbara	P	30s	Separated	Two	Barmaid, now unemployed	SC1
Caroline	P	30s	Living with partner	None	Doctor	SC4
Deborah	P	20s	Living with partner	None	Software engineer	SC3
Edith	P	50s	Married	Two	Housewife and foster parent	SC2
Gillian	P	30s	Living with partner	One	Hairdresser, now childcare	SC2
Jackie	P	30s	Single, living alone	None	Draughtswoman	SC3
Janet	P	30s	Living with partner	None	Nurse	+
Jeanette	P	30s	Married	Four	Machinist, now childcare	SC1
Karen	P	20s	Married	Two	Clerk, now childcare	SC2
Moira	P	50s	Married	Three	Nurse	SC4

(continued over)

Table A.2 **(continued)**

Sharon	P	60s	Married	None	Housewife	SC1
Shirley	P	30s	Living with partner	Two	Factory worker, now unemployed	SC1

*** To ensure anonymity, all names have been changed.**
**** C = Corstorphine, H = Haymarket, P = Pilton.**
+ Social Class could not be ascribed to two interviewees as they did not fill in questionnaires.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 6.5 - 6.15 and interview material

Appendix B
METHODS

1. Design and implementation

a) The pilot study

Prior to the implementation of the main survey, a pilot study was carried out. This involved sending one questionnaire mailshot to thirty women in each study area. The aims of the pilot study were to test the sampling method; to evaluate the effectiveness of different questionnaire designs, presentations and the wording of the accompanying letters; and to estimate the likely response rate in each area and, if necessary, identify measures which might increase it. The pilot survey had three major effects on the form and outcome of the research. First, while the response rate from this single mailshot was high in Corstorphine (79%) it was low in Pilton (29%), and as it was considered important that women in Pilton should be well represented too, changes were made to the implementation of the postal survey after consultation with researchers who had used it successfully in the past. A number of follow up mailshots were used in the main survey, and this worked to achieve good response rates in all the study areas (see Chapter 1).

Another important contribution of the pilot survey was in testing question design. In some cases it was clear that particular questions had caused confusion and these were modified accordingly. Respondents in Pilton appeared to have had the most difficulty and this might have been partly responsible for the low response rate here; hence some questions were rewritten in more accessible language. Respondents taking part in the pilot survey had also been asked to give their views about the questionnaire and the survey by writing comments on the schedule. Many did so, and many of their comments were encouraging and suggested that women had considerable interest in the topic and were pleased that something appeared to be 'being done about it'. However, there were also several useful comments on the wording and layout of questions and on some of the terms used. Some respondents highlighted the questions they had difficulty in understanding, for example, while others noted problems in distinguishing between terms such as rape, sexual assault and sexual abuse. Others pointed out the difficulty of selecting an occupational grouping, and this gave rise to the new social class categorisation used in the main survey (Chapter 1). All of these comments fed into the design of the main survey.

The pilot survey also influenced the ultimate use to which the results of the main survey were put. The pilot survey results prompted interest from the local press, and initial interest from the local council who went on to partly fund the main survey and to use the findings in the planning of a public education campaign. Although it had to be made clear at this time that the pilot survey results could not stand alone due to the problems with design I have identified, they provoked local attention which later proved valuable to the success and usefulness of the research.

b) Questionnaire design

Good design is crucial if postal questionnaires are to gather data effectively and accurately. Various criteria influenced the design of the survey, as follows. Because the questionnaire was self reporting, the general appearance and layout and wording of questions had to be inviting and respondent-friendly, and the order of questions had to establish continuity as there was no interviewer present. The questionnaire also had to be accessible and comprehensible, as it was intended for women from a range of backgrounds: the format and wording had to be simple enough to be understood by everyone while retaining their interest. At the same time, as a research tool the questionnaire had to stand up to scientific scrutiny, therefore the wording, question order, structure and balance had to elicit unbiased responses as far as possible. Finally, design had to maximise cost-effectiveness; the questionnaire had to be simple to produce, compact and lightweight to post. While meeting these criteria, the questionnaire could not compromise too far on the subject matter and the material which it sought.

Design progressed by testing the developing questionnaire on friends and colleagues and on the general public in the pilot study (above). The final schedule is considered to be an acceptable balance between the various criteria, and can be found in Appendix C. An important part of the mail 'package' is a covering letter asking respondents to take part, and so this letter and those which followed were also carefully worded and constructed. These can also be found in Appendix C.

c) Questionnaire implementation

The implementation of the postal survey involved three main sweeps. Rather than targeting the three areas at the same time, they were surveyed consecutively to allow enough time for follow-up interviews to be completed in each area within the same period. Each sweep began by sending an initial letter accompanied by a questionnaire. After one week a short letter was sent which acted both as a

reminder for those who had not responded, and a thank-you letter for those who had. Two weeks later a second questionnaire and letter were sent to those who had not yet responded, and finally, after another three weeks, a third questionnaire. The tone of the accompanying letters increases in persistence and provides various reasons and forms of encouragement for participation (see Appendix C). Once a respondent had returned her questionnaire her name and address were struck off the mailing list so that no further mailshots were sent. As the letters accompanying the questionnaires explain, although the questionnaires each carried an identification number, it was only for this purpose, and once the questionnaires were returned anonymity was maintained.

Table B.1
Cumulative response rates in the postal questionnaire survey
(% / 389)

	Corstorphine	Haymarket	Pilton	Overall
After first questionnaire	17	21	8	15
After reminder	58	52	39	50
After second questionnaire	74	67	58	66
After third questionnaire	77	71	68	72

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992

The repetitive nature of this method is necessary to achieve good response rates. Most questionnaires were returned after the first reminder letter, but a considerable proportion were returned later, particularly so in Pilton (Table B.1). The first questionnaire sent may be lost, thrown out or put aside. The early follow up acts to remind respondents and attaches further importance to their participation. The second questionnaire is a replacement for those who have lost the first copy, while the third picks up a few more respondents who have had a change of heart, been very busy or absent from home. One completed questionnaire, for example, was returned three months after the end of the fieldwork period.

d) Interviewing

i) Setting up the interviews

Each questionnaire respondent who had expressed interest in being interviewed in the final question on the questionnaire was sent a short letter which explained what would happen and was aimed at allaying any potential fears they might have (Appendix C). During the first two sweeps (Corstorphine and Haymarket), it was then up to the respondent to get back in touch suggesting a suitable time for the

interview. However, I soon realised that this method meant that some potential interviewees were lost in between the stages of contact and reply, and so the Pilton questionnaires asked for the phone numbers of interested respondents so that I could contact them. This created a new drawback in that some women in Pilton are not on the phone. I contacted a few by visiting their homes, but this was very time-consuming and in the end the number of women interviewed in Pilton was lower than for the other two areas. This method also biases the interviewee sample towards those who have phones, who were likely to be better off, but I was unable to improve on it because of time constraints. The eventual figure of 45 interviewees meets the original target but, as I outline below, may be slightly biased towards women in higher social classes.

A few interviews were carried out in the Department of Geography, but most took place in the respondents' homes which was more satisfactory as they generally felt more relaxed. Most women seemed to be looking forward to the interview. In most cases I was led into the sitting room and offered a drink. There was a notable difference between the interviews in Corstorphine, where husbands, children and dogs respectfully disappeared together and Pilton where, if children were at home, they wandered in and out of the room and sometimes joined in. In two cases female friends of the interviewees asked if they could join in and in these instances I treated them as additional interviewees and included them in the conversation. In both cases their interjections provided extra insight and the two women helped each other to develop certain points, and it struck me that small group interviews might have been a valuable asset in the methodology so long as the women involved knew each other well. In two other cases the women's boyfriends stayed in the room for the duration, in one case in Corstorphine appearing to be silently engrossed in the paper for over an hour and in the other, in Pilton, complaining about general levels of crime in the area for a good part of the interview. The presence of both was a hindrance as in the first case the respondent was embarrassed by her boyfriend's presence and in the second case overshadowed. Before each interview began I asked if the women minded being tape-recorded and reminded them that everything which they said would be treated in confidence, and mentioned that the clipboard I held and any notes I made on it were simply to make sure I did not forget to ask anything.

ii) Interview technique

Interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours. Because I was aware from the start that this did not provide enough time to cover all the research topics in depth, the interviewees' completed questionnaires had an extra function in highlighting topics which might be worth concentrating on. For example, if on her questionnaire a woman had reported a lot of harassment I made sure that this was something I explored in depth in her interview. However, I made sure to talk about harassment with every interviewee to some degree and, as I noted in Chapter 5, in conversation it frequently emerged that women had experienced more harassment than they had initially indicated.

The interviews were basically unscheduled - while I had a number of topics listed on the clipboard I held (see Appendix C), the aim was for the conversation to flow naturally and it was only structured my myself by the introduction a new topic when one area seemed to have been covered. I took cues from the interviewees as to what seemed to be areas of most interest. I tried to cover all of the topics with each person but where they showed a total lack of interest it was obviously not worth pursuing them. With the exception of two or three women, all of the interviewees were talkative, and channelling the conversation took more effort than keeping it going.

Most of the women were well-expressed and explored what they said at length with minimal prompting. Even several of the older women surprised me by the frankness with which they talked about what are commonly considered to be sensitive issues. The fact that they were so forthcoming is partly because, having filled out the questionnaire, the interviewees had had time to think about the issues, and I felt that this was a positive preparation for interviewing on the whole. Only in a couple of cases did the women seem to have prepared a particular spiel and my questioning had to be more persistent to get round to the issues I wanted to discuss, but this was never difficult.

Feminist researchers have stressed that research should be less about researchers extracting information from subjects and more about participation in which power relations are equalised. This might involve, for example, a two way exchange of information, and allowing the subjects of research to contribute to and shape it rather than sticking to a rigid pre-set agenda (Duelli Klein 1983; Mies 1983; Stanley and Wise 1983). I was conscious of this need, both to minimise the sense

of exploitation which can arise in the research process and also for the efficacy of interviewing, but I was also aware of the limitations of this ideal in practice. For example, it has been argued that close identification between interviewer and respondent facilitates the development of the trust required for openness and honesty, and that this is best achieved if the two share a common power background (Mies 1983; Stanley and Wise 1983; Valentine 1989). Yet close 'matching' based on class, race and ethnicity are rarely possible given the usual constraints of research. What remained important was to keep in mind the possible influence of the fact that I was a white middle class English woman interviewing a diverse mixture of other women. In practical terms, however, I did not feel that this affected the interviews adversely to any great extent. Neither would I suggest that being female is necessary for the interviewing I carried out, contrary to the wisdom of some researchers in the past (see Finch, 1984; Graham, 1983; Oakley, 1981); although it certainly gave me an insight in terms of my own experiences in analysing and interpreting what I was told, a sympathetic male perspective could also be enlightening. Unequal power backgrounds have greater implications at the analysis stage of research than in data collecting, and it was here that I was particularly aware of the potential influences on interpretation engendered by my own background.

Although it was my aim for the interviews to represent a two-way interaction or 'normal' conversation as closely as possible, I was aware of the danger of influencing what people said and so imposed a few rules on myself. In particular I took care not to express my own opinions where possible. In most cases I found it relatively easy to express understanding of what was said without giving a judgement, and to probe deeper, for example, by putting opposing points of view forward as those of other people. When giving their views on controversial areas such as the penal system, some respondents needed to be reassured to go on and it was possible to do this without indicating that I agreed or disagreed with them. In other cases, for example when women were relaying experiences of violence, the conversation could not have gone on without my expressing value judgements and sympathy.

I also tried to avoid telling respondents much about the research itself until after the interview in case it affected what they said. Many wanted to know the 'real' risks of sexual violence, in which case I told them afterwards that the chance of being attacked outside was small. At one point I became slightly worried that the

research might be increasing some women's anxiety, but those whom I asked at the end of the interview said they actually felt better for talking about the issues. One elderly woman in particular was very fraught when I arrived because she had just had her bag stolen from her car. In between my questioning she spent most of the hour and a half trying to reason why this had happened and why it had had such an effect on her. At the end she thanked me because she felt her son, her husband and the police had brushed off her fears as 'groundless' and not encouraged her to talk them out.

I was also concerned initially that reliving incidents of abuse and violence in the interviews might be upsetting for some women and in this sense an exploitation of the research situation as Kelly (1990) has suggested. However, some of those who did talk about such experiences said that this had been their main motivation for volunteering for interview. In some cases they just wanted to talk about it, in others they wanted to offer their information in the hope that some 'good' would come out of it. In fact the interviews probably had a more profound effect on me than on any of the respondents; the research eroded my own sense of security because so many incidents of violence were described to me, although this effect only lasted as long as the fieldwork.

2. Analysis

a) Accountability

Before going on to describe the procedures by which the research data were analysed, I want to point out the importance of accountability and self-awareness in research. There is increasing discussion about maintaining standards of quality in research, a debate which is particularly influenced by feminist critiques of traditional positivist standpoints and the quantitative revolution (eg Duelli Klein 1983; Mies 1983; Stanley and Wise 1983). Doing good quality research involves addressing the fact that much research ignores the influence of the researcher and the research process on the outcome (Cain 1990; Gelsthorpe 1990).

The ideology and background of researchers affect all stages of research, from the design of the methodology, the data gathering process, analysis, writing up, and the use which results are put to, and similarly the implementation of all these stages affects the outcome of the research (McRobbie 1982; Messing 1983). This has led to suggestions that objectivity in research is impossible, and that the best we can do is to recognise the subjectivity of our own and others' research (Stanley and Wise

1983). I would agree with Eichler (1988), however, who remarks that this view makes the very idea of research itself impossible. She suggests that objectivity should not be entirely disregarded as a useless concept, but can retain an important role in maintaining standards in research. So, for example, research should always weigh up contrary evidence, report accurately all of the research processes, maintain a commitment to truth-finding and clarify and classify all the values underlying research (Eichler 1988). I have tried to apply these standards here.

During the research I tried to remain aware of how the chosen methodology affects the course and outcome of the research. Rather than theory influencing how the research was carried out, I based theory on what was learnt in practice (Henwood and Pidgeon 1992; Iles 1990). While methodological processes are routinely open to scrutiny, there is a need to break down the mystique around the process of writing and the construction of arguments (McRobbie 1982; Stanley and Wise 1983); this has recently been tackled with attention being given to the influence of researchers' positionality (eg Jackson 1993). I want to address some of these concerns by setting out the process of analysis of the research data below.

b) Analysis of quantitative data

Qualitative data, ie answers to open-ended questions and additional volunteered comments, was collected from the questionnaire and, where relevant, coded at this stage (see below). The questionnaires were then passed on for data entry into the VAX mainframe at the University of Edinburgh. This file was imported into the statistical package SPSSX for analysis.

c) Analysis of qualitative data

i) Transcribing and coding

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed shortly after they had taken place. After transcription, the material was categorised and coded. At first the conceptual labels under which material was coded were broad, but as interviewing and analysis progressed and the major themes and shape of the data were identified it became possible to further sub-categorise topics. A list of these can be found in Appendix C. The contextual conversation was not separated from coded material so that it would remain clear how the 'quotes' arose and how they might be interpreted. The resulting material was printed, sorted and stored manually. Although several computer programs are available for the coding and recalling

process which might have saved time, these were beyond the financial resources of the research.

ii) Selection of examples

Material used in the write up was selected for different reasons. Firstly, some quotes have been selected as examples of patterns which emerge in the quantitative data. Second, views or experiences which differ from general trends are represented as appropriate. Third, individual case studies where more detail is given about individuals are sometimes used to explore particular situations and help to develop certain points. Fourth, the qualitative data play a leading role where the implications of the quantitative data are unclear (one example being the conflicting levels of reported harassment described above and in Chapter 5).

I tried to be careful in the selection of quotes in order that the most articulate interviewees, or those with the most forthright views, were not over-represented. The aim was to give a balance of views and in this sense the qualitative data is representative and transferable (Henwood and Pidgeon 1992). Examples were selected after considering all of the qualitative material for a particular topic; atypical cases were represented in context as can be the most illuminating (Mitchell 1983). I took care to represent women who are not as well-expressed as others as their perspectives are just as important, and I felt it was important to retain the original wording in all cases; consequently not all of the quotes are tidy, lucid or wholly comprehensible. In the interests of space the material necessarily had to be fairly brief and had to appear without the contextual conservation, but I tried to ensure that the appearance of the text on its own did not misrepresent the general tone as suggested by the contextual material. Some demographic details about each interviewee such as their ages and occupations are listed in Appendix A for reference. All have been renamed in order to fulfil the promise of anonymity.

iii) Interpretation

All qualitative material gathered undergoes a process of interpretation. This begins at the interview where factors such as the interviewee's intonation and attitude encourages the interviewer to make certain judgements about what is being said. Sometimes during transcription I realised that I had not fully understood what was being said at the time, demonstrating the importance of studying full transcripts carefully.

With this topic there is a particular difficulty in that fear of violence is said to operate on a subconscious level as well as a conscious one, and that many of the effects involved go unnoticed. Many commentators on qualitative methods have stressed the importance of looking beyond what people say to what they mean, the need to infer from respondents' answers and place them within his or her objective reality; in other words, to consider broader social relations in analysis (Briggs 1986; Dean and White 1969; Henwood and Pidgeon 1992; Silverman 1986).

While I was aware of this and tried to bring it out where appropriate in interpretation, I exercised caution in an effort to avoid the danger of misrepresenting or exaggerating what was said. The researcher holds a lot of power in interpretation of what is said by respondents in this respect and I was keen not to abuse this. Therefore I tried not to read single explanations into anything, but instead I suggest various reasons as to why, for example, several women appear to give conflicting answers. In some cases the impact of the interview situation itself on the answers people give may require interpretation (Briggs 1986).

d) Accessibility

Efforts have been made to make the research findings accessible. In the first instance this meant giving something back to all the participants in the form of a summary sheet of results. This includes a letter of thanks and outlined the main findings of the research but aimed not to increase concerns about violence, and includes contact numbers for various support groups (see Appendix C). Secondly, some of the research findings have been used in the planning and implementation of a public education campaign run by Edinburgh District Council Women's Committee. The research findings specified existing perceptions and concerns which were the targeted by the campaign, as well as being used initially in funding proposals for the project to stress its importance. Thirdly, I made efforts to disseminate the findings as broadly as possible in academic journals and in the general media. This partly involved an arrangement with the local press to use some of the findings in an ongoing campaign on women and violence which began after the research was completed. As I was aware of the danger that the misuse of such material could increase the fears of local residents, I maintained control over what was published and made sure that statistics were accompanied by qualifying statements by myself. One drawback of seeking accessibility for research findings is that it can leave them open to misinterpretation and exploitation, but due to good

relations with the journalists involved and their interest in the subject matter this was minimised.

3. Calculations

a) Sampling

Women were randomly sampled for the postal survey from electoral registers. Two hundred women were selected from each of the three ward registers. One difficulty in this process was presented by non-English names where I sometimes found it difficult to judge whether an individual was male or female and hence did not include them. This compounds the problem of under-representation of non-white people in the survey.

Although electoral registers are fairly current, during the time lapse between the registration of individuals and the sampling of names for research the data can become invalid. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, one drawback of a postal survey is that it is rarely possible to discover the reason for non-response; is it because the letter did not reach the named person or because she decided not to participate? In some cases contact letters are returned by the Post Office or other residents with the information that the person named has moved, in which case they can legitimately be removed from the sample (see below). In other cases the cause of non-response remains uncertain.

However, during the Pilton mailshot, a larger than expected proportion of contact letters sent to the West Granton area of the ward were returned by the Post Office. In interviews with other residents it emerged that part of West Granton was due to be demolished and some residents had recently been moved out. After verifying with the Council Housing Department which blocks of flats were involved, I removed thirty names and addresses from the original sample and drew a new random sample of thirty women elsewhere in the ward. I was careful to ensure that if any of the original questionnaires were returned complete, they were discluded from analysis. Although this course of action did not create a numerical bias in responses, it might have meant a small qualitative difference. The blocks to be demolished and replaced are some of the worst housing stock in Edinburgh; as well as being a poor physical environment the area has become socially and economically marginalised and only the poorest and least advantaged tenants remaining there. Their inclusion in the survey might have provided additional insight, although some West Granton tenants were represented from other blocks.

b) Calculating response rates

Response rates were calculated following Dillman's (1978) guidelines, as follows.

$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{Number of questionnaires completed and returned} \times 100}{\text{Number in sample - (noneligible + nonreachable)}}$$

The original sample number can be reduced for two legitimate reasons. First, a small number of contacts were listed as noneligible if they or someone else wrote back to say that they were, for example, in hospital, blind or dead. Secondly, a larger number of contacts were listed as nonreachable if the Post Office or another resident returned the contact letter saying that they had moved away. This eventuality was greatest in Haymarket where population turnover is relatively high, as Table A.1 suggests. Where women returned their questionnaire incomplete, poorly completed or spoilt, gave written refusals, or where there was no indication as to the reason for a non-response, these were classed as 'non-responses' and were not subtracted from the number in the original sample. Response rates for each ward calculated on this basis are as follows:

Table B.2
Calculation of response rates

	Corstorphine	Haymarket	Pilton	Overall
Original sample (n)	200	200	200	600
A. Final sample (n)	189	171	177	537
B. Returned complete (n)	146	122	121	389
Response rate (B/A x 100)	77%	71%	68%	72%

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992

Calculated in this manner, the final response rate is probably always an under-estimate because it is not known how many questionnaires actually reached the named person.

c) Calculating the social class variable

The social class variable was calculated for each respondent based on her income, level of education, and occupational grouping as classed by the scale for women's occupations shown in Chapter 1 (Table 1.3). This was done by using a simple points system. Based on the categories in Section 6 of the questionnaire, each respondent was allotted a number of points; the higher her income, occupational grouping and age on leaving full time education, the higher her composite score.

Women were then attributed a social class based on their composite scores. For simplicity, four Social Classes were constructed as follows:

Social Class 1: score 0 - 4

Social Class 2: score 5 - 9

Social Class 3: score 10 - 14

Social Class 4: score 15 - 19

Examples of the calculation are given below for three of the interviewees.

1. *Rebecca, Corstorphine:*

Principal guidance teacher	=	grade 5
Earns £20,000+	=	point 6
Left education aged 21	=	point 5
Composite score	=	16
Social Class	=	4

2. *Danielle, Haymarket:*

DSS Officer	=	grade 3
Earns £10,000 - 15,000	=	point 4
Left education aged 18	=	point 3
Composite score	=	10
Social Class	=	3

3. *Amanda, Pilton.*

Cleaner	=	grade 1
Earns < £3,000	=	point 1
Left education aged 16	=	point 2
Composite score	=	4
Social Class	=	1

The fact that this system also deals with women who are not currently in paid work is an important feature as the social class variable takes some account of this. For example, unemployed women by no means share a common social class position and it was necessary for the system to account for this albeit in a simplistic way. To demonstrate, the usual occupation of unemployed women was entered, but a reduction in socio-economic status would have been reflected, for example, in a low income being entered which lowered their composite score. Similarly, part time workers generally had a lower income than full time workers and this too is reflected. The classification of retired women, and women who were looking after the house or children full time, might also be affected by their income. Of course,

in some cases the presence of a partner employed outside the home mediates a women's class position.

Women who had never worked were probably at a disadvantage in this system, receiving no score for occupational grouping. Students, on the other hand, may have benefited as they were given the middle occupational grouping 3. Some more shortcomings of this system along with recommendations for its modification are outlined below.

4. Evaluation of the research methodology

In this section I comment on some of the problems and successes of the methodology employed, and their consequences for the research findings.

a) Sources of bias

There are a number of potential sources of bias in the selection of the respondents for the postal survey and interviews. First, who is most likely to have been included by the initial sampling? I mentioned the problems created by using the electoral register for sampling in Chapter 1; this source of respondent selection may have under-represented women who are poor, unemployed or temporary residents, for example. I justified my use of the electoral register as the best means of sampling available for my purposes. As the Poll Tax has now been abolished the representativeness of electoral registers may improve in the future.

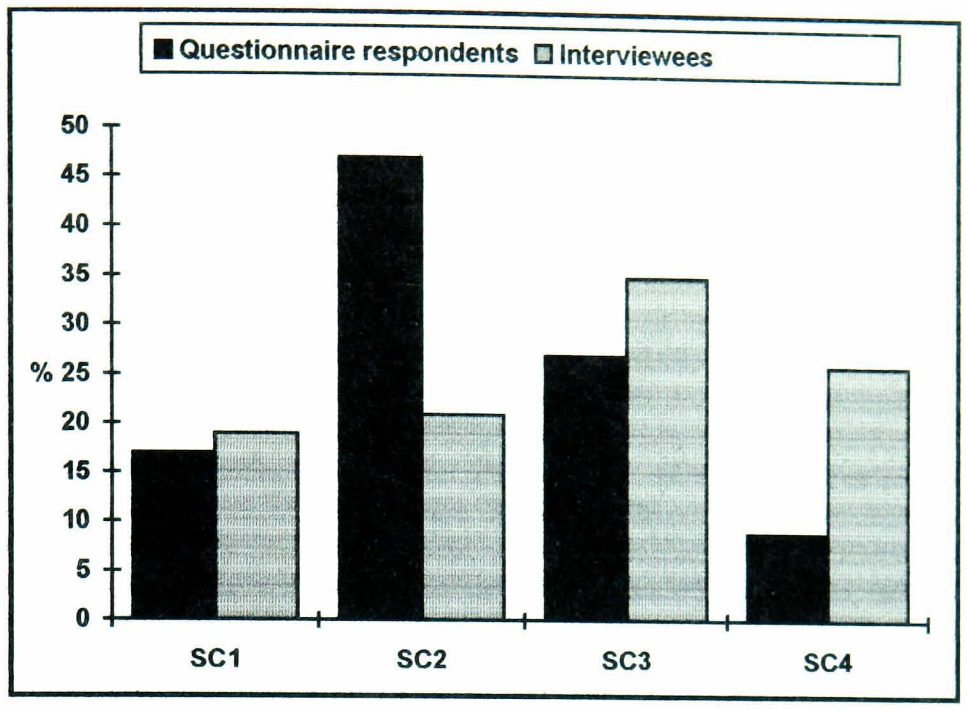
Who was most likely to respond to the postal questionnaire once it had been sent out? One notably low response rate appears to be among women of ethnic minorities targeted by the sampling. Only two respondents identified themselves as of non-white ethnic groups on questionnaires, whereas in the original sampled lists there are at least nine names which suggest ethnic minority backgrounds. These women are clearly under-represented in the research, perhaps for language or cultural reasons as well as the sampling problem I mentioned above. Similarly only three women identified themselves as 'lesbian' or 'bisexual'; probably more because of the wish to keep sexual identity hidden than because of sampling or response bias. Whatever the reasons, this under-representation also quite a serious omission in view of the impact that race and sexual orientation may have on fear of crime (Chapter 6); this survey methodology is clearly less useful in reaching and identifying these groups.

Other reasons for not responding to postal surveys include boredom with being a research subject, and low levels of social desirability or interest attached to particular surveys (Dillman 1978). A major problem with postal surveys is that there is no way of knowing who non-respondents are or how much bias is created by self-selection in response. Research has suggested that young people are more likely to co-operate with surveys than older people (Molenaar 1991), and that postal surveys often produce a class bias (Dillman 1978). This last point is difficult to confirm. Even comparison of the demographic data on the respondents with aggregate ward data would help little, because it would be expected that women would differ from aggregate patterns of income, occupation and so on. The fact that postal surveys involve self reporting suggests that better educated women are more likely to respond, although the careful design of my research aimed to minimise this problem.

However, a couple of factors suggest that there is a slight class bias in this research. First, a higher response rate was achieved in Corstorphine, and second, the survey was unable to reach many women initially targeted in West Granton, one of the most rundown and deprived schemes in Scotland, due to impending demolition (see above). The high response rates in each area minimise the problem to some extent, although it is probably true to say that the survey does not include representatively the most disadvantaged women in Edinburgh. This is not to say that some of the questionnaire and interview respondents were not living in extreme poverty. However, the views of more affluent, better educated and more articulate women may be slightly over represented. Demographic data about respondents in Appendix A demonstrate that, other than this, the respondents appear to be fairly reflective of the general population of Edinburgh.

Were the forty five interviewees reflective of the demography of the wider sample of questionnaire respondents? Figure B.3 shows that those who were interviewed are more likely to be in a higher social class that the questionnaire respondents. However, in the light of the interview sub-sample being so small in relation to the wider sample, the mix of social classes achieved seems reasonable. While the questionnaire respondents are over-represented by women in SC2, interview respondents are more widely distributed.

Figure B.3
Social class of questionnaire respondents and interviewees*
(%)



*** A corresponding Table (B.3) can be found in Appendix D.**
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.15

b) Successes of the methodology

i) Postal questionnaire survey

On a practical level the postal survey was very successful. The response rate of 72.4% attaches a high degree of confidence to generalisations based on the results, and improves on many other postal surveys of the general population (eg McLaughlin et al 1990; Dillman 1978). This is especially true as one area, Pilton, is considerably more disadvantaged than the areas usually targeted by this method, yet this has not created a particular problem in my research. The care taken in the planning and implementation of the survey is partly responsible for this, but it also reflects the high level of interest and concern about the topic among women in Edinburgh at the time.

As to the effectiveness of the questionnaire as a tool for data gathering, the rate of missed questions is very low (on average 3 respondents, or 0.8% of the total, failed to answer each question). Moreover, the high response to 'sensitive' questions was notable, such as those which asked about fear of sexual attack from known men, and child harassment and abuse. Many women wrote more information voluntarily by the side of these questions, including accounts of child abuse, domestic violence and marital rape. Although there were few open ended

questions, most women responded to these and in some cases they provided valuable insight. This suggests that post surveys have a great potential for researching this type of topic and sensitive issues in general; it seems that the privacy and anonymity they offer positively encourage openness. My initial decision not to try to measure rates of sexual violence using the postal survey was clearly over-cautious.

ii) Interviews

The process used to find interview respondents worked well for the relatively small numbers of interviewees required. A greater number of women volunteered than I had time to interview and, as I outlined above, those eventually selected were slightly over-represented by those with time on their hands and with telephones. Throughout the research I found the interviews increasingly useful. While the questionnaires produced useful data and suggested possible relationships, interview material was valuable in helping to consolidate and evaluate these, as well as in adding substance and colour to the research with individual case studies. Interviews also proved useful for gathering detailed material on sensitive issues; few of the interviewees who chose to discuss incidents of violence had inhibitions about doing so. The fact that accounts of violence were given on a voluntary basis may have helped.

iii) Dual methodology

As I suggested might be the case in Chapter 1, the use of the two methods together was a success. While my experience reaffirms some of the points in the qualitative/quantitative debate, it also confirms that different methods can be used together very effectively so long as their particular strengths and weaknesses are acknowledged and accounted for. As I have discussed, each method made a valuable contribution in being useful in areas where the other was less so. The result in this case is a breadth of information and documentation which has aided the development of theory.

c) Shortfalls of the methodology

I also suggested in Chapter 1 that there are potential conflicts between the two methodologies. These became evident in that answers sometimes differed between questionnaire and interview. This problem seems to be restricted to two types of topic; firstly where terminology or concepts are open to wide interpretation, and secondly where an issue involves exploration of the subconscious or highly

routinised behaviour. In particular, evidence about sexual harassment and the effects of fear sometimes proved contradictory. Clearly in cases such as these the interviews played an important role in clarification, as well as initially raising awareness of the problem. These finding suggests that postal surveys are not suitable alone for certain problematic topics which require in depth analysis, or that if they are used to study them great caution should be taken in analysis and evaluation.

d) The social class variable

The system of ascribing social class to each individual described above appears to have been reasonably successful. Again, there is no gauge by which to measure it; I pointed out some of the drawbacks of aggregate social class data in Chapter 1. The system used here shares the problem of clustering in the middle classes, however (47% of the questionnaire respondents are in Social Class 2); the problem of a lack of differentiation of women's class which much research shares. Notwithstanding this, there exist many significant and marked relationships between the social class variable and certain variables such as fear of private violence, sexual harassment and concern for children's safety, and these relationships do not simply reflect the individual patterns produced by correlations with income, education or occupation. This suggests that the social class variable calculated here ought to be seen as a rough guide to women's socio-economic status but is quite a valid measure.

Something is inevitably lost in the reduction of categories entailed in the classification process. Firstly income, education and occupational grouping were simplified and then the social classes were divided equally into four; it should be recognised that any such categorisation is arbitrary. In addition, forty-two women (10.7% of the questionnaire respondents) were not allocated a social class, usually because they had failed to give the required information about their income or occupation. Therefore their experiences are lost from calculations using the social class variable:. It is impossible to say whether this creates any bias or not.

This system for measuring women's social class requires further refinement beyond the scope of a project primarily concerned with something else if it is to be applied in the future. There is a need for the development of a coherent and applicable system which allows for the differences in men's and women's work as well as the numerous factors which have a bearing on social class. Rather than being aimed at

women's classes alone, such a system should take account of the central role of gender in stratification and be used for both sexes. It should allow for the value of alternative types of work (eg voluntary work and childcare), and it would need to be capable of responding to the changing circumstances of individuals and the broader national social and economic context.

Appendix C
SCHEDULES

1. Questionnaire schedule

(Question numbers marked by hand relate to the question numbering referred to in the main text.)

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(Question numbers marked by hand relate to the question numbering referred to in the main text.)

WOMEN AND SAFETY IN EDINBURGH

A Survey of Women's Feelings about Crime

WOMEN AND SAFETY IN EDINBURGH

A Survey of Women's Feelings about Crime

QUESTIONNAIRE

Only to be filled in by women aged 18 or over.

Please complete in private and answer all of the questions.

Most answers just require you to circle a number (or numbers). In some cases you are asked for extra details.

If you wish to comment on any questions or qualify your answers, please feel free to do so, beside the questions or on a separate sheet. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

. . . . PLEASE BEGIN

SECTION ONE: HOW SAFE YOU FEEL TODAY

To start off with, we'd like to ask you a few questions about the safety of women in general.

1. **Please indicate how common you think the following incidents are in Scotland as a whole: (Circle one in each case.)**

	VERY COMMON	FAIRLY COMMON	FAIRLY RARE	RARE	DON'T KNOW
Rape	1	2	3	4	0
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4	0
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	4	0

1.1

2. **Please indicate how common you think the following incidents are in the Pilton area of Edinburgh.**

	VERY COMMON	FAIRLY COMMON	FAIRLY RARE	RARE	DON'T KNOW
Rape	1	2	3	4	0
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4	0
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	4	0

1.2

3. **Over the last five years, do you think each incident has become more common, or less common?**

	MORE COMMON	LESS COMMON	NO CHANGE	DON'T KNOW
Rape	1	2	3	0
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	0
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	0

1.3

4a. **Which person do you think is the most likely to commit each offence?**

	STRANGER	FRIEND/ACQUAINTANCE	RELATIVE	DON'T KNOW
Rape	1	2	3	0
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	0
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	0

1.4a

4b. Which person do you imagine would be most likely to commit each offence, if *you* were the victim? (Circle one in each case.)

1.4b

	STRANGER	FRIEND/ACQUAINTANCE	RELATIVE	CAN'T IMAGINE
Rape	1	2	3	4
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	4

5a. Where do you think each incident would be most likely to take place?

1.5a

	VICTIM'S HOME	ANOTHER HOUSE	OUTSIDE	DON'T KNOW
Rape	1	2	3	4
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	4

5b. Where do you imagine each incident would be most likely to take place, if *you* were the victim?

1.5b

	MY HOME	ANOTHER HOUSE	OUTSIDE	CAN'T IMAGINE
Rape	1	2	3	4
Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4
Child Sexual Abuse	1	2	3	4

6. Which crime do you worry about most? (Please number these 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, in the order that they worry you - with 1 as the most worrying, and 5 as the least worrying.)

1.6

_ Car theft
_ Housebreaking
_ Physical assault
_ Theft of personal belongings
_ Sexual assault (rape, etc.)

7. **Now please put yourself in each of the following situations. How safe would you feel? (Circle one number in each case.)**

	ALWAYS FEEL SAFE	SOMETIMES FEEL SAFE	RARELY FEEL SAFE	NEVER FEEL SAFE
<u>At Home</u>				
a. Alone at home, during the day	1	2	3	4
b. Alone at home, at night	1	2	3	4
c. With company at home, in day	1	2	3	4
d. With company at home, at night	1	2	3	4
<u>Outside</u>				
e. Alone outside, during the day	1	2	3	4
f. Alone outside, at night	1	2	3	4
g. With company outside, in day	1	2	3	4
h. With company outside, at night	1	2	3	4

1.7

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION TWO . . .

SECTION TWO: CHILDREN'S SAFETY

This Section asks how worried you are about children's safety; and what you remember about safety when ***you*** were young.

1a. Have you had any children? 2.1

1 Yes
2 No

b. If not, have you ever looked after other people's children?

1 Yes
2 No (- please go on to Question 5)

c. Are the children under 16 at present?

1 Yes
2 No (- please go on to Question 4)

d. Are they:

1 Male
2 Female
3 Both

2. How often do you worry about the *girls* you look after becoming victims of sexual attack or abuse? 2.2
(Please circle one.)

1 All the time
2 Frequently
3 Sometimes
4 Rarely
5 Never

3. How often do you worry about the *boys* you look after becoming victims of sexual attack or abuse? 2.3

1 All the time
2 Frequently
3 Sometimes
4 Rarely
5 Never

4. **If your children are now adult, do you ever worry now that they might become victims of sexual attack or abuse?**

2.4

1 No
2 Yes - worry about females
3 Yes - worry about males
4 Yes - worry about males and females

5. **In your own childhood (under 16), do you remember being warned that you might be at risk from sexual attack or abuse?**

2.5

1 Yes
2 No **(- please go on to Section 3.)**

6. **Can you estimate how old you were when you were first warned?**

2.6

1 Under 5 years old
2 5 - 8 years old
3 8 - 11 years old
4 11 - 14 years old
5 14 - 16 years old

7. **Who warned you when you were young?**
(Circle any which apply.)

2.7

1 Parents
2 Sister or brother
3 Other relative
4 Teachers at school
5 Friends
6 Police
7 Other (who?_____)

8. **What were you warned about? (Circle any which apply.)**

1 Being abducted
2 Being physically hurt
3 Being sexually attacked or abused
4 Nothing in particular, just general danger
5 Other (what? _____
_____)

2.8

9. **Who were you warned about? (Circle any which apply.)**

1 Men who were strangers
2 Men you might know
3 Women who were strangers
4 Women you might know

2.9

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION THREE . . .

SECTION THREE: HOW SOME MEN BEHAVE TOWARDS WOMEN

The last two Sections asked you about safety from certain crimes.
Now we would like to ask about your views and experiences of the way some men behave towards women, more generally.

1. Can you estimate how often each of these experiences has happened to you since you have been an adult (over 16)? (Please circle one number in each case.)

	NEVER	ONCE	A FEW TIMES	FREQUENTLY
a. Being flashed at	1	2	3	4
b. Being followed	1	2	3	4
c. Being touched up	1	2	3	4
d. Being leered at	1	2	3	4
e. Being whistled at	1	2	3	4
f. Unwanted comments	1	2	3	4
g. Obscene phone call	1	2	3	4
h. Harassment at work	1	2	3	4

3.1

2. How do you feel (or how would you feel) about each of these experiences happening? (Please circle one number in each case.)

	HATE IT	DISLIKE IT	DON'T MIND IT	FEEL FLATTERED	NO STRONG VIEWS
a. Being flashed at	1	2	3	4	5
b. Being followed	1	2	3	4	5
c. Being touched up	1	2	3	4	5
d. Being leered at	1	2	3	4	5
e. Being whistled at	1	2	3	4	5
f. Unwanted comments	1	2	3	4	5
g. Obscene phone call	1	2	3	4	5
h. Harassment at work	1	2	3	4	5

3.2

3. **How worried are you that each experience might happen? (Please circle one number in each case.)**

	VERY WORRIED	FAIRLY WORRIED	NOT VERY WORRIED	NOT AT ALL WORRIED
a. Being flashed at	1	2	3	4
b. Being followed	1	2	3	4
c. Being touched up	1	2	3	4
d. Being leered at	1	2	3	4
e. Being whistled at	1	2	3	4
f. Unwanted comments	1	2	3	4
g. Obscene phone call	1	2	3	4
h. Harassment at work	1	2	3	4

3.3

PLEASE CONTINUE . . .

At work

4. **Have you ever worked outside the home?**

1 Yes
2 No **(Please go on to Question 7)**

3.4

5. **Have you ever experienced any of the following from a man (or men) while at work? (Please circle any which apply.)**

1 Leering
2 Unwanted touching
3 Unwanted sexual comments
4 Pestering with unwanted requests
5 Standing too close for comfort
6 Someone suggested sex in return for a favour
7 Forced sex (or an attempt at forced sex)
0 None of the above

3.5

6. **In what ways has the possibility of harassment at work affected you? (Please circle any which apply.)**

1 I'm aware of it as a problem I may encounter
2 I'm aware of it as a problem others may encounter
3 It affects the way I dress
4 It affects the way I behave towards men at work
5 It has affected my choice of job
6 It has affected my promotion prospects
7 It has meant I have given up my job
8 Other (what? _____
_____
_____)
0 It has had no effect on me

3.6

When you were young

7. **Do you remember any of the following happening to you before you were 16? (Circle any which apply.)**

1 Flashed at
2 Touched up or fondled
3 Offered a lift or approached by a stranger
4 Followed
5 Someone sitting or standing too close for comfort
6 Other (what?_____)
7 None of these (- go on to Section 4)

3.7

8. **How old were you, on the first occasion you remember?**

1 Under 5 years old
2 5 - 8 years old
3 8 - 11 years old
4 11 - 14 years old
5 14 - 16 years old

3.8

9. **Who did this, on the first occasion?**

1 A stranger
2 Friend of the family
3 Relative (who?_____)
4 Other (who?_____)

3.9

10. **Did you experience this sort of thing more than once before you were 16?**

1 Yes
2 No

3.10

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION FOUR . . .

SECTION FOUR: WORRYING ABOUT SEXUAL ATTACK

This Section moves on to ask how worried you feel about more violent forms of sexual attack, such as rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, and so on.

1. How much anxiety do you feel about becoming a victim of the following incidents?
(Please circle one number in each case.)

4.1

	VERY WORRIED	FAIRLY WORRIED	NOT VERY WORRIED	NOT AT ALL WORRIED
Outside				
a. Being beaten up, outside, by a stranger?	1	2	3	4
b. Being beaten up, outside, by someone you know?	1	2	3	4
c. Being raped, outside, by a stranger?	1	2	3	4
d. Being raped, outside, by someone you know?	1	2	3	4
In your home				
e. Being beaten up, in your home, by a stranger?	1	2	3	4
f. Being beaten up, in your home, by someone you know?	1	2	3	4
g. Being raped, in your home, by a stranger?	1	2	3	4
h. Being raped, in your home, by someone you know?	1	2	3	4

2. Do you think you are generally more worried or less worried about sexual attack than you have been in the past? 4.2

1 More worried
2 Less worried
3 No change

3. **If you are more worried now, or less worried now, can you explain why?**

_____ 4.3

_____

_____

4. **If you are *less* worried about sexual attack now, what sort of age were you when you worried most?** 4.4

Approximate age _____

5. **Have any of the following increased your anxiety about sexual attack?**
(Please circle those which apply.) 4.5

1 Newspapers or television
2 Your past experience of such an incident
3 You know someone who's experienced such an incident
4 Having children
5 Warnings or advice from the police
6 Warnings or advice from other people
7 Poor street lighting
8 Badly designed buildings/estate
9 Badly-placed bushes, shrubbery, etc
0 None of the above

6. **Have any of the following ever made you worry about sexual attack?**
(Please circle those which apply.) 4.6

1 Being flashed at
2 Being followed
3 Being touched up
4 Being leered at
5 Being whistled at
6 Unwanted sexual comments
7 Obscene phone call
8 Harassment at work
0 None of the above (- **please go on to Question 8.**)

7. **Were you frightened at the time, or when you thought about it later, or both? (Only answer for those you circled in Question 6.)**

4.7

	FRIGHTENED AT THE TIME	FRIGHTENED LATER	BOTH
Being flashed at	1	2	3
Being followed	1	2	3
Being touched up	1	2	3
Being leered at	1	2	3
Being whistled at	1	2	3
Unwanted comments	1	2	3
Obscene phone call	1	2	3
Harassment at work	1	2	3

8. **Have any of the following made you feel *less* worried about becoming a victim of sexual attack? (Please circle one or more.)**

4.8

1 Moving house
2 Getting married or having a boyfriend
3 Spending less time alone
4 Fitting locks on doors or windows
5 Learning self defence
6 Carrying a rape alarm or something as a weapon
7 Having a dog
0 None of the above

<u>Reporting sexual attacks</u>

9. **Do you think that you would report the following incidents to the police if they happened to you? (Please circle one in each case.)**

4.9

	WOULD ALWAYS REPORT	WOULD PROBABLY REPORT	WOULD PROBABLY NOT REPORT	WOULD NEVER REPORT
a. Rape by a stranger	1	2	3	4
b. Rape by someone you knew	1	2	3	4
c. Domestic violence	1	2	3	4
d. Being flashed at	1	2	3	4
e. Being followed	1	2	3	4
f. Being touched up	1	2	3	4
g. Receiving obscene phone call	1	2	3	4

10. Do you think that any of the following could put you off reporting sexual crime to the police? (Circle any which apply.)

4.10

1 Embarassment
2 Feeling the offence was too trivial
3 If the attacker was an acquaintance
4 If the attacker was a relative
5 No faith in treatment by police
6 No faith in legal system
7 Past experience of reporting sexual crime
8 Other (what? _____
_____
_____)
0 None of these

11. On average, how sympathetic do you think the way the police deal with women who suffer rape and sexual attack is?

4.11

1 Very sympathetic
2 Quite sympathetic
3 Quite unsympathetic
4 Very unsympathetic
0 No strong view

12. On average, how fair do you think the British legal system is to women who suffer rape and sexual attack?

4.12

1 Very fair
2 Quite fair
3 Quite unfair
4 Very unfair
0 No strong view

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION FIVE . . .

SECTION FIVE: HOW YOUR FEAR AFFECTS YOU

This Section asks you to consider the effects that the threat of sexual attack might have on day-to-day life.
Please read all of the statements in this Section and circle those which apply to you.

In everyday life

1. How often do you do the following because of the risk of sexual attack?
(Please circle one number in each case.)

	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
a. I make sure I don't go out	1	2	3	4
b. I make sure I don't go out alone	1	2	3	4
c. I'm watchful as I walk	1	2	3	4
d. I don't answer the door	1	2	3	4
e. I put off routine calls	1	2	3	4
f. I avoid certains streets/areas	1	2	3	4
g. Feel unsafe with strangers	1	2	3	4
h. Feel unsafe with people I know	1	2	3	4

5.1

2. Which types of transport do you use regularly (more than once a fortnight)?:

5.2

1 Walking
2 Bicycle
3 Bus
4 Train
5 Car
6 Taxi
7 None of the above **(Go on to Question 5)**

3. **The risk of sexual attack means that sometimes I *choose not to use* these types of transport: (Please circle any which apply)**

5.3

1 Walking
2 Bicycle
3 Bus
4 Train
5 Car
6 Taxi
7 None of the above

4. **The risk of sexual attack means that sometimes I *choose to use* these types of transport: (Please circle any which apply.)**

5.4

1 Walking
2 Bicycle
3 Bus
4 Train
5 Car
6 Taxi
7 None of the above

Your social life

5. **How often do you go out socially? (Please circle one number.)**

5.5

1 More than twice a week
2 Once or twice a week
3 One to three times a month
4 Less than once a month
0 Never **(- go on to Question 7.)**

6. **Does the risk of sexual attack affect any of the following? (Please circle any which apply)**

1 It affects whether I go out
2 It affects who I go with
3 Where I go
4 How I get there
5 How I get home
6 The way I dress
7 The way I behave towards men who I don't know
8 The way I behave towards men who I do know
9 It means I spend more money on my social life
0 It has no effect on my social life

5.6

Your work

7. **Have you ever worked outside the home?**

1 Yes
2 No **(Please go on to Question 9)**

5.7

8. **Does the risk of sexual attack affect any of the following? (Please circle those which apply.)**

1 It affects how I travel to or from work
2 It means I feel nervous in some situations at work
4 It affects the way that I dress at work
5 It affects how I behave towards men at work
7 It could affect my choice of job
8 It has meant I have given up a job
0 It has no effect on my working life

5.8

Leisure and sport

(These questions refer to all activities such as sport, walking the dog, jogging, bingo, art, evening classes and so on.)

9. Do you take part, or have you taken part, in one or more leisure activity? 5.9

1 Yes
2 No (- **please go on to Question 10.**)

10. Does the risk of sexual attack affect any of the following? (Please circle those which apply.) 5.10

1 It affects how I get to and from activities
2 It means I feel nervous doing some activities
3 It means I do activities with others
4 It means I only do activities in certain places
5 It has put me off trying an activity
6 It has meant I have given up an activity
0 It has no effect on my leisure activities

Family life

11. Does the risk of sexual attack affect your home life or family relationships in any way? 5.11

1 Yes
2 No
3 Don't know

If 'yes', please explain how:

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION SIX . . .

SECTION SIX: ABOUT YOURSELF

Finally, please fill in the following details:

Your House or Flat

How long have you lived in the Pilton area? _____ 6.1

Is the property a house or flat? _____ 6.2

If the property is a flat, which floor do you live on? (please circle one) 6.3

1 Basement
2 Ground floor
3 First floor
4 Second floor
5 Third floor
6 Fourth floor or above

Who owns the property? (please circle one) 6.4

1 Occupier
2 Council
3 Private landlord
4 Housing Association
5 Other (what?_____)

How many people live in the same house or flat as you? _____ 6.5

Your Age Group (please circle one) 6.6

1 18 - 30
2 31 - 45
3 45 - 60
4 Over 60

Do you have a walking difficulty or other physical disability which limits how you get around? 6.7

1 Yes
2 No

Your Marital Status (please circle one)

6.8

1 Single
2 Married
3 Living together as a couple
4 Divorced
5 Widowed
6 Separated

Your Ethnic Group (please circle one)

6.9

1 White
2 African-Caribbean
3 Indian
4 Pakistani
5 Bangladeshi
6 Chinese
7 Other ethnic group
(please describe_____)

Your Income (before tax) (please circle one)

6.10

1 Below £3,000 a year
2 £3,000 - £6,000
3 £6,001 - £10,000
4 £10,001 - £15,000
5 £15,001 - £20,000
6 Above £20,000

Your Education

When did you leave full-time education? (please circle one or more)

6.11

1 Aged under 16
2 Aged 16
3 Aged 17 or 18
4 Aged 19 - 20
5 Aged 21
6 Aged over 21
7 Went back into education as an adult
8 Other (please specify_____)

Your Occupation

Are you: (please circle one or more) 6.12

1 Employed full-time
2 Employed part-time
3 Unemployed
4 Retired
5 Looking after house/children full-time
6 Student

Please describe your usual occupation, even if you are not working now:

6.13

Title: _____
Kind of work you do: _____
Kind of company or business: _____
Are you in charge of other people? _____

Would you describe yourself as . . . . (please circle one)

6.14

1 Heterosexual
2 Lesbian
3 Bisexual

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT.
PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE
IN THE POSTAGE-PAID ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

* * * SAFETY IN EDINBURGH SURVEY * * *

As the next part of the study, we are looking for women who would be willing to talk informally with a female interviewer about the sorts of issues the questionnaire has covered. Again, confidentiality is guaranteed.

Would you be interested in information about participating?

1 Yes
2 No

If so, please write your name and address here, so we can send you more details once we have received your questionnaire:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Daytime telephone number: _____

If you do not wish to participate, please don't forget to return your questionnaire anyway.

2. Accompanying letters

Letter 1: First questionnaire

May 15th 1992

Dear Resident,

You are one of a selected number of women living in the Pilton area who have been chosen to take part in a survey about women's safety and security in Edinburgh. Your name and address were taken at random from the electoral register.

The survey aims to find out how safe women feel where they live and work in Edinburgh, and will be used to suggest how improvements can be made.

It would be a great help to the survey if you could fill in the questionnaire enclosed, and return it in the postage-paid envelope provided. As it is important that we consider the opinions of a full range of women, of different ages and areas, your individual reply is very valuable.

This survey is completely confidential. The questionnaire only has an identification number so that we can strike you off the mailing list when you return it. Your answers will then be completely separate from your name or address.

The result of this research will be made available to planners and policy-makers, as well as interested residents. If you wish to receive a summary of results, please write "summary of results" on the back of your return envelope, and print your name and address below it.

Thank you for your help. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Pain
Researcher.

Letter 2: Reminder

May 22nd 1992

Dear Resident,

SAFETY IN EDINBURGH SURVEY

Last week I wrote to you, asking for your help with the Safety in Edinburgh Survey by filling in the questionnaire we sent to you. Your name and address were drawn at random from the Electoral Register as part of a sample of women.

If you have completed and returned your questionnaire, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank you.

If not, please do so soon. Because it has been sent to a small, but representative, sample of women in Edinburgh, it is extremely important that yours is included in the study. Whatever your views, your help is valuable to the research, and will contribute to understanding of this important issue. We intend to report to Edinburgh District Council and other experts and policy-makers on the results.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope which was sent with it. Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Pain
Researcher.

Letter 3: Second questionnaire

5 June 1992

Dear Resident,

SAFETY IN EDINBURGH SURVEY

About three weeks ago I wrote to you seeking your help with the Safety in Edinburgh Survey, which aims to find out how safe women feel where they live and work. As of today we have not received your completed questionnaire.

I am writing to make this request again as the return of each questionnaire is so important to the study. Your name was drawn by a sampling procedure, using the electoral register, which produced a small but representative number of women living in Edinburgh. In order for the results of this study to be truly representative, it is essential that each person in the sample returns their questionnaire. We need to include old and young people in the study, as well as people who feel safe in their area and people who do not.

We will be reporting to Edinburgh District Council, and other experts and policy-makers, on the results. However, your name and address will not be used in the research at any stage. There is an identification number on the questionnaire only so we can remove you from the mailing list once you have returned it. If you would like to know the outcome of the survey, please print "summary of results" with your name and address on the return envelope.

I enclose another questionnaire and return envelope for your use - we greatly appreciate your participation.

Many thanks,

Rachel Pain
Researcher.

Letter 4: Third Questionnaire

26 June 1992

Dear Resident,

SAFETY IN EDINBURGH SURVEY

I am writing about the Safety in Edinburgh Survey, which you were randomly selected to take part in several weeks ago. As of today we still have not heard from you.

This survey is about how safe women in the city feel where they live, and we will be reporting to policy-makers on the results. But the success of the project greatly depends on getting a high response from the questionnaire survey. We have had a good response to date, but it is still important that we consider all the opinions of a range of women in different areas. Therefore your individual reply is very valuable.

I enclose another questionnaire in case you have misplaced the original, and would be very grateful if you could fill it in, and return it in the postage paid envelope enclosed. Your answers are completely confidential. The questionnaire only has an identification number so that we can strike you off the mailing list when you return it.

Your participation in this important survey is much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Rachel Pain
Researcher.

Letter 5: Invitation to interview

May 25th 1992

Dear Resident,

SAFETY IN EDINBURGH SURVEY

Many thanks for the completed questionnaire which you returned as part of this survey, and for your interest in the informal interviews which make up the next stage of the survey.

The interview would be with myself and take the form of an informal chat, lasting around 45 minutes. Like the questionnaire, it would cover your feelings about the risks of attack and harassment, and is confidential.

Everyone who is interviewed makes an important contribution to the study. So if you are interested in taking part, please return the attached form to me, so that we can arrange a time for the interview which suits you. Or if you prefer, please telephone me on 031 6502352 during working hours.

Best wishes,

Rachel Pain
Researcher.

Letter 6: Summary of findings

Dear Resident,

You may remember taking part in the Safety in Edinburgh Survey earlier this year. I am writing to thank you for your help in the survey, and am enclosing a copy of the main findings.

600 questionnaires were sent out to a random sample of women in the Pilton, Haymarket and Corstorphine areas of Edinburgh, of which 72% were returned. This is a good response rate, showing the high level of interest in women's safety in Edinburgh.

I enclose a summary of the results; the survey produced a large amount of information on topics such as sexual harassment, reporting violence, and children's safety.

The survey is due to be used as part of Edinburgh District Council's campaign on women's safety. The information will also be presented to other authorities and policy-makers, to help improve safety on the streets and in the home. It will also be publicised in the local and national press - look out for the Evening News campaign on 'women and violence' this autumn.

Meanwhile I would like to give my thanks to everyone who gave up time to help with the survey and the interviews, as everyone's contribution is important to the end result.

Yours faithfully,

Rachel Pain
Researcher.

WOMEN AND SAFETY IN EDINBURGH
A SURVEY OF WOMEN'S FEELINGS ABOUT CRIME

How safe do women feel in Edinburgh?

Sexual assault is the most worrying crime for the women surveyed, far ahead of burglary, physical assault, or theft or belongings or car.

64% of women said it was the crime that worried them most

a further 13% said it was the second-most worrying crime

Perhaps because of media coverage, women think that sexual violence is common in Scotland.

61% think that rape is very or fairly common

84% think that domestic violence is very or fairly common

51% think that child abuse is very or fairly common

But women in all areas - Pilton, Corstorphine and Haymarket - feel that such incidents are much less common in their own area.

In fact, sexual attack is probably as likely to happen in one area as another. But because it is a hidden problem, most people assume it must be happening somewhere else.

Where do women feel at risk?

Most women worry about being attacked outside, by a stranger.

69% are worried about being attacked outside by a stranger

25% are worried about being attacked in their home by someone they know

Although fewer women worry about being attacked in their own homes, this is where sexual violence is much more likely to take place.

Who worries the most?

Concern about sexual attack was widespread in Corstorphine, Pilton and Haymarket: it's a problem affecting the majority of women. But those who worry most tend to be:

Young and middle aged women

Women who rent their house or flat

Women who have experienced violence in the past

What are the effects of fear of sexual attack?

Because of fear of sexual attack...

7 out of 10 regularly avoid certain types of transport

8 out of 10 feel it affects their social lives

4 out of 10 feel it affects them at work

5 out of 10 feel it affects their leisure activities

What about children?

Another big concern for women is their children's safety.

61% worry about girls being sexually attacked or abused

50% worry about boys being sexually attacked or abused

Most parents warn their children about danger and keep a close eye on them. Just like women, children are far more likely to be abused by someone they might know than by a stranger. Children warned that anyone might potentially hurt them are more likely to stay safe.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is common on the streets of Edinburgh and something women find worrying.

Half of the women surveyed have been followed

Over half have received obscene phone calls

A third have been flashed at

A third have been touched up or groped

The majority have also had numerous minor incidents, like being whistled at, leered at, receiving unwanted sexual comments. Most women also remember being harassed before the age of sixteen.

Most working women have been sexually harassed at work. Several women said they had given up a job because of persistent harassment. Women in 'white collar' or professional jobs are just as likely to be harassed at work as anyone else.

Being harassed the streets also makes women wary of certain places and increases fear of strangers.

Overall, sexual harassment is more of a worry than crimes like burglary or car theft - yet is has never been considered in discussions about making the streets safer.

Summary

The Safety in Edinburgh Survey shows that fear of sexual attack and harassment affects most women's lives whether they have been attacked or not. Sometimes it has a severe effect on day to day activities, leisure interests and work.

What can be done to improve women's safety?

Most women take various precautions to avoid attack, ranging from the minor (carrying a rape alarm) to the extreme (staying in every night).

But this isn't the answer to improving safety for everyone. Recommendations from the Safety in Edinburgh Survey include:

Safety advice to women and children: educating people about violence in the home rather than violence against strangers.

Action on harassment at work and on the streets: changes in the law, and in the attitudes of companies, workers and the police.

Tackling violence against women: This might involved harsher, fixed penalties/treatment for offenders, and continuation of the improvements in police response.

3. Interview topics

(The following is a brief list of the main topics covered in every interview. In many cases these were discussed in more depth than this list suggests and additional topics were covered).

1. Unsafe situations - people, places, incidents which worry you.
2. Knowledge of violence
   - public
   - private
3. Effects of fear
   - public
   - work
   - social
   - leisure
   - home
4. Adult learning - information sources
5. Worrying about children's safety
   - warnings
   - restrictions
6. Childhood learning
   - warnings
   - restrictions
   - experiences
7. Experiences of harassment
   - frequency
   - feelings
   - examples
   - effects/restrictions
   - relation to fear of crime
8. General attitude
9. What would make you feel safer?
10. What would help to reduce violence?

4. Data categories

Unsafe Situations	- public	- places
		- people
		- incidents
	- private	- places
		- people
		- incidents
Private violence	- knowledge	- hearsay
		- beliefs
	- experiences	- childhood
		- adulthood
Public violence	- knowledge	- hearsay
		- beliefs
	- experiences	- childhood
		- adulthood
Constraints	- public	
	- private	
	- work	
	- social	
	- leisure	
	- transport	
	- subconscious	
Children	- concern for children	- gender
	- concern for grandchildren	
	- warnings give to children	
	- restrictions on children	
Learning	- childhood warnings	
	- sources of information	

Safety factors	- age
	- disability
	- built environment
	- transport
	- legal system
	- policing
	- knowledge/experience of other crimes
	- home/husbands/dogs
	- beliefs about causes of violence
Sexual harassment	- definitions/labelling
	- public
	- home
	- work
	- social
	- childhood
Attitude	- reactions
	- old days

Appendix D
ADDITIONAL TABLES

The Tables in this Appendix are referred to within the main Chapters as indicated, either in conjunction with Figures or independently.

1. Chapter 3

Table 3.1
Which crime do you worry about most?

% of respondents (n = 374)	Car theft	House-breaking	Physical assault	Theft of personal belongings	Sexual assault
Corstorphine	0.0	30.1	8.4	2.8	59.4
Haymarket	1.7	10.0	16.7	5.8	67.5
Pilton	4.5	18.9	9.9	0.9	65.8
Overall	1.9	20.3	11.5	3.3	63.9

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 1.6

Table 3.2
Perceptions about the commonness of rape in Scotland and in respondents' own area

% of respondents who perceive rape to be 'fairly or very common' (n = 386)				
	Corstorphine	Haymarket	Pilton	All
In Scotland	51.4	60.9	74.2	61.4
In own area	2.1	20.8	19.4	13.3
% who perceive domestic violence to be 'fairly or very common' (n=386)				
	Corstorphine	Haymarket	Pilton	All
In Scotland	78.8	87.5	88.4	84.5
In own area	13.7	44.1	73.1	36.4

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 1.1 and 1.2

Table 3.6

The spatial distribution of fear of sexual violence among women in different social classes

% of respondents who report being 'very or fairly worried' about each incident (n=347)	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4*	Significance (p)
Rape outside by a stranger	69.5	68.1	68.8	64.5	>0.9
Rape in your home by a stranger	53.4	45.0	37.6	45.2	>0.2
Rape outside by someone you know	36.2	30.2	19.4	9.7	*<0.05*
Rape in your home by someone you know	36.7	26.7	17.2	9.7	*<0.001*

*** SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest. Figures are based on 89.3% of the sample for whom social class could be calculated.**
Significant results are highlighted in italic.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 6.15

Table 3.7

The spatial distribution of fear of physical violence among women in different social classes

% of respondents who report being 'very or fairly worried' about each incident (n=347)	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4*	Significance (p)
Being beaten up outside by a stranger	66.1	56.9	55.9	51.6	>0.5
Being beaten up in your home by a stranger	56.7	41.0	31.2	35.5	*<0.05*
Being beaten up outside by someone you know	33.9	21.4	12.9	6.5	*<0.001*
Being beaten up in your home by someone you know	36.8	23.6	16.1	6.5	*<0.001*

*** SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest. Figures are based on 89.3% of the sample for whom social class could be calculated.**
Significant results are highlighted in italic.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 6.15

Table 3.10

Effects of fear of sexual attack on transport use

Method of transport	% who sometimes avoid because of fear of sexual attack (n = 389)	% who sometimes choose because of fear of sexual attack (n = 389)
Walking	56.3	2.8
Bicycle	10.1	1.0
Bus	13.2	27.5
Train	10.6	2.1
Car	2.4	40.4
Taxi	6.9	49.9
One or more	70.7	84.8

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 5.3 and 5.4

Table 3.11

Effects of fear of sexual attack on leisure activities

Effect of fear of sexual attack	% of respondents (n = 310*)
Affects how I get to and from activities	47.0
Means I feel nervous doing some activities	8.3
Means I do activities with others	20.6
Means I only do activities in certain places	21.6
Has put me off trying an activity	5.8
Has meant I have given up an activity	1.3
One or more of the above	53.6

*** 310 respondents (79.6%) out of a total 389 say that they take part in (or have ever taken part in) one or more leisure activities. Examples given are sport, walking the dog, jogging, bingo, art, evening classes.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 5.10

Table 3.12

Effects of fear of sexual attack on work

Effect of fear of sexual attack	% of respondents (n = 365*)
Affects how I travel to or from work	14.1
Means I feel nervous in some situations at work	9.5
Affects the way that I dress at work	10.8
Affects how I behave towards men at work	13.4
Could affect my choice of job	5.7
Has meant I have given up a job	1.8
One or more of the above	41.6

*** 365 respondents (93.8%) out of a total 389 say that they have worked outside the home at some time.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 5.8

Table 3.13

Effects of fear of sexual attack on social activities

Effect of fear of sexual attack	**% of respondents (n = 377*)**
Whether I go out	4.6
Who I go with	10.9
Where I go	38.0
How I get there	40.1
How I get home	61.7
The way I dress	14.7
The way I behave towards men I don't know	39.1
The way I behave towards men I do know	4.1
I spend more money on my social life	9.6
One or more of above	76.9

*** 377 respondents (96.9%) out of a total 389 say that they ever go out socially.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 5.6

Table 3.15

Fear of sexual violence from known men among child sexual abuse victims and non victims

Respondents who report being 'very or fairly worried' about each incident	**% of victims of child sexual abuse (n = 86*)**	**% of non-victims of child sexual abuse (n = 303)**	**Significance (p)**
Being raped outside by someone you know	19.8	30.0	*p < 0.05*
Being raped in your home by someone you know	16.3	27.7	*p < 0.05*

*** The figure of 86 comes from Question 3.7b and probably represents an underestimate of child sexual abuse amongst women in the survey (see Chapter 2). Significant results are highlighted in italic.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1, 3.7b

Table 3.16

Effects of fear of sexual attack among women in different social classes

% of respondents who report that they 'always' or 'sometimes' do the following because of fear of sexual attack (n = 347)	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4*	Significance (p)
Do not go out	11.3	7.6	4.7	7.1	>0.5
Do not go out alone	39.6	29.5	37.2	32.1	>0.4
Don't answer the door	42.3	35.9	26.7	46.4	>0.1
Put off routine calls	9.8	11.8	8.3	3.6	>0.5
Watchful when walking	82.7	86.9	81.4	85.7	>0.6
Avoid certain streets/areas	76.9	84.9	84.9	89.3	>0.4
Avoid certain types of transport	63.9	71.0	74.2	83.9	>0.3
Choose certain types of transport	75.4	85.2	90.3	96.8	*<0.05*
Affects social life	63.9	81.5	82.8	80.6	>0.09
Affects leisure activities	62.3	65.4	61.3	77.4	>0.4
Affects working life	52.5	39.5	40.9	41.3	>0.4

*** SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest. Figures are based on 89.3% of the sample for whom social class could be calculated.**

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.8, 5.10 and 6.15

Table 3.19

Concern about children's safety among women in different social classes

% of respondents (n = 195*)	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4**	Significance (p)
Worry 'frequently' or 'all the time' about girls	71.4	22.1	19.1	27.8	*<0.001*
Worry 'frequently' or 'all the time' about boys	57.1	12.9	6.7	20.0	*<0.001*

*** 195 women had or looked after children under the age of 16 at the time of the survey.**

**** SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest. Figures are based on 89.3% of the sample for whom social class could be calculated.**

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 2.3, 2.4 and 6.15

2. Chapter 4

Table 4.2

Factors which respondents believe would deter them from reporting sexual crimes

Would any of the following put you off reporting sexual crime to the police?	% of respondents (n = 389)
Feeling the offence was too trivial	36.5
If the attacker was a relative	30.1
Embarrassment	28.0
No faith in legal system	22.1
If the attacker was an acquaintance	18.8
No faith in treatment by police	16.2
Past experience of reporting sexual crime	2.6
Other	3.6
One or more of above	73.0

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 4.10

Table 4.4

Fear of rape in public and private space, and faith in police treatment of rape survivors

	% of respondents who feel the police are 'very or quite *sympathetic*' towards women who suffer rape (n = 211)	% of respondents who feel the police are 'very or quite *unsympathetic*' towards women who suffer rape (n = 85)	Significance (p)
'Very or fairly worried' about being raped outside by a stranger (public space)	65.9	76.8	>0.09
'Very or fairly worried' about being raped in home by known (private space)	23.0	37.3	*< 0.01*

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 4.11

Table 4.8

Perceptions about the commonness of rape and domestic violence in area of residence according to respondents' length of residence

Length of residence in area	% in each length of residence group who believe rape to be 'fairly or very common' in own area	% in each length of residence group who believe domestic violence to be 'fairly or very common' in own area
0-2 years (n=79)	29.5	70.7
3-5 years (n=77)	18.5	60.7
6-10 years (n=64)	15.7	66.0
11-20 years (n=68)	10.2	37.0
20 + years (n=95)	12.2	40.5
Significance (p)	*< 0.01*	*< 0.001*

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey, Questions 1.2 and 6.1

Table 4.10

Perceptions about rape among women in different social classes

Which person do you think is most likely to commit rape? % of respondents (n = 347)*				
In general**	**SC1**	**SC2**	**SC3**	**SC4**
Stranger	71.2	53.8	44.6	30.0
Friend/Acquaintance	26.9	42.8	49.4	63.3
Relative	1.9	3.4	6.0	6.7
If you were the victim+				
Stranger	84.8	89.9	87.5	84.0
Friend/Acquaintance	10.9	8.7	11.1	12.0
Relative	4.3	1.4	1.4	4.0

*** Percentages do not add up to totals in Table 5.9 as for a minority of respondents it was not possible to ascribe a social class.**

SC4 is the highest Social Class, and SC1 the lowest.

**** Relationship significant at 0.5 degrees confidence level ($p < 0.01$).**

+ Relationship not significant ($p > 0.8$).

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey, Questions 1.4a and 1.4b

3. Chapter 5

Table 5.4

The short term and long term impact of harassment on fear of sexual attack

Were you frightened at the time, or when you thought about it later, or both? (% of respondents who said incident made them worry about sexual attack - see Table 5.3)			
Incident	**At the time**	**Later**	**Both**
Being flashed at	44.4	28.6	25.4
Being followed	60.8	7.8	31.4
Being touched up	48.4	10.9	40.6
Being leered at	52.9	17.6	29.4
Unwanted sexual comments	43.9	24.6	31.6
Obscene phone call	41.1	14.7	44.2

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992: Question 4.7

Table 5.7

Reports of sexual harassment among women in different social classes

	Social Class				
% of respondents who report experiencing each at least once	**SC1**	**SC2**	**SC3**	**SC4**	**Significance**
Being flashed at	30.7	26.7	41.8	58.0	*$p < 0.01$*
Being followed	48.1	46.5	50.6	56.6	-
Being touched up	21.2	38.2	46.2	61.3	*$p < 0.01$*
Being leered at	39.1	66.7	79.5	83.3	*$p < 0.01$*
Being whistled at	78.8	91.0	95.6	93.5	*$p < 0.01$*
Receiving unwanted comments	61.6	78.9	82.4	90.3	*$p < 0.01$*
Receiving obscene phone call	42.3	53.8	66.0	54.9	-
Being harassed at work (1)*	21.2	26.1	25.3	45.1	-
Being harassed at work (2)*	49.2	52.5	55.9	71.0	-
Being harassed before the age of 16	55.7	67.3	61.2	81.4	-

*** Two measures of sexual harassment at work are available:**
(1) from Question 3.1: respondents report 'harassment at work'
(2) from Question 3.5: respondents report unwanted/intrusive sexual behaviour from men at work
Interview material suggests that both measures underestimate the extent of harassment at work (see Section B of Chapter 5).
Significant results are highlighted in italic.
Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992: Questions 3.1, 3.5, 3.7

Table 5.8

Reported levels of concern about sexual harassment among women in different social classes

	Social class				
% of respondents who are 'very or fairly worried' about...	**SC1**	**SC2**	**SC3**	**SC4**	**Significance**
Being flashed at	42	25	25	29	-
Being followed	84	76	72	65	-
Being touched up	73	54	51	42	*p< 0.01*
Being leered at	57	35	32	26	*p< 0.01*
Being whistled at	21	4	8	7	*p< 0.05*
Unwanted comments	46	27	23	12	*p< 0.01*
Obscene phone call	73	55	49	32	*p< 0.01*
Harassment at work (1)	49	32	31	26	*p< 0.01*

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992: Question 3.3

4. Chapter 6

Table 6.1

Concern about sexual and physical violence among women in different age groups

	% of respondents in each age group who report being 'fairly' or 'very' worried about each incident				
Incident	**18-30**	**31-45**	**46-60**	**61+**	**Significance (p)**
Being raped outside by a stranger	83.2	71.9	53.5	39.2	*< 0.01*
Being beaten up outside by a stranger	65.1	63.8	48.0	44.4	*< 0.01*
Being raped in your home by someone you know	28.0	28.0	18.4	21.7	> 0.3
Being beaten up in your home by someone you know	23.7	29.5	18.2	20.1	> 0.3

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 4.1 and 6.6

Table 6.3

Effects of fear of sexual attack among women with and without a disability

Effect of fear of sexual attack	**% of respondents with a physical disability (n=33)**	**% of respondents with no physical disability (n=356)**	**Significance (p)**
Don't go out	27.3	8.3	*< 0.01*
Don't go out alone	59.1	33.7	*< 0.01*
Don't answer the door	45.5	35.0	> 0.3
Put off routine calls	23.8	10.6	> 0.3
Feel unsafe with strangers	59.1	61.8	> 0.3
Feel unsafe with people I know	18.2	4.8	*< 0.01*

Significant results are highlighted in italic.

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Questions 5.1 and 6.7

5. Appendix B

Table B.3
Social class of questionnaire and interview respondents

	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4*
Questionnaire respondents (% / 389)	17	47	27	9
Interviewees (% / 43)**	19	21	35	26

**** SC4 is the highest Social Class and SC1 the lowest. Figures are based on 89.3% of the sample for whom social class could be calculated.**
*** Although 45 women took part in interviews, demographic information was available from questionnaires for only 43 of these.**

Source: Safety in Edinburgh Survey 1992, Question 6.15

Appendix E
PUBLISHED PAPERS

1. Pain, R. H. (1991) Space, sexual violence and social control: integrating geographical and feminist analyses of women's fear of crime. Progress in Human Geography, 15, 4, 415-31*

2. Pain, R. H. (1993) Women's fear of sexual violence: explaining the spatial paradox. In Jones, H. (ed) Crime and the urban environment: the Scottish experience Aldershot: Avebury, 55-68**

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Space, sexual violence and social control: integrating geographical and feminist analyses of women's fear of crime

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1 Introduction: the geography of women's fear

That fear of crime is a significant social problem has been well documented (for example, Conklin, 1975; Hough and Mayhew, 1983; Lewis and Salem, 1986; Smith, 1983), and it is now a well established field of research within geography. The effect of gender on the scale of the problem was noted early in general studies of urban fear of crime. It seems an anomaly that little specialist work has been carried out into women's fear of crime, however, when geography as a discipline is ideally placed to isolate and examine differentiations in fear between social groups in cities. The reflection of broad social processes in the use of space by different groups has been a key part of research in social geography, which has encompassed some of the spatial patterns and experiences common to particular classes, racial groups, age groups and sexes: yet the development of similar analyses of women's fear of crime has only just begun. Recently it has been recognized that the generalized concentration on fear at neighbourhood level which is common to many studies is not always adequate for explanations of fear. Social relations which affect people's fear may be manifested on a smaller scale, and in particular may account for the large gender differences in fear of crime which can be found in local areas (Smith, 1989).

Yet to date, the bulk of research on women's fear has been in feminist social sciences other than geography, despite the spatial patterns which are central to descriptions and explanations of women's fear. Geographers have made little use of this literature in their recent structural analyses of fear of crime, which provide a fitting context for it; and likewise, the specific literature has not drawn from the general.

In this article it is argued that women's fear of crime merits separate attention in geography. While it is not true that all women share the same experience of fear of crime, broad trends exist which suggest that women's fear is significantly different from men's fear. The spatial patterns of women's perceptions of risks, of the actual risks they are exposed to and of their behavioural responses have implications for their equal participation in society.

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1 Separate analysis of women's fear

Why should women's fear of crime be studied separately from men's? It differs in its extent, its nature, its relation to actual risks, its effects and its potential for structural analysis.

a Extent

It has emerged repeatedly that women's fear of crime is more widespread than men's. The three sweeps of the *British Crime Survey* showed clear differences in the extent of fear between the sexes – the 1982 survey, for example, found that women were five times more likely than men to worry excessively about their personal safety (Hough and Mayhew, 1983; 1985; Mayhew *et al.*, 1989).

b Nature

Such differences, which hold regardless of age, place of residence and experience of victimization (Smith, 1989), can largely be accounted for by the fear of rape and other forms of sexual violence (Riger and Gordon, 1981; Stanko, 1987; Warr, 1985). The 1990 *Edinburgh Crime Survey* found that while men and women were equally worried about property crime, women were far more worried than men about personal crime, especially sexual offences: 45% of women in central Edinburgh were 'very' or 'fairly' worried about sexual assault (Anderson *et al.*, 1990). In a postal survey of Seattle, a larger percentage still expressed fear of sexual violence – 52% of women respondents said that they were 'fearful' of rape, rising to 67% of those who were under 35 years old (Warr, 1985).

c Relation to actual risks

Women's fear of crime reflects actual risks more realistically than men's fear of crime, although this is not apparent from crime surveys and police statistics because of the under-reporting of sexual violence. The differences in actual risk between the sexes have always been debatable: police statistics and crime surveys have shown that men are more likely than women to be attacked on the streets (Mayhew *et al.*, 1989). However, the evidence is mounting that sexual violence is more pervasive and widespread in location than any other type of crime (e.g., Hall, 1985; Hanmer and Saunders, 1984), in the light of which it is *women* who are most likely to experience physical assault (Stanko, 1991). The common belief that sexual offences can occur in a wide range of situations and places, many of them everyday and unavoidable, mean that insecurity and fear are heightened amongst women, and less restricted by factors such as location, activity and time of day (Gordon and Riger, 1989).

d Effects

Moreover, the effects of crime have a greater impact on women's lives. Men commonly protect their property in response to the threat of crime, but as women are most concerned about sexual crimes, they are more likely to make adaptations to lifestyle and behaviour. These often involve, for example, self-imposed restrictions such as staying indoors at night, not walking alone and avoiding certain parts of town, which have implications for personal freedom and decrease general quality of life (Gordon *et al.*, 1980; Warr, 1985).

e Potential for analysis

Sexual violence is unique in its nature as a crime. Rape is one of the most traumatic of crimes and can have long-lasting effects, the awareness of which adds to women's fear

(Gordon and Riger, 1989). Sexual violence also has implications for women as a whole which go far beyond those of other crimes against person or property (London Rape Crisis Centre, 1984) – the imposition of fear on the majority of women through the threat of sexual violence has been considered as one of the foundations of patriarchal control. In other words, the spatial patterns of fear of sexual violence have implications for women's equality with men; thus it is open to structural analysis, which men's fear (as a whole) is not.

Similar analyses can be applied to certain other groups, such as fear of racial violence (see Smith, 1986), and fear of homophobic violence amongst homosexuals and lesbians (see Stanko, 1990). Clearly, neither 'women's fear' nor 'men's fear' exist in a vacuum, as the effects of class, age, race and sexuality and other factors cut through both. Amongst all the factors which have been noted to increase fear of crime, however, being female has the largest effect. This article is intended as an introduction to a new way of looking at women's fear, and concentrates largely on the broad trends existing amongst women as a group.

2 Fear of sexual violence within geographical studies

There is ample justification, then, for studying and analysing women's fear separately. While traditional geographical studies of fear of crime have been important in showing up gender differences, they are inadequate for a thorough consideration of the impact of sexual violence. The reasons behind women's greater levels of fear have not always been asked for or analysed in the past, nor have the unique spatial patterns associated with women's fear been examined. The location of women's perceptions of risk, of the actual risks they are exposed to, and of their behavioural responses, are of key importance in understanding how sexual violence affects women. A mistaken assumption common to a more traditional geographical approach is that the *physical* areas women fear are more important than the *symbolic* connotations of space; as fear is a psychological phenomenon whether it is justified or not, it is the meanings to which it is attached which are crucial. For individual women the spatial separation of feelings of fear and safety may well be experienced as particular localities, or conversely there may be no clear physical boundaries to what is 'safe' and 'unsafe'. It is of greater significance, though, to study on a broader scale how these spaces are constructed, what they represent, and how cumulatively they might affect women's lives.

Geography has begun to consider this importance of space, for example, with Valentine's study of the way the threat of sexual violence inhibits women's use of public space (Valentine, 1989). There is scope to widen consideration of threat and space within geography: just as the threat of rape deters some women from being out on the streets at night, sexual harassment at work functions to deter some women from the public domain. Domestic violence takes place almost exclusively within the home, but still may affect the broader spatial experiences and choices of women affected by or threatened by it.

In this article I shall explain the spatial patterns of women's fear by looking at the extent and location of sexual violence and associated intimidating behaviour. It can be seen that while sexual violence occurs mainly in private space, women tend to fear it far more when they are in public space. This has implications for the usefulness of the precautions they take to avoid sexual violence, and for their ultimate safety.

I suggest that this paradox between conceptions of public and private space is an important area of potential research for geography. As a theoretical basis for understanding it, I demonstrate that geography would benefit from integrating a feminist analysis into fear of crime research. This alliance will be supported by exploring the feminist literature both on women's use of space, and on women's fear of sexual violence. I will identify a niche for

such study in the structural analyses of fear of crime in geography, and finally, research directions for geography will be identified.

II The spatial patterns of sexual violence, sexual harassment and women's fear

I stated previously that one justification for the separate study of women's fear, and of the importance of such study, is the fact that sexual violence in its various forms is more widespread and pervasive than other forms of crime. It is a common suggestion in studies of fear of crime that fear and actual risks do not necessarily coincide (Lewis and Maxfield, 1980; Smith, 1989). Fear of crime is seen to be produced by a number of different factors acting in conjunction, as is evident from the *British Crime Survey* data (Hough and Mayhew, 1985). Factors such as area of residence, type of housing and integration into the community may have as or more important a role in predicting fear levels as actual crime rates in a locality (Smith, 1983). This generally accepted premise has been extended in the past to include fear of sexual violence – unjustifiably so, as it is now well documented that sexual violence is seriously under-reported. Studies of fear of crime which have assumed that police or crime survey statistics are a reasonable measure of the 'real' risks have concluded that women's fear is unrealistic (e.g., Pyle, 1980). By contrast, feminists have proposed that high levels of fear of sexual violence are well justified and based on 'well-founded expectations of its routine nature' (Walby, 1989: 224). To understand women's fear as a spatial phenomenon, and to avoid its marginalization as an issue of importance, a realistic assessment of actual risks in private and public space is therefore a necessary basis from which to develop theory.

1 The extent of sexual violence

There is a huge void when it comes to information on the amount of sexual violence which takes place, where and when it happens, who suffers and who carries it out.

a Problems of definition

The wide spectrum of opinion as to what is meant by 'sexual violence' is an initial difficulty in assessing its extent. Sexual violence has been traditionally perceived (and, it has been argued, in common belief) as meaning rape alone, and this taking place in the public sphere, carried out by a stranger (often a pervert or psychopath). This is the definition which state institutions – the police, the legal system, the social services, health service personnel – tend to work by (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984). This is also the type of sexual violence most likely to be reported to, and accepted to be a crime by, the authorities.

Since the 1960s and early 1970s feminists have challenged this narrow definition, broadening it to include rape by anyone, sexual assault, wife-beating, father/daughter incest, indecent exposure, and sexual harassment (Walby, 1989). Opinion in and outside feminist literature is most divided on what is encompassed by the term 'sexual harassment', as will be discussed later. It is this hazy lower margin of what does and does not constitute violence which causes the most debate. A good rule of thumb may be that sexual violence is any male behaviour which a sample of women define as a potential or actual physical threat (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984), a definition which is especially pertinent in the context of fear of sexual violence.

b Problems with traditional data sources

The main problem in estimating the extent of sexual violence is women's apparent disinclination to report it to the police or to crime surveys. Police statistics are now generally accepted to represent only a fraction of the real extent, perhaps as little as 10% in the case of rape (Johnson, 1980). Rape Crisis Centre statistics support this; although they by no means deal with all rape cases, on average they deal with around four times as many as are reported to the police (Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, 1988; London Rape Crisis Centre, 1984). The vast majority of crimes of sexual violence which are reported at all are the most extreme (rapes and sexual assaults), which themselves are likely to be outnumbered by less serious forms.

Factors contributing to the under-reporting of sexual violence include embarrassment, fear of the stigma attached to rape victims, expectations of insensitive and unfair treatment of victims of sexual violence by the police and the courts, and fear of reprisals by the perpetrator. The last two factors are particularly important in explaining why little domestic violence is reported to the police. Incidents of sexual violence which involve strangers are much more likely to be reported to the police than those which involve people who know each other (McLaughlin *et al.*, 1990), so official statistics are likely to seriously under-represent violence which occurs in private.

Crime surveys, commonly used by geographers when assessing actual risks, provide an alternative source of information gathered from random samples of the population at a point in time. The *British Crime Survey* is the largest and most wide-ranging data source on the extent of crime in the UK, gathered from household questionnaires in 1982, 1984 and 1988. It is generally respected for representing the extent of crime more realistically than do police statistics, but their validity in measuring the extent of sexual violence has been questioned. In the third sweep of the survey, for example, 15 women (0.2% of those included) reported sexual offences (defined as rape and attempted rape, woundings with sexual intent, and indecent assault). The authors acknowledge that this must seriously under-represent the extent of sexual and domestic violence (Mayhew *et al.*, 1989). The fact that interviewing is carried out door-to-door for the crime surveys, by people who have not been trained in handling sensitive issues, is likely to have discouraged women from reporting sexual violence (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984).

Local crime surveys have revealed slightly higher levels of sexual violence than national crime surveys, but still suffer from under-reporting (e.g., Jones *et al.*, 1986; Kinsey, 1984). In the 1990 *Edinburgh Crime Survey*, the authors did not attempt to measure the incidence of rape or sexual assault, recognizing that the majority of this type of crime takes place in the private sphere and so women are unlikely to report it by the methods used (Anderson *et al.*, 1990).

c Feminist studies

If police and crime survey statistics are as good as useless in allowing assessment of actual, as opposed to perceived, spatial risks, where should geographers turn to for a better indication? In the past decade a mounting number of feminist studies have been carried out in an attempt to reveal something closer to the true extent of sexual violence. These are openly feminist, which in itself has attracted the criticism that such a standpoint will lead to bias in results. Though occasionally valid, this view itself stems from bias, and an unfortunate consequence of it has been the limited political and social acceptance of feminist research to date.

The research methods used in such studies are far more likely to yield accurate results

than those of the crime surveys, due to more sensitive methodologies, such as in-depth interviewing by trained female researchers, being used. One difficulty with the findings of these surveys is that they are not directly comparable to police or crime survey statistics, as they refer to experiences over women's lifetimes rather than a particular year. Yet even when this is accounted for, they reveal high rates of sexual violence as well as lending a new insight into the usual location of sexual violence.

The number of women who have reported rape to various UK surveys varies from 17% (Hall, 1985) to 25% of the sample (Painter, 1991a). Thirty-one per cent of Hall's *London Women's Safety Survey* had experienced sexual assault, which can be as traumatic a crime as rape (Hall, 1985). Fifty-nine per cent of a Leeds survey of 129 women had experienced some form of male violence themselves, and 36% had witnessed male violence against other women (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984).

2 The location of sexual violence

As to the location of violence, feminist studies strongly indicate that the threat is mainly in private space. Police statistics commonly show that around half of all rapes are committed by known attackers (Amir, 1979; Wright, 1980); from the *London Women's Safety Survey*, this applied to three-quarters of all rapes (Hall, 1985). Rape within marriage, which has recently undergone transformation to public issue status, may be experienced by as many as one in seven women in the UK and USA (Russell, 1982; Painter, 1991a). The literature on domestic violence supports the fact that women are more likely to be the victims of sexual violence if they are married than if they are single (Dobash and Dobash, 1976; 1980). All this is not to suggest that the public sphere is a safe place for women. It is important to be aware, though, that sexual violence is widespread both in extent and in space. These two facts justify women's fear, and attach an importance to them which geography has hardly acknowledged.

3 The location of women's fear

Paradoxically, however, studies of women's fear have overwhelmingly shown that women feel at risk outside the home rather than within it. In a survey of 299 women in cities in the USA, 49% said that they felt 'very' or 'somewhat' unsafe when out alone at night (Gordon *et al.*, 1980). Over 50% of the women in Hall's London sample 'often or sometimes felt frightened' in the daytime, and over 75% 'often or sometimes felt frightened' when out at night (Hall, 1985).

The way that women respond to fear of sexual violence also demonstrates that it is seen as a public sphere problem. While men tend to protect home and person in response to fear of crime, women take social and lifestyle precautions which are most costly in terms of personal freedom. Seven times as many women as men do not go out alone at night in Seattle, according to one survey (Warr, 1985), and 50% of the women in inner city areas in the 1982 *British Crime Survey* avoided going out alone on foot at night (Hough and Mayhew, 1983). In 1981, just after the sex murderer 'The Ripper' had been caught locally, 83% of women surveyed in Leeds either didn't go out alone, or didn't go out (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984). In the *Edinburgh Crime Survey*, 23% of women interviewed said that they never went out alone at night (rising to 38% in the area perceived as most dangerous): for 82% of these it was due to their fear of crime. Women were five times more likely than men to 'often' or 'always' go out with someone else due to their fear of crime, and were more

than three times more likely than men to avoid certain streets (Anderson *et al.*, 1990).

Why should women's fear reflect the likely extent of sexual violence, and yet the spatial patterns of fear and precautionary behaviour not reflect the spatial pattern of sexual violence? In this article I propose two answers to this question: first, that all the sources of information from which women learn about sexual danger suggest it is a public sphere phenomenon (I discuss this more fully later on); and secondly, that although sexual violence mainly takes place in private space, the common occurrence of sexual harassment in *public* space acts to remind women of sexual danger. In other words, sexual harassment evokes fear of more severe sexual attack through routinely creating a state of insecurity and unease amongst women.

4 The effect of sexual harassment

'Sexual harassment' has existed as a term only since the mid 1970s (Thomas and Kitzinger, 1990). The phrase and the concept have been problematic since there is wide disagreement over the forms of behaviour which it covers. Following a hypothesis which sees it as a reminder of more severe male violence, it would seem sensible to define sexual harassment as 'intimidating sexual behaviour': but disagreement is widespread over the location and limits of such behaviour. The law tends to define sexual harassment as 'making sexual acquiescence a condition of employment or promotion' (De Sola, 1982: 136). Some feminists, on the other hand, have defined sexual harassment as including all 'processes of social control enacted by men over women in which the totality of our lives are available to being policed by them' (Wise and Stanley, 1987: 15); i.e., *all* 'dominant' behaviour by men intimidates women. This definition, while perhaps more realistic than the former, is too wide to be useful. For the purposes of this discussion, I shall define sexual harassment as it is more ordinarily perceived: as unwanted intrusive acts perpetrated by men against women, including staring, touching, and comments or actions of a sexual nature.

As little information on the extent of sexual harassment exists as for other forms of sexual violence. There is a tendency for sexual harassment to be trivialized by society and by the state, and for this reason women themselves may not label their experiences as sexual harassment (Thomas and Kitzinger, 1990). Most studies have concentrated on sexual harassment in the workplace; here the concept is generally accepted in society and more clearly defined. However, recent evidence shows that sexual harassment occurs and affects women in a wide variety of locations outside the workplace. Sixty per cent of the women included in Hanmer and Saunders' study of sexual violence had experienced sexual harassment (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984). The *Edinburgh Crime Survey* was the first large scale study to examine the incidence of sexual harassment in a UK city (Anderson *et al.*, 1990). The factors which deter women from reporting more severe forms of sexual violence to crime surveys do not seem to be in operation when women are asked about sexual harassment, perhaps because less stigma is attached to victims of this sort of crime. The survey included a number of questions about sexual harassment (cases where the women had been shouted at, stared at, followed or threatened by men, or subject to indecent exposure). It emerged that 32% of women living in central Edinburgh had been 'worried or frightened' by such incidents within the last year. Within the 16–30 age group, the figure was 53%. Only 7.5% of these women had reported the event to the police.

Similarly, there is now evidence to show that sexual harassment, often viewed as harmless, can have significant effects on women. Forty per cent of the women questioned in the *Edinburgh Crime Survey* said that they were 'very' or 'fairly' worried about sexual harassment

(Anderson *et al.*, 1990). A recent Stirling study into women's experiences of crime found high levels of sexual harassment (McLaughlin *et al.*, 1990), and the respondents felt threatened enough by it to lead to the authors assuming that it alone could have effects on lifestyles, daily routines and employment. A survey into women's feelings when they are 'flashed' at showed that reactions can vary from amusement to fear of death (McNeill, 1987).

It is reasonable to suggest, then, that sexual harassment, as a common form of intimidation, creates fear amongst women (Hall, 1985; Stanko, 1987; Wise and Stanley, 1987), and may contribute significantly to women's fear of public places. Personal and shared experiences bear out how anomalous it seems that sexual harassment has been excluded from fear of crime discussions. There are also many cases, documented and undocumented, of the deterrence of women from participation in the 'semi-public' sphere through sexual harassment at work (see, for example, MacKinnon, 1979). I am not implying universal intentionality in the actions of men who harass, individually or collectively: but the effects on women's feelings of security are the same, regardless.

III A background to analysis: feminist perspectives on women's use of space

Feminist geography considers the implications of spatial structure for women, and the effect of gender relations on the environment and on social processes (Women and Geography Study Group, 1984). The study of women's restricted use of public space, as a product of various constraints imposed upon them, has been an integral part of feminist geography research in the 1980s, and provides an opportunity to explore the spatial elements of women's fear further. The role of geography should lie not so much in asking simply 'which *places* do women fear?', but 'which *spaces* do different women fear, and why?' A wider view of the meaning of space is taken in feminist geography than in mainstream geography: the labelling of space and the construction of spatial identities are central concepts.

1 The man-made environment

Just as dominant capitalist or racist ideologies 'label' space on their own terms, it is central to the feminist view of space that patriarchy assigns space as masculine (i.e., public, political) or feminine (private, domestic) (Rose, 1990). The reasoning behind this is that in so doing, society retains control of the subordinate group (whether defined by class, race, age, sex, etc.), by restricting their movements, behaviour and activities. In feminist geography, much of the literature concentrates on how the man-made built environment achieves this control over women. It is commonly reiterated that 'space reflects, reinforces, and helps recreate in new forms gender differences' (Bowlby *et al.*, 1982: 714).

There are several ways in which feminists have considered the built environment to constrain women. First, they argue that the structure of the built environment affects the physical arrangement of activities. Male and female activities have traditionally been kept separate, by the locational distinction between the home and the workplace, and women's opportunities to challenge this distinction between public and private space have been restricted by their spatial segregation (Bowlby *et al.*, 1982). For example, much urban development is based around the home/work/leisure split and is road-based. Matrix (1984) cites the example of Milton Keynes, where planners have assumed 100% car ownership. Here spatial structure has been created appearing to take inequalities for granted, without considering that women are limited by gender role constraints (for example, childcare

responsibilities) and restricted mobility (Pickup, 1988; Tivers, 1985).

Secondly, feminist analyses of architecture have suggested that, in the same way, it symbolizes a male-defined world (Boys, 1984). Criticisms of the profession encompass both its male-dominated structure and the lack of regard for women's needs in building design – for example, the need for slopes rather than steps for those pushing prams, and safe, light spaces rather than dim alleys on many housing estates.

A third area of feminist critique lies around the stereotypical ideas about appropriate behaviour for the sexes which are attached to certain locations, which then proscribe people's behaviour and movements. For women, the cultural association of sexual violence with certain types of environment is central (Women's Design Service, 1988), reinforcing the general spatial inequalities described above (Mazey and Lee, 1983).

2 Violence and public/private space

Stereotypical ideas concerning the messages attached to places might be learnt, for example, from the media, which has been shown to shape women's fear of certain types of public place (for example, parks, dark alleys, etc.) by a tendency to report only those sexual crimes which occur there (Gordon and Heath, 1981; Gordon and Riger, 1989; Stanko, 1985). Current UK government crime prevention literature confirms the idea that it is *public* places which are risky, and suggests that to prevent becoming victims of crime, women should try to avoid these places (*Practical ways to crack crime handbook*, fourth edition, HMSO, 1991).

Women learn about sexual danger from an early age (Burt and Estep, 1981) and from various agencies such as parents, school and friends as well as the media; but the messages which most receive again overwhelmingly suggest that the danger lies in public space (Stanko, 1990). Feminist socialization theory, i.e., the way that girls learn passivity and acceptance of their unequal status in society as they grow up (Haug, 1987; Sharpe, 1976), has been extended to women's fear by some feminists. The agencies of socialization imply that the constant threat of sexual violence is inevitable, 'part of the natural environment', which women can only protect themselves against rather than challenge (Griffin, 1986: 3). This leads to the imposition of a code of unspoken rules about dress, behaviour, lifestyle, sexuality, and female loyalty and passivity in relationships: women learn that there is a series of boundaries in the physical and social worlds which they must not cross if they wish to remain safe (Hanmer, 1978). After the recent public attention to child abuse, children are beginning to be taught about sexual danger in a new way – they now learn that men they know, as well as strangers, can harm them. Education about sexual violence against women needs to follow suit, in all the agencies which inform them about danger. Until then, although women's fear of sexual violence reflects the likely extent of risk, it does not accurately reflect the likely location of risk, which has implications for their ultimate safety.

Some feminists have taken this paradox as the prime example of the 'labelling' of certain locations by men for their own purposes, the result being a continuing cycle of fear and violence (Hanmer and Saunders, 1984) which runs as follows. Women fear violence in public places, and so participate less in public activities, spend more time in the home and seek more protection from men. As a result there is more sexual violence (which occurs mainly in the private sphere); the men who carry it out remain unpenalized and common notions of sexual violence in the public sphere go unchallenged.

Historically, the most important aspect of male and female use of space was the obvious dichotomy between home and work. This continues to exist but it can be argued that the actual physical separation is less important today than the ideological separation. Most

women now work outside the home: but their physical entrance into the public sphere has had little effect on their continuing domestic role in the private sphere (Pahl, 1984; Vanek, 1980). Perhaps the most important determinant of men's continuing dominance of public space is now sexual violence, and ideologies surrounding sexual violence which have the power to restrict women's movements and activities.

IV Explaining women's fear – towards a structural analysis

So far, I have justified the importance and relevance of the geography of women's fear as a topic of study within geography, and related its occurrence and nature to feminist theory within and outside the discipline. In this final section, I want to suggest a possible theoretical basis for explaining and understanding the geography of women's fear. I will discuss the feminist theory of sexual violence as a means by which the behaviour and opportunities of women are controlled; but first, where might this fit into geography?

1 Structural analyses in the fear of crime literature

The relation between patterns of inequality in space and patterns of inequality in society is a key tenet of social geography. Recent literature on fear of crime within the discipline has explored this relationship, in an attempt to explain the variations in the extent and effects of fear between different social groups. Research has consistently produced evidence that social traits such as age, gender, race, ethnicity and class affect fear levels. It has been hypothesized that this is due to structural inequalities in society which affect the relation of such groups to power. Those who feel a lack of integration into their neighbourhoods, isolation, or a lack of social acceptance; those who have little control over resources; and those who are marginalized and have a sense of powerlessness within society are most likely to fear crime (Kail and Kleinman, 1985; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981; Smith, 1989; Van der Wurff and Stringer, 1988). General feelings of uncontrollability may become focused on specific fears about crime, and consequently are manifested in spatial perceptions and behaviour.

Fear is thus seen in these power-based analyses as a consequence of individuals' unequal status; it has also been seen as having a role in perpetuating those inequalities. Responses to fear of crime by subordinate groups have been held to reproduce the patterns of dominance which produce inequalities (Smith, 1986). If people of colour stay indoors for fear of racial attack, for example, then their oppressors gain more control of public space.

Gender has commonly been included in such discussions of fear, but patriarchy has not been explicitly mentioned as a causal dominant structure. Yet the link to the feminist literature is clear. Feminist analyses of women's fear see it not only as having a role in maintaining women's inequality, but as being provoked by the source of inequality itself (i.e., patriarchal society) in order that it does so. Opinions are divided over the intentionality which this suggests. However, there is room for argument that women's fear is more significant in this context than fear of crime in general, because there is justification for their fear in the extent of sexual violence.

If social geography is to extend its structural analyses of power to women's fear of crime, it needs to take explicit account of feminist theory. A large body of relevant literature exists within feminist social science which analyses sexual violence as a social control of women, and has clear links to what is known about the spatial pattern of women's fear. Fear is

central to this theory: though a minority of men may perpetrate violence against women, the consequence is that the majority of women are kept in a state of fear.

2 Sexual violence as social control: feminist theory

a A 'conscious process of intimidation'

The role of sexual violence in the social control of women has become established as a major tenet of feminist theory since Susan Brownmiller's *Against our will* was published in 1975. This stands as the key text on the feminist notion of rape, propounding the view that by constraining women through fear, sexual violence acts as a means for men collectively to control women's lives: 'it is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all* men keep *all* women in a state of fear' (Brownmiller, 1975: 15).

Although this appeared as a sweeping statement in its time, since its publication a large amount of feminist literature has been produced in support. The result has been the development of multifaceted theory which explains exactly how this 'intimidation' might function in different areas of personal life and society. Feminists are not united on whether the intimidation produced by sexual violence is a 'conscious' conspiracy by men, and it is not the role of this article to discuss this: but it is widely accepted that the state has an important bolstering role in failing to act against male violence.

Brownmiller (1975) describes how rape helped to maintain the patriarchal status quo, historically, in a wide range of societies as an acceptable form of punishment for women who deviated from expected norms; especially those of chastity before, and loyalty and subservience within marriage. She brings the argument forward to the present day, suggesting that these social rules and regulations still abide in different forms. She suggests that passivity in women and dominance among men is the norm, in both personal and sexual relationships. Radical feminists (e.g., Jackson, 1978) have agreed that the wide extent of sexual violence is the logical conclusion of all male/female relationship, and helps perpetuate it on the same terms.

Brownmiller also suggested that society has not shown that it finds rape unacceptable, and popular culture still portrays rapists as 'heroes' and victims as 'asking for it'. Consequently women must live under the continual threat of rape, and this shapes what they can and cannot do. They are discouraged from breaking the mould of traditional roles and behaviour and so, according to Brownmiller, rape is still the main way in which women are controlled by men.

More recent feminist theory generalizes less, and has concentrated upon fear, which has become a more important concept in the theory of social control than violence itself. Wise and Stanley (1987), for example, consider that not all relationships are unequal, but that the *potential* for oppression by the male is always present because of the social context, and this ensures his control is maintained; Hanmer (1978) similarly comments that it is only necessary for some men to use or threaten to use violence for the majority of women to be constrained through their fear.

Much of the literature on domestic violence attributes it a parallel role in controlling women within marriage. Dobash and Dobash (1980), in a study of 109 battered wives, examined how as girls the women had been socialized into acceptance of male control, and how, once married, violence from their husbands maintained this control. The occurrence of rape within marriage is tolerated in general socially held notions about acceptable male/female relations and the privacy of family matters (Russell, 1982; Stanko, 1985). Sexual

violence, as with rape in marriage, imposes fear and thus a form of control within private space – which has not yet been included in geographers' analyses of fear.

Nor have geographers considered how women might be restricted or deterred from the 'semi-private' sphere, the workplace. Feminists have seen sexual harassment in the workplace as having a very clear role in helping define male and female space – deterring women from competing with men in the public domain, or from rejecting a domestic role or traditional male/female relationships. It can be seen both as the result of women's second class economic status in the labour market, and also as having a role in perpetuating that inferior position. Numerous case studies in the literature show how sexual harassment, introduced by male workers as a condition of work or by controlling women's employment chances, adversely affects equal opportunities for women in the workplace in the UK and the USA. The effects of sexual harassment may be fear, upset and frustration in the short-term, and a lack of confidence amongst women in their actual employment abilities in the long-term. In many cases, women have lost their jobs or decided to leave because of harassment (MacKinnon, 1980; Russell, 1984; Stanko, 1985).

Similarly, sexual harassment in a wide range of other places, situations and relationships has been seen to police women's lives in men's interest, by keeping women off the streets, restricting their activities, and generally encouraging certain modes of behaviour and lifestyle (Wise and Stanley, 1987).

b The 'second offender': the state and sexual violence

Sexual violence is commonly seen in feminist literature to be tolerated and condoned by the state (Walby, 1989). In history, this has been well documented (Brownmiller, 1975; Dobash and Dobash, 1980; Sachs, 1978). The way in which the law deals with sexual violence remains entrenched in patriarchal ideology today (LeGrand, 1977; London Rape Crisis Centre, 1984). The treatment of rape victims by the police is notoriously insensitive, although some improvements have been made in recent years: but the legal system has shown few signs of change. Court proceedings have been described as 'the second assailant' (Stanko, 1985: 83), 'rape by statute' (New York Radical Feminists, 1974: 123). Such treatment deters the reporting of sexual violence and leads to high acquittal rates and low sentencing, and so the majority of offenders are not penalized.

Patriarchal attitudes also prevail within the institutions which deal with domestic violence. It has been widely argued that the state appears to sanction domestic violence through lack of will or inclination to act, and the ineffectiveness of the police, the social services, housing policy and the legal system (Dobash and Dobash, 1976; 1980; Mama, 1989; Pizzey, 1974; Wilson, 1983). Similarly, women who suffer sexual harassment at work can rarely take successful legal action against offenders, although in theory they are legally recognizable to have suffered sex discrimination (MacKinnon, 1980). Elsewhere, sexual harassment is trivialized as a crime, and consequently few women report it.

The common conclusion drawn by this large body of literature is that the failure of the state to react to violence against women is a sign of its acceptance of force as a form of social control. The use of force against women is 'the structural underpinning of hierarchical relations; the ultimate sanction buttressing other forms of social control' (Hanmer, 1978: 229). The net effect, feminists argue, is that fear of sexual violence remains, and encourages women towards traditional roles and dependence on men. Thus the spatial pattern of women's fear is one way in which patriarchy is maintained (Valentine, 1989).

3 An evaluation

The theory of sexual violence as social control outlined above is wide-ranging and encompasses several viewpoints, but can be criticized for a number of common assumptions. Some of its advocates (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975; Hanmer, 1978) have been criticized for implying that rape is the only, or most important, form of social control over women (Walby, 1989). In the light of the large feminist literature on male control of other areas of women's lives (importantly labour, reproduction and sexuality), concentration by Brownmiller and her followers on sexual violence alone is a very narrow analysis.

Brownmiller also wrongly assumes that women are universally passive in the face of the threat of violence, and that men are universal in their use, or acceptance of the use by others, of sexual violence as a means of controlling women. The most persuasive arguments in the literature are not those which claim that all men consciously control women through sexual violence individually, but collectively, through the failure of the state to act where violence occurs.

Another criticism lies in the fact that women have made inroads into the traditionally male-dominated avenues of power in the last 40 years despite the occurrence of sexual violence in society – clearly fear of sexual violence is *not* maintaining the patriarchal status quo. However, it would be wrong to cast off the theory on this ground alone, for two reasons. First, it needs to be recognized that, as a group, women are still unequal citizens in practice, in the workplace (Snell, 1979; Walby, 1986) and in the home (Bose, 1979; Oakley, 1974; Pahl, 1984; Vanek, 1980). Secondly, there is no reason why the barriers to equality with men entailed in social control must only be those which are sizeable and immediately recognizable (such as blatant sexual harassment at work which leads to a woman losing her job, for example). Such events are not rare, but the literature on women's fear suggest that it is smaller, everyday changes which are the most common effect of sexual violence and harassment on spatial and social routines and behaviour.

The few studies which exist show that women's fear limits their mobility significantly, and affects their social and economic activities. Forty per cent of the women questioned by Hall (1985) felt their fear affected their social lives and, more seriously, 20% felt that their fear restricted the jobs which were available to them. Thus women's fear of sexual violence may affect not only their quality of life, but their equality with men. Gordon and Riger have attempted to evaluate the feminist notion of rape as a form of social control of women (Gordon *et al.*, 1980; Gordon and Riger, 1989; Riger and Gordon, 1981). Their research in the USA shows that women take far more precautionary measures in their lives than men, as a result of their fear of rape. Examples include avoiding certain areas, situations, and strangers; not going out at night or not coming home alone; protecting the home or carrying a weapon. Cumulatively, such constraints *are* significant in terms of time, effort and overall effect: '. . . the threat of crime, by creating a constant state of apprehension . . . and by leading to the self-imposition of behavioural restrictions, has the effect that feminists decry: it limits women's opportunities to be active participants in public life.' (Riger & Gordon, 1981: 89). Riger and Gordon's work, though ageographical, has laid the foundations for spatial analysis and explanation. Within geography, Valentine (1989) analysed the effect of male violence on women's use of public space from a feminist perspective. Using interview material and the spatial diaries of a sample of women in Reading, Valentine found that constraints are placed on women's mobility daily through their fear of male violence. Valentine concluded that women's inhibited use of public space acts as a 'spatial expression of patriarchy' (Valentine 1989: 315).

A forthcoming study by Painter (1991b), which looked at the effects of street-lighting on men and women's feelings of safety, confirms that women's movements are curtailed by their fear, and demonstrates that environmental factors are not necessarily involved in shaping fear. Lighting the survey area after 9 p.m. had little effect on either the number of women in the survey area (there were still five times as many men as women when the area was well lit) or women's fear of rape, which remained at a high level whether the area was unlit or lit.

There has been little spatial research on women's fear, but the studies which have been carried out strongly suggest that social rather than environmental factors should be sought to explain women's fear. The theory of social control provides a good basis for further investigation and theory: fear clearly limits many women's opportunities and behaviour, their spatial perceptions and everyday movements.

V Links to fear of crime amongst other social groups

Before concluding, it should be noted that statistics such as those used in this paper do not show the variation in experiences amongst women, or the multitude of factors which might affect their fear. Although it merits separate treatment in fear of crime discussions, women's fear should not be viewed in a blinkered fashion – as, in particular, age, race and sexuality have been shown to affect women's fear of crime.

As I suggested initially, perhaps the clearest parallels which can be drawn involve fear of crime amongst people of colour, and amongst lesbians and gay men. Racial violence is a common occurrence in the UK (Commission for Racial Equality, 1987), and can be analysed on the same basis as sexual violence in that it is ideologically constructed, its true extent is largely a hidden problem, it creates high levels of fear amongst the group as a whole, no major efforts have been made by any government to eliminate it, and its existence might benefit the holders of power (in this case white people). A similar parallel can be drawn with homophobic violence against lesbians and gay men, which can be seen as a product of society's heterosexism – though far less still is known about its extent. Evidence suggests it is also common, and that high levels of fear exist amongst gay and lesbian communities (Stanko, 1990).

Whilst violence against elderly people is relatively rare, high levels of fear are found amongst them which have been related to their sense of powerlessness in society (Kennedy and Silverman, 1985). Age is a complicating factor in studying women's fear, as older women have higher levels of fear in general, yet younger women's fear of sexual violence compensates for this. This illustrates the potential difficulties in distinguishing between the effects of fear of different sorts of crime. However, geographers need to get to grips with the inter-relationships of fear of crime amongst these various groups, and structural analysis provides the framework for doing so. Ultimately, social geographers should aim to integrate their analyses of fear of crime amongst people of different sexes, classes, races, ages and sexualities, rather than restrict inspection to separate categories.

VI Conclusion: research directions for human geography

In this paper, I have collated evidence to support the feminist theories of male violence, female fear and their relation to public and private space. I have described the start which

has been made in analysing women's fear of crime in the social sciences. Although fear of crime is well established as a research topic in human geography, the discipline has only just begun to follow up early indications that women's fear merits special attention in geographical analysis. Below, I reiterate the main research gaps which stand out from the literature described here, on which future geographical interest in the topic might concentrate.

1 Areas for research

Past research has been concerned only with the effects of violence on women's movements in public space and opportunities in the public domain. Although this is where most women perceive themselves to be at risk, there is a need to tackle the fact that in reality, most sexual violence occurs in private space. Domestic violence is currently growing in importance as a social issue, but women's fear of private violence and its consequent effects have not been researched. The same applies to the effects of sexual harassment, at work and elsewhere, on women's spatial and social patterns. There is room for a detailed geography of sexual harassment, and for research into its effects on patterns of fear of violence.

2 Methodology

Qualitative methodologies, involving more informal and sensitive interviewing techniques such as are now widely used within feminist research, may be required to encourage women to discuss their fear and its effects.

3 Theory

There is a need to draw together what has been uncovered about women's fear into theory. This would involve both extending power-based analyses in social geography, and linking up with feminist social science to make use of theories on sexual violence, for greater understanding of women's fear. There is also a need for similar detailed analyses of race, class, age and sexuality and fear of crime, and geographers should aim to illuminate the differences, similarities, intersections and links between these groups' experiences of fear of crime.

Ignorance of the large amount of information and theory on sexual violence and women's fear of sexual violence in the feminist literature has been another example of geographers' 'head in the sand' approach. By applying spatial analysis to women's fear and acknowledging research which has gone before in other discriplines, geography could have much to offer what looks set to emerge as a serious social issue in the 1990s.

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4 Women's fear of sexual violence: Explaining the spatial paradox

Rachel Pain

Women's fear of sexual attack is continuing to run high on social and political agendas. Publicity about attacks on women is increasing, as are reports of the high incidence of fear and precautionary behaviour amongst women in British cities. However, both fear and violence have distinct and conflicting spatial patterns; the places which women fear are not the places in which women are most likely to be attacked.

This chapter provides an analysis of why this spatial paradox persists when information about the true locational nature of sexual violence is improving. With reference to a recent Edinburgh survey, the importance of various strands in women's fear are evaluated. Social and physical environments both influence the spatial dimension of fear and associated behavioural responses. It is argued, however, that emphasis should be placed on the ways in which space is socially constructed - how we come to perceive that certain risks are attached to places, what we are taught about places, and how we experience places in everyday life - in order to appreciate why some places are considered safe while others are considered dangerous.

In the first part of the chapter it is demonstrated that fear of sexual violence cannot be bracketed with fear of other crimes owing to differences in extent, effects and relation to risk. I then go on to discuss the most significant predictors of fear of sexual violence from current research, and conclude that recent crime prevention policies are doing little, if anything, to allay women's fear.

The Safety-in-Edinburgh Survey (1992)

The methodology involved postal questionnaires and in-depth interviews with a sample of women selected randomly from the electoral registers of

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three wards: North West Corstorphine, Pilton and Haymarket. These areas were chosen to provide a range of social, economic and physical environments.

Corstorphine is a predominantly middle class 'quiet' suburb on the western outskirts of the city, with high rates of owner-occupancy in low-rise, low-density housing. By contrast, Pilton is a peripheral council scheme of post-war tenement flats, with a reputation for high rates of deprivation, crime and drug abuse. Recent upgrading and the sale of some council flats have marginalized other parts of the scheme. The third ward, Haymarket, is in the city centre and has a mixed and highly transient population, mostly living in traditional pre-twentieth century, four-storey tenements.

389 women completed and returned the postal questionnaire - an overall response rate of 72% (Corstorphine 77%, Haymarket 71%, Pilton 68%). In-depth interviews were then carried out with a sub-sample of 43 respondents who reflected the social composition of the three areas.

Spatial and social patterns of women's fear

Before exploring the causes of women's fear of violence, it is useful to look at the unique patterns of women's fear. In many aspects, they run counter to what we know about 'generic' fear of crime, which is often discussed as a homogenous phenomenon. In this section I develop the argument that, because of the differences in the nature of and background to women's fear, it needs to be analyzed on a separate basis. The reasons focus on the extent of fear, the effects of fear, and the relation of fear to actual risks.

Extent of fear

> You're never safe at any time. If somebody wants to go out and attack a woman, they'll do it. (Barbara, Pilton)
>
> I think without a shadow of a doubt, you know, I'd rather be killed than raped, you know, stabbed than raped. (Jane, Corstorphine)

Women's fear of crime is more widespread and more intense than men's. The difference is largely accounted for by fear of rape and other forms of sexual violence (Riger and Gordon, 1981; Stanko, 1987; Warr, 1985). Fear of sexual violence, therefore, accounts for a considerable measure of *all* fear of crime within cities.

Table 4.1 shows that sexual assault is by far the most worrying crime for women. Sixty four per cent say it is the crime they fear the most, and a further thirteen per cent rank it as their second most-feared crime. The

remainder tend to be elderly women who do not feel at personal risk of sexual attack and are more concerned about housebreaking.

Table 4.1
Which crime do you worry about most?

	Car theft	House-breaking	Physical assault	Theft of personal belongings	Sexual assault	n
Corstorphine	0	30	8	3	59	146
Haymarket	1	10	16	6	67	122
Pilton	4	19	10	1	66	121
Overall	2	20	11	3	64	389

n = number of respondents

Table 4.1 also shows that there is little geographical difference in the extent of fear of rape; a more elderly population in Corstorphine accounts for the lower figure there. Social patterns of fear are shaped most significantly by age; seventy six per cent of women aged between eighteen and thirty said that sexual assault was the crime they worried about most, compared to only twenty seven per cent of those over sixty (p=0.0000). Married women are no more worried about sexual violence than single women, although women who are divorced or separated experience more fear. Women on low incomes are more likely to choose sexual attack as the crime they fear most than women on high incomes (p=0.0019), and women living in rented accommodation more than women in owner-occupied housing (p=0.0156).

It is sometimes said that fear of crime is low, with the proviso 'except among certain groups', usually meaning women and the elderly. In light of the extent and severity of fear of sexual attack reported here, it would seem more pertinent to suggest that fear of crime is actually high, except among men.

Effects of fear

Fear of sexual violence is unique in the effect it has on women's lives. Fear of crime always produces some reaction to the perceived risk, but whereas men and women worry equally about property crime, women are far more worried than men about personal crime (Anderson et al., 1990a). Therefore, women's responses to crime more often involve lifestyle

adaptations or avoidance behaviour. These can have dramatic effects on the spatial and social patterns of women's day to day lives (Gordon and Riger, 1989; Stanko, 1987; Valentine, 1989).

Table 4.2
Lifestyle effects of fear of sexual violence
Percentage of respondents

Regularly avoid certain types of transport	71
Regularly choose certain types of transport	85
Do not go out unaccompanied	35
Watchful when walking outside	85
Avoid certain streets/areas	84
Affects social life	77
Affects leisure activities	54
Affects work	42

Table 4.2 shows some of the direct effects of women's fear of sexual attack. Mobility is one of the major concerns; means of transport often avoided include walking, cycling and taking the bus or train, while forty per cent of women say that they choose to drive a private car and fifty per cent hire taxis because of fear of sexual attack.

The majority feel that the risk of sexual attack affects their social life; again, the problem of transport arises, but also choosing which places to go to and adopting 'safe' dress and behaviour while out. Many also avoid outdoor activities like jogging, cycling or walking the dog, or only do them in 'safe' places.

> I mean I won't go out for a walk, not round here or in the hills now. I used to love hillwalking. But that is basically because I don't want to put myself into a position where I feel threatened. I don't know how likely it is but I'm not prepared even to take the risk. (Rosalind, Corstorphine)

> Well even jogging - I'd like to go jogging but it sorta puts me off, people looking at you, and I think you're a target for an attack aren't you? Even when I went to aerobics, you know mixed classes, there's always some creep looking at you. Well it's not worth doing something if you're uneasy all the time. (Gillian, Pilton)

Avoidance behaviour is mainly implemented in public places. However, forty two per cent of those surveyed also feel that the risk of sexual attack affects them at work. Jobs which provoke the most anxiety are those involving a lot of contact with the public or nightwork, or those which may be seen to indicate sexual availability such as barwork and waitressing.

Eight women had given up a job because they felt it put them in too vulnerable a position, or because they had been attacked at work.

> Specially when I worked in the casino I had a terrible time there. Just - they were all waiters where I was working and I was the only girl, and because you had to wear these kinda certain dresses they used to try and take advantage of you. And the people that came in would try and pick you up all the time... sometimes they'd wait outside for you and follow you and it was just too frightening. I ended up handing my notice in. I was absolutely sick of it. (Karen, Pilton)

It should be noted that the avoidance behaviour reported was only that which came to mind while filling in the questionnaire or during the interview. Much precautionary behaviour is adopted over a period of time and becomes almost subconscious.

> See, in my mind I must be aware that I'm taking precautions, but you know I'm not aware of it. I've never really thought about it till we've had this conversation. So you're doing things more or less because you always do them. You're doing it and you're not aware of it. It must be a sort of ingrown feeling that you're protecting yourself. (Elizabeth, Haymarket)

As well as those who choose to avoid the things they want to do, there are many women who do them but employ various protective strategies. These have been documented elsewhere (e.g. Gordon and Riger, 1989), as have their implications for freedom of movement and the quality of life.

The effects of sexual attack, then, go far beyond the trauma experienced by victims. In most women's lives, avoiding and protecting against sexual violence is commonplace. It has been widely argued that the constraints imposed by society's and individuals' 'fear' are, in effect, a subtle and pervasive means of socially controlling female members of society (e.g. Brownmiller, 1975; Hanmer, 1978; Valentine, 1989). Certainly, equality is at stake as much as the quality of women's lives. The Edinburgh survey demonstrates that because of the threat of sexual attack, many women don't have the same freedom of movement as men, nor the same freedom to 'be themselves' - to do the things they enjoy doing and to benefit from the same opportunities in the labour market.

Perceived risks and actual risks: the spatial paradox

Geographically, levels of fear of crime and actual rates of crime do not necessarily coincide (Donnelly, 1989; Lewis and Maxfield, 1980; Smith, 1989). In the past, it has been assumed that this is also true of women's

fear of rape: it has commonly been implied, based on official rape statistics, that women's fear is irrational or unrealistic (e.g. Pyle, 1980). Recently this line of argument has been countered in several ways. It is now widely accepted that areal statistics existing for sexual attacks cannot be taken as anything like representative; sexual attacks are seriously under-reported, both to the police and to local and national crime surveys (Mayhew et al., 1989).

Even if accurate statistics were available, they would be unlikely to show that sexual violence is 'pocketed' within cities in the way that other crimes may be. It is a widespread, endemic crime, irrespective of socioeconomic or geographic boundaries, as the backgrounds of the women who reported violence during the survey demonstrates. Based on what a growing number of studies using sensitive methodologies have revealed about levels of violence against women, high levels of fear are well-founded (Stanko, 1987). For example, research has shown fairly consistently that more than one in ten adult women have been raped (e.g. Hall, 1985; Painter, 1991; Russell and Howell, 1983). Domestic violence is estimated to affect between one in ten and one in four families (Dobash and Dobash, 1980; Strauss et al., 1980), and various studies of child sexual abuse estimate that around one in four girls are abused before they reach the age of sixteen (Peters et al., 1986).

Although women's fear accurately reflects the extent of sexual violence in society, what it does not match is the location of violence. While fear of sexual violence is usually manifested in fear of public places (Riger and Gordon, 1981; Valentine, 1989), attacks are far more common in private situations, and those involved usually know each other well (Hall, 1985; Painter, 1991; Russell, 1982). Even in the 1988 British Crime Survey (which, as the authors acknowledge, underestimates the extent of violence against women) only nine per cent of reported attacks against women happened in public places (Kinsey and Anderson, 1992).

Table 4.3
The location of women's fear
Percentage of respondents

	'Very or fairly worried' about each incident
Rape outside by a stranger	69
Rape in your home by a stranger	45
Rape outside by someone you know	27
Rape in your home by someone you know	25

Of the incidents of rape, sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse reported in the Edinburgh research (114 women reported at least one incident, many unsolicited), the majority were of attacks by boyfriends, husbands, fathers or other relatives. Fear amongst the respondents, however, does not follow the same pattern. Far more women are concerned about being attacked outside by a stranger than being attacked in private (Table 4.3). Even the women who had been attacked in private situations were often more fearful of public places; in many cases violence inside inflates fear outside.

The following cases are typical of the sort of answers women gave when asked where they imagined they were most likely to be raped.

> It would generally be at night time, anywhere. Um or areas of the high rise flats like Wester Hailes. (Olivia, Corstorphine)

> Well roundabout here obviously it's the Meadows, there's no way I would cross the Meadows either early in the morning or late at night. Um, basically isolated places where there's a not a lot of people around. Anywhere that's unlit. (Yvonne, Haymarket)

> Well I suppose just an area where I didn't know it too well, and perhaps there weren't many other people around. And it was dark. (Irene, Pilton)

Women are, of course, far less likely to be attacked in these dark, lonely, strange places than in more familiar surroundings and these comments belie the fact that many know that they are not statistically at risk outside. Table 4.4 shows that almost half of the women who expressed a view believe that rape is most likely to happen in private space. The recent increase in publicity about marital violence and date rape probably accounts for this. However, these women are no less concerned than the others about being attacked outside. When asked the same question in relation to themselves, the vast majority felt that if they were raped it would be by a stranger.

Table 4.4
Which person would be the most likely rapist?
Percentage of respondents

	Generally speaking	If you were the victim
Stranger	47	70
Friend/acquaintance	39	9
Relative	4	2
Don't know/can't imagine	9	19

Why does this spatial paradox exist and, more to the point, why does it persist in the face of improving information about the location of violence? In the remainder of the chapter I explore why public space appears so threatening when private space is where women are far more likely to be attacked.

The social environment and the demarcation of space

Recently a series of studies have confirmed that the structure of the built environment has some bearing on women's fear of crime, although less impact on their self-imposed behavioural restrictions than on men's (Painter, 1989). Because women's fear is mainly fear of public space, a stronger relationship might be expected. However, the Edinburgh research revealed no statistical difference in women's feelings about the safety of the built environment by area of residence, by socioeconomic factors, or even by fear of being attacked outside. No Edinburgh housing environment is considered 'safe'. Despite the huge contrast between the three areas, every interviewee expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of her locale, including street lighting, poor upkeep of tenement stairs, vandalism, and the position of shrubbery. But the contribution of the physical environment to women's fear is secondary.

It is important to get away from thinking about spaces and environments only as concrete places where incidents do or do not take place. Instead the symbolic connotations of space, and social experience of places, are central to understanding patterns of fear. Gender has been described as the most significant factor in individuals' treatment in, and experience of, public space (Gardner, 1990). Feminist geographers have described the variety of ways in which patriarchy ascribes public space as masculine and private space as feminine. The outcome is the continued control of women (Rose, 1990), and the effect of male violence has been included in this thesis (Valentine, 1989).

The widespread effects of fear of violence on women's lifestyles and behaviour already outlined lend some support to this idea and, clearly, if the curfew that seems to have evolved governing women's use of certain areas of the public domain could be lifted, this would go some way towards empowering women. How then, is space labelled 'safe' or 'dangerous'? From this research, two aspects of the social environment have emerged as particularly significant; firstly, what we are taught about safe places, and secondly, how women commonly experience public places.

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Education about safe and dangerous environments is a lifelong process. This includes both formal education, i.e. what is taught by parents, schools and other agencies, and also informal education through socialization about gender roles and appropriate spatial behaviour.

Parents have a considerable influence on children's environmental awareness and perception as they grow up. Several studies have shown that girls' freedom to explore and experience public places is restricted to a greater degree than boys' (Hart, 1979; Moore, 1986), the main reason being fears that girls are more at risk from sexual attack.

Children are made aware early on of their parents' concern about public places. Half of the women in the Edinburgh survey had been warned specifically about sexual attack when they were young. However, while all had been warned about strangers and outside dangers, only fourteen per cent had been warned that people known to them could potentially harm them. Although children today are more likely to be warned about their sexual safety than in the past, there is little evidence that the message is improving in accuracy over time; parents today are still much more likely to warn children about strangers, with the emphasis on the public sphere being dangerous and the home being safe. This is true of parents in all three study areas, all social classes, and regardless of the children's ages.

In the past, what amounts to misinforming children could perhaps be excused by ignorance of the fact that most child abuse is perpetrated by adults known to the victim. But, today, the majority of the survey respondents know that children are most likely to be sexually abused in private space. Only five per cent of those questioned believed that strangers are most likely to abuse children, while only seven per cent thought that child abuse usually happens out of doors.

Most of the mothers in the survey take their children's sexual safety very seriously. But because, paradoxically, they can only conceive of their children being harmed in the public sphere, many go to great lengths to make sure that their children do not spend any time on their own outside. In Corstorphine, this means that many children are ferried about everywhere by car. Their social and leisure activities thus tend to be structured around 'safe' pursuits to which an adult can take them.

> Jamie doesn't stop any of his social activities. He goes training tonight, he goes swimming, he goes to scouts on a Friday, and if he wants to go anywhere he's dropped off and picked up. It works out quite nicely, you know one mum will bring the whole lot back and then drop them off. (Kate, Corstorphine)
>
> We worry that Katie isn't learning a sense of doing things

> independently, so in the summer we try to get her to do more things for herself. But on the dark evenings I'm just not happy about her going on the bus alone, and I always make sure I'm with her. (Valerie, Corstorphine)

In Pilton most mothers do not have a car, and find it more difficult to guard children from public places so completely, but they often walk with their children to where they want to go or make sure a relative or neighbour is keeping an eye on them, and many keep children in at night.

> I don't let the kids out late, like as soon as it's dark I call them in from the streets. They have to sit in from six o'clock, which isnae fair on them really. It's like an added worry because you're worried about yourself anyway, but then I don't go out at night for that specific reason. I wouldn't give anybody the opportunity to attack me, and so I try to do the same with my kids. (Jeanette, Pilton)

This perceived need to protect children creates not only another constraint on mothers' time and anxiety, on whom the responsibility for chauffeuring and accompanying generally falls; but it also has implications for children's independence and confidence in using public space. This is especially true of girls, who are usually allowed less freedom than boys. However, if children were warned more about the possibility of abuse from people they know, then it is less likely it will happen to them. Several women told of their own experiences of sexual abuse twenty or thirty years ago when there was an almost total silence on violence within families. Significantly, these women were far more likely to explain similar dangers to their own children.

> In those days you didn't tell your parents things like that, so I've always encouraged my kids that they must tell me. Mum told us about er strangers, and we didnae take anything off strangers and we didnae talk to strangers. But - I suppose nobody really expects a kid to be abused. Everyone just says 'oh it wouldnae happen to my kid'. But it's gonna happen to somebody's kid, do you know what I mean? And I think most of the time it's people that the parents have trusted that do it. (Karen, Pilton (sexually abused by her uncle))

That children receive the right messages about the relative spatial risks is extremely important. Things have begun to improve, at least in the messages taken into schools via police educational liaison work. The 'Feeling Yes, Feeling No' programme is currently being introduced in most areas, which includes reference to known attackers as well as the perennial stranger.

The images taught when we are young stay with us. Many of the images of danger the women in the survey described, such as being

approached on foot or in a car at night in a lonely place, hark back to 'stranger danger' lessons learnt in childhood. Women grow up, then, being told directly that the danger lies in public space. There are also many indirect messages coming from the media, peer groups and behavioural codes which reiterate that public places are basically hostile, and that there are certain physical and social boundaries women must not cross if they wish to remain safe (Fox, 1977; Griffin, 1986; Hanmer, 1978; Stanko, 1990).

Several commentators have blamed the existence of the spatial paradox of women's fear on messages coming from the media, which tend to report sexual assaults happening in public places disproportionately and in a sensationalist manner (Gordon and Heath, 1981; Valentine, 1992). However, although it is clear that isolated incidents such as the Wimbledon Common murder in August 1992 can have a profound short-term impact on women's use of space in the locality, there is a major flaw in the general argument. It assumes that women believe everything they read, especially that rape is predominantly a public place crime. In fact, because information flows about the real spatial risks are improving, many women now know that this is not the case (Table 4.4).

The problem that remains is the gulf between *knowing* and *believing* that public space is actually relatively safe. Women who recognize that being raped outside is unlikely are no less worried about rape than those who believe that most attacks happen in parks and alleyways. In order to uncover what is reinforcing conceptions of public space as dangerous, we need to look at how women experience public space on a day to day level.

Experiences of public places

From this research, the factor which is most influential on feelings about public places is sexual harassment. The relationship between women's fear and the incidence of harassment is more significant than that between fear and childhood warnings or experiences, social factors, economic factors, concern about the built environment or faith in the police and penal system. Overall, there is strong support for the suggestion that 'minor' incidents (most forms of sexual harassment are not yet classed as crimes) act to continually remind or forewarn women of more serious sexual attack when they are in public places (Crawford et al., 1990; Gardner, 1989; Stanko, 1987). Just as it has been said that harassment in the workplace affects some women's experiences of work and opportunities at work, so harassment in public places acts as a spatial deterrent.

Although sexual attack in public is relatively rare, sexual harassment in public places is very common. Table 4.5 indicates how many women have experienced certain forms of this behaviour in public (obscene phone calls

are an exception, but they do have implications for feelings of safety outside). These incidents are not the only forms of harassment, only the most easily definable and least ambiguous.

Table 4.5 also shows the high levels of anxiety produced by these common forms of harassment. Certainly incidences of sexual harassment worry women far more than crimes like burglary or car theft, yet they have only recently been considered in discussions about fear of crime and crime prevention. Moreover, as Table 4.6 demonstrates, there is a direct link between these incidents and women's fear of sexual violence.

Table 4.5
Experience and concern about sexual harassment in public space
Percentage of respondents

	Have experienced this incident	'Very or fairly worried' about this incident
Flashed at	34	30
Followed	50	75
Touched up/groped	38	56
Unwanted sexual comments	77	29
Leered at	65	38
(Obscene phone call)	(55)	(55)

Table 4.6
Sexual harassment and fear of violence
Percentage of respondents

	Experiencing incident increased fear of sexual attack
Flashed at	50
Followed	85
Touched up/groped	42
Unwanted sexual comments	21
Leering	22
(Obscene phone call)	(50)

In half of the women experiencing these incidents, the heightened fear of attack was short term, but for the other half it persisted long term. Some forms of harassment are considered more serious than others (notably being followed), but all seem to indicate that a more serious attack might be about to happen; this is the case even with apparently minor instances of

unwanted comments and leering. Sexual violence and sexual harassment have been described as existing on a continuum, with minor incidents at one end, rape at the other, and a gradation of incidents in between (Kelly, 1987). Certainly, these findings indicate that many women make this connection in their minds.

> I was followed home the other night. Now I don't know if it was serious, if there would have been an assault or whether it was just a sick way of winding me up. But he kind of quickened his footsteps, you know, and he was so close behind me that I could smell the alcohol on his breath. At first I had thought 'don't panic, it's just somebody else walking home', but by this point I had decided to run for it. I thought he may be fooling, but I'm not going to hang around to find out. (Sheila, Haymarket)

Without going into the intentions of men who harass women, it is probably true that many such incidents will not develop into anything more serious. Having said that, most sexual attacks do start with a minor incident and escalate, so the disinclination to 'hang around' is justifiable.

The Edinburgh data also show that women who have been harassed on the streets are significantly more likely to worry about sexual attack than those who have not. There is the qualification, however, that rather than a single incident leading to long term avoidance behaviour, the effect seems to be cumulative. Most women experience a range of incidents of harassment over time; two thirds of those in the survey had been sexually harassed before the age of sixteen. Gradually, these experiences create a climate of uneasiness, reinforcing public space and strangers as hostile and off-putting and something to be avoided if possible.

Implications

The Safety-in-Edinburgh Survey findings demonstrate that the fear of sexual attack creates social and spatial constraints on women's everyday lives, reducing the quality of life and opportunities in the public domain. Women still fear public places, and many children are misinformed about the spatial risks of child abuse. Sexual harassment, which is often passed off as harmless, provokes more anxiety than crimes such as burglary, mugging or car theft and is central to explaining why fear of public places persists.

One response to women's fear from central government is the burgeoning output of leaflets giving safety advice for public places, at work and on the move. The suggestion tends to be that the onus is on women to be continually alert, to adjust their dress and behaviour, and not to give out the wrong messages to men - to acquire a physical and psychological

guardedness which Gardner (1990) has described as 'profaning the self'. As the findings of the Edinburgh research show that many women do these things as a matter of course anyway, the logic of this policy is dubious. Because most attacks take place within the home, these behavioural adaptations constitute the problem of women's fear, rather than its solution.

Current crime prevention strategies put little effort into tackling violence where it more often occurs. Agencies which help women who have suffered violence in the home continue to be under-resourced, while safety advice literature sustains the myth that public space is more dangerous. This research suggests that a more effective strategy might involve education campaigns focusing on the true spatial risks involved with sexual violence and abuse, and a rerouting of resources to tackle violence and threatening behaviour where it most often takes place.

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