

From Mace to Restricted Movement:

**Feminist Social Control Theory
and College Women's Fear of Rape**


by

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(ABSTRACT)

This research utilizes feminist social control theory to explore college women's fear of crime, specifically rape. Elements within this analysis include: comparisons of males and females on their relative fear of crime in both stranger and acquaintance situations, an assessment of behavioral/social self-restrictions, and an examination of the relative impact of previous victimization on women's fear. Data are derived from a self-administered questionnaire from a non-probability sample of 217 male and female Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University undergraduates in the fall of 1994. Consistent with the hypothesis, women report significantly higher rates of fear in both acquaintance and stranger situations, and also report employing significantly more crime preventative measures than men. However, regression analyses reveal that while gender, acquaintance and stranger fear all have a statistically significant impact on precautionary use, neither fear of rape, nor previous rape victimization are significant. Policy implications and areas for future research are explored.

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CHAPTER I: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the chief rallying cries of the feminist movement is the contention that “the personal is political.” By this, feminist scholars and activists mean that what women take for granted as unalterable aspects of their private and personal lives may, in fact, be crucial for generating the political movement of women. As feminist activists reconsider long-held assumptions about family, home, and work -- feminist scholarship is flourishing in academia as well. Feminist analysis is taking different forms in different disciplines. For example, in anthropology, feminist researchers are critically analyzing the gender specific ways conventional anthropology has defined primitive cultures (Lamphere 1987). In psychology, feminist researchers are examining the differential diagnosis of mental illness on women (Chesler 1989). And in political science, feminists are investigating the different ways women experience political socialization (Sapiro 1987). Similarly, within the discipline of sociology, the rebirth of the feminist movement is encouraging researchers to look at sociology in a new way -- a way that not only “brings women in,” but critically analyzes the processes of women’s everyday lives. As Smith describes it, feminist sociological analysis should investigate “the everyday world as problematic” (1987:88).

Within the field of criminology, feminist sociological analysis has also been remarkably successful in convincing both academic and legal authorities to accept as crimes acts which were once considered to be under the domain of the personal, including: incest, domestic violence, marital rape, and acquaintance rape (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Freeman 1980; Gelles and Cornell 1985). Yet, despite over a decade of feminist criminological analysis, much of mainstream criminology still confines studies of crime to its numbers, offenders, and victims, with work on rape reduced to the demographic characteristics of its victims and offenders.

Many feminist criminologists contend that the discipline is “androcentric” -- claiming that mainstream criminology has largely ignored or dismissed gender in its analysis and has adopted male experiences and perspectives into its theories as if they were universal (Gelsthorpe and Morris 1992). In a sense, studying men seems logical, given the fact that the majority of both criminals and victims are male. However, if we adopt a feminist framework which challenges us to reconsider the everyday world as problematic and modify our conceptions of crime to include the personal, then the everyday experiences of women *can* become a focal point of our analysis.

If we embrace a feminist lens as we look at mainstream criminological research on the fear of crime, we can see new dimensions to these studies. For instance, one of the most consistent findings in studies of fear of crime is that women are more afraid of crime than men. In fact, women register fear levels which are often two to three times higher than males (Reiss 1967; Garofalo 1977; DuBow, McCabe, and Kaplan 1979; Stinchcombe et al. 1980). Conventional criminology accounts for women’s greater fear

with the arguments that women are culturally/socially conditioned to be more timid and weak, they have generally smaller physical builds, and/or women are socialized to reveal fears more openly than men (Maccobby and Jacklin 1974; Garofalo 1977; Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garofalo 1978; Skogan and Maxfield 1981). Others attribute women's fear to perceived vulnerability related to environmental factors, or "dangerous places" (Nair, Ditton, and Philips 1993). In a sense, mainstream criminology is denying any real threat associated with this fear. Women are portrayed as simply paranoid or delusional (Ahluwalia 1990).

This study will examine the radical feminist contention that women's fear of crime is, in fact, related to their fear of one particular crime -- rape. Specifically, this research will test the feminist assertion that fear of rape is a form of social control. In this regard, this research examines several crucial questions: How and in what ways are the everyday lives of college women affected by their fear of crime -- especially rape? Are they more fearful in stranger or acquaintance rape situations? What kind of behavioral/emotional restrictions do they face? And finally, what are the social implications of women's fear?

This research is meaningful because if college women feel that it is necessary to dramatically alter their public and private behavior to avoid rape, then both the quality of their personal life and their education may suffer: late night trips to the library become fraught with potential terror, night classes become out of the question, and trusting male acquaintances becomes problematic. Furthermore, if college women are socialized to be fearful only in stranger rape scenarios (despite statistics that consistently demonstrate that

women are more likely to be raped by someone they know than by strangers) then women's actual vulnerability to rape may be increased.

This project may have important policy implications as well. Information on the impact that fear of rape has on women's lives can help encourage college administrators to initiate better security measures in and around campus, take firmer action against rapes which occur on campus, develop more self-defense courses, and/or implement more rape awareness courses and campaigns. All of these efforts will not only make women feel less fearful at universities, but may help to decrease the actual rate of rape on campuses as well. Through understanding women's fear, universities may become more sensitive to the problem of rape and begin to administer more efforts aimed at alleviating both the fear and the reality of rape on campus.

CHAPTER II: THEORY

"Like indiscriminate terrorism, rape can happen to any woman, and few women are ever without this knowledge.

- Susan Griffin,

Rape: The Power of Consciousness

Before delving into feminist theories of rape, it is important to remember that feminist theory is not monolithic -- it encompasses a wide body of literature which includes many different perspectives, including liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, socialist, existentialist, and post-modern feminism. Yet, feminist theory, in all its varieties, has in common its concern with the causes, consequences, and maintenance of gender inequality (Tong 1989). According to nearly all feminists, patriarchy is at the root of women's oppression. Millet's conception of patriarchy as "male control of both the public and private worlds" is perhaps the most widely cited definition, and will be utilized as a foundation for the social control analysis presented here (Millet as cited in Tong 1989: 96). As outlined in the problem statement, this research is primarily concerned with investigating the consequences the fear of rape has on women's lives. Specifically, this research focuses on the manner in which this fear acts as a form of social control which helps to maintain other forms of gender inequality within a patriarchal social structure. Building upon the works of Brownmiller (1975), Griffin (1979), and others, this thesis will attempt to illustrate this radical feminist perspective.

2.1 FEMINIST SOCIAL CONTROL THEORIES AND WOMEN'S FEAR OF RAPE

In order to understand recent research on the fear of rape, it is important to situate this research in its historical context. It is the feminist movement of the early 1970's which first "broke the silence" on rape. Since then, much feminist theory and research has focused on the relationship between sexual assault and the wider patterns of gender inequality in society. However, the initial feminist interpretations of the causes and consequences of rape are crucial to understand because they continue to form the basis for much of the current scholarly work on this subject.

While traditional discourse prior to the feminist movement viewed rape primarily as an act of sexual frustration and/or aggression, feminists and others maintain that rape is, in fact, an act of power. Although rape is clearly a physical act which utilizes sexual organs to achieve its ends, feminists contend that the real motivation for rape is not necessarily the release of pent up sexual desire or tension -- but the exertion of power. Some feminists focus on the fact that in raping a woman a man is committing an act of violence, which should be punished properly as such in court of law (Estrich 1987; Freeman 1980; MacKinnon 1989). Others concentrate on empowering women to take aggressive personal action against potential rapists, in the form of self-defense training or precautionary behavior (Booher 1981; University of Virginia 1991; Caignon and Groves 1987). However, in the view of other feminists, the solution to rape cannot be assured through legal reform (laws that will put the rapist in jail and throw away the key) or in an individual manner (giving women skills in assertiveness training and self-defense).

It is radical feminists who first posed the idea that rape and fear of rape operate as forms of social control over women. Griffin (1979) was one of the first feminists to connect the two. Applying Amir's (1971) study on the demographic characteristics of rapists, Griffin maintains that the rapist is no different from other males in American society. Rather, the rapist is merely a product of a patriarchal culture that simultaneously rewards both aggression and sexuality in males. For this reason, women must fear *every* man, because the rapist can be *any* man. However, within a patriarchal social system women are simultaneously socialized to rely on men to keep them safe from rapist attack. This complicated interplay between both fear and reliance on men compels women to continually negotiate their territory in terms of safe and unsafe men, and fear plays a prominent role (Griffin 1989).

When and if they go out alone, women must alter their schedules, their emotions, and their lives in order to avoid this ever-present threat of rape, or face accusations that they were "asking for it." If a woman attempts to move out of the range of acceptable behaviors or territories, she may be blamed for precipitating the rape. As a result, women's fear of rape (and its ensuing emotional and social victimization) has a significant impact on their personal and social selves. According to Griffin:

The fear of rape keeps women off the streets at night. Keeps women at home. Keeps women passive and modest for fear that they be thought provocative (1989: 398) .

It is important to remember that for radical feminists, the fear of rape is seen as a direct tool of patriarchy -- enabling male dominance to continue. According to

Brownmiller (1975) and other radical feminists, rape (and the fear it generates) is the very bedrock of patriarchy. Fear of rape results in placing social and physical restrictions on women's ability to move freely in society, and thereby operates as a form of terrorism against women:

Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of prehistoric times...From prehistoric times to the present, rape has played a critical function. 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 1975:14-15).

Radical feminist theory asserts, then, that throughout history and in every known society men have actively and aggressively utilized their biological strength to intimidate and subordinate women through both the threat and reality of rape.

It should be noted that the fear of rape does not take place within a vacuum. Fear of rape is inextricably tied to other forms of social inequality - including economic, racial, ethnic, and sexual orientation. Although this thesis deals principally with the assertions of radical feminist theory, clearly women's fear of rape helps to maintain other forms of inequality in society as well.

Rape is just one example of all the violence existing to help maintain the unequal power relations in patriarchal capitalist society. Moreover, by reason of fear of rape, women do not have freedom of movement -- only men do. Rape by keeping women 'in their place', serves the interests of both patriarchy (men) and capitalism (reproducing the labor force). (Messerschmidt 1986: 136-37).

Therefore, although this thesis centers on exploring the radical feminist social control theory of fear of rape, this does not mean that the fear of rape affects women at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the same way that it affects women from diverse racial, ethnic, economic, sexual or geographic backgrounds. Clearly, women's place in the other social hierarchies will correspondingly affect the extent to which fear of rape dominates their lives.

CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 THE PREVALENCE OF RAPE

In order to accurately assess the extent to which rape and fear of rape are significant social problems for college women, it is important to review the literature on the prevalence of rape among both the general population and among the college population. However, there is considerable debate about which form of data collection provides the most accurate measures of rape. While many criminologists rely solely on data derived from either the FBI's annual Uniform Crime Reports or the U.S. Department of Justice's annual National Crime Survey, other social scientists criticize these sources and suggest alternate estimators in order to find the true rate of under-reported crimes such as rape.

The most common source researchers use for determining crime rates is the FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR). The UCR reveals only the number of crimes reported to police each year. Due to this, the UCR is highly criticized by many criminologists who argue that it grossly underestimates the true rate of various crimes. In the case of rape, for instance, the true rate of rape is argued to be significantly higher than UCR estimates due to the fact that rape is widely thought to be one of the most socially difficult crimes to report (Koss 1992). Yet, despite its inherent flaws, for the purposes of comparison with other measures, the most recently calculated UCR rate for rape will be included here. According to the 1993 Uniform Crime Report, the rate of rape in 1992 was 43 per

100,000 persons, with a total of 109,062 rapes reported to police. In 1992 in Virginia, the UCR reports the total number of forcible rapes to be 2,008 with a rate of 32 per 100,000 persons (Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1993:353).

In contrast, researchers with the Justice Department's National Crime Survey (NCS) conduct direct interviews with households in the U.S. to determine victimization rates for various crimes, including rape. Face-to-face interviews are carried out in an effort to encourage respondents to share criminal victimizations that might have gone unreported to the police. However, criminologists contend that there are also problems with the methodology of the NCS (Koss 1992). The main criticism of the NCS with regard to its estimates of rape lie in the way the interview is administered and the manner in which the questions on rape are posed. The central problem many researchers have with the interview format is that the interview is conducted with other family members present. For example, if a family member is the rapist, then the respondent would be less likely to reveal this information. Furthermore, if a woman never informed her family about a rape, she would be less likely to tell this to the interviewer when her family is present. In addition, the victimization survey employs a "screen question" before they inquire about rape which asks the respondent if they have been attacked or threatened, but fails to ask specifically if the respondent has been raped. If the respondent fails to respond affirmatively to the screen question, then they will not have an opportunity to report that they were the victims of rape (Eigenberg 1990; Koss 1992). Again, despite the NCS' arguable flaws, NCS data is reported here for purposes of comparison. The NCS calculates the rate of U.S. rape in 1992 to be 70 per 100,000 persons with a total of

140,930 attempted and completed rapes reported (Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1993).

In recent years, the subject of crime on college campuses has become the focus of increased public concern. Recently this concern resulted in the passing of the federal Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990 which forces colleges and universities to make public campus crime statistics and prevention measures to college students and their parents. This act has met with limited success. For some critics, the act is too strong and requires colleges and universities to waste valuable time and money compiling irrelevant statistics (Megerson 1991). For others, the main problem with the act is concern over its practical implementation and methodology. Some argue that the actual rate of many campus crimes may continue to go unreported due to the lack of universal terminology and definitions of what constitutes particular crimes (Palmer 1993).

In response to the Act, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI & SU) publishes a statement on crime awareness and campus security in the Schedule of Classes Bulletin. According to the Spring 1995 VPI & SU Statement on Crime Awareness and Campus Security there were four forcible rapes in the school year 1991-1992 and no forcible rapes for both the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 school years (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 1995). A potential problem with this report is that the policy statement statistics do not differentiate between attempted and completed forcible rapes. Furthermore, like the Uniform Crime Report of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (to which these statistics are forwarded), the statement can only reveal rapes which were reported to campus police and which police considered founded.

In an effort to alleviate these problems, researchers are attempting to use other measures to more accurately assess the rate of rape on college campuses. Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski's study of a national sample of 6,159 U.S. college students from 32 different institutions finds much higher rates of rape among college women than are published in official reports (Koss et al 1987). This can be attributed to Koss et al's unique methodology, including the fact that she uses a self-administered questionnaire, she asks questions about both rapes and attempted rapes, and that she specifically defines rape as being forced or threatened to engage in sexual activity against your will, or when you are incapacitated (Koss 1992). Therefore, contrary to the extremely low estimates of rape reported in the Virginia Tech Campus Crime Awareness Statement (four forcible rapes in the school year 1991-1992 and no forcible rapes for both the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 school years), Koss et al's study finds an average of 27.5% of college women report having been the victim of rape or attempted rape in their lifetime (Koss et al 1988: 168).

Other independent research studies likewise confirm the inadequacy of UCR and NCS data on rape - confirming Koss' conclusion that these sources underestimate the extent of rape by 10-25% (Russell 1982; Wyatt 1992; Kilpatrick et al 1987). In fact, the most recent survey on sex also confirms Koss' conclusion in its finding that 25% of women aged 18-25 (the age of most college women) report having been "forced to do something sexual by a man" (Michael, Gagnon, and Laumann as cited in Pollit 1994).

In the midst of such contradictory data one thing should become clear. No one can definitively say how many women have been victimized by rape. In fact, numbers may be irrelevant if, as feminists contend, sheer numbers of rape alone will never describe the

true impact that rape has on women's lives (Ahluwalia 1990). In order to understand the degree to which rape infiltrates the everyday lives of women, we must go one step further to look at the attitudinal and behavioral modifications the fear of rape places on women's lives.

3.2 WOMEN'S GREATER FEAR OF CRIME: A FEAR OF RAPE

Our understanding of women's fear of rape emerges from various research studies on the fear of criminal victimization which consistently indicate that women are more fearful of crime than men (Reiss 1967; Garofalo 1977; DuBow et al. 1979; Stinchcombe et al. 1980). Since women are far less likely to be the victims of most crimes (with the exception of rape) than men, victimologists studying fear of crime have a difficult time accounting for women's fear. The most commonly held notion among victimologists surrounds the physical vulnerability of women in comparison to men: most women are physically weaker than men and therefore would naturally feel more vulnerable to criminal attack (Hindelang et al 1978; Skogan and Maxfield 1981). Others explain women's fear by stating that it may be that women are not really more fearful than men - but that they are simply more likely to report fear due to socialization and cultural conditioning (Garofalo 1977). Some maintain that women's fear is related to a fear of areas thought to be particularly dangerous places (Nair, Ditton, and Phillips 1992). Still others state that women experience greater rates of fear because they are socially conditioned to be more timid and dependent (Maccoby and Jacklin 1974; Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garofalo 1978). More recent work concludes that women's greater fear of crime is inextricably

linked to their fear of one crime -- rape.

In one of the first studies of the subject, Riger, Gordon and LeBailly (1978) analyze two main positions that attempt to explain women's greater levels of fear: those which focus on women's socialization and those which focus on the unique nature of crimes against women. Using data collected from the National Crime Survey, telephone and personal interviews, Riger et al. conclude that it is not necessarily women's personalities or physical characteristics that make them feel more vulnerable to crime. Instead, their study finds that it is the fear of one specific crime - rape - which acts to increase women's anxiety levels about all crimes (Riger, Gordon and LeBailly 1978).

A study by Ahluwalia (1990) investigates the different manners in which mainstream criminology/victimology portray women's greater fear of crime. In contrast to conventional criminological research on fear of crime, Ahluwalia maintains that women's higher levels of fear of crime in general are attributable to their fear of rape. Traditional research frequently portrays women's greater levels of fear as "irrational," due to women's relatively low rates of general crime victimization. Ahluwalia asserts that although the official risk of crime for women (as reported in the Uniform Crime Report) is not very high -- the potential for a crime, such as rape, to be committed against a woman is an ever present danger further exacerbated by sexual harassment. Therefore, Ahluwalia's study confirms that it is the persistent threat of rape, rather than its official statistical magnitude, which accounts for women's greater fear of crime in general (Ahluwalia 1990).

Another possible explanation for women's greater levels of fear is found in Stanko's (1992) study which finds that women's greater fear of crime can be attributed to their exposure to crime prevention literature which is targeted primarily at women and the crime of rape. Stanko argues that exposure to this biased crime prevention literature may actually serve a detrimental purpose rather than a helpful one -- resulting in generating even more fear of rape in women. Despite its aim to reduce crime rates, crime prevention literature, with its overwhelming emphasis on rape scenarios, only serves to intensify women's levels of fear. In addition, it may lead to the false belief in "stranger danger," despite statistics that show women are far more likely to be raped or attacked by someone they know (Stanko 1992: 176).

Riger and Gordon (1981) study the radical feminist contention that the threat of rape is an element through which men maintain social control over women. Data from their survey are consistent with the feminist contention that the fear of rape limits women's freedom both inside and outside the home. According to Riger and Gordon:

The threat of crime, by creating a constant state of apprehension about possible victimization in many women and by leading to the self-imposition of behavioral restrictions, has the effect that feminists decry: It limits women's opportunities to be active participants in public life (1981: 89).

Riger and Gordon's study demonstrates that the threat of rape imposes both conscious and unconscious behavioral and physical limitations on women's everyday lives. Riger and Gordon confirm that indeed, women employ numerous precautions and avoidance procedures due to their overwhelming fear of rape victimization, ranging from carrying

mace to avoiding ever going out alone at night (Riger and Gordon 1981).

Warr's 1985 study of fear of rape among urban women in Seattle supports Riger and Gordon's (1981) assertion that women's fear of rape has a significant impact on the precautions they incorporate into their daily lives. Warr finds that while women are no more likely than men to employ safety precautions within the home (i.e. dead bolts, alarm systems, weapons, etc.), women are far more likely than men to employ social or lifestyle precautions (i.e. avoiding going out alone, refusing to answer the door, avoiding certain places in the city). For instance, Warr's survey finds that while only 8% of men report avoiding going out alone at night, 42% of women indicate utilizing this precaution on a regular basis (Warr 1985: 248).

From a study derived from in-person interviews of 367 men and women from San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Chicago, Riger and Gordon (1991) find that greater levels of fear of rape are associated with economic, educational, and physical disadvantage. They also indicate that women who have been previously victimized by rape report much higher rates of fear. They report that the fear of rape is "central to the day to day concerns" of approximately one third of women, a sporadic concern for another third, and of little concern to one third. However, all women, regardless of their level of concern report making behavioral or social changes to prevent rape. According to Riger and Gordon:

Each incident, taken by itself, may seem trivial. But the sum of these incidents exacts a heavy toll for women...The fear, the anxiety, the distress are all a daily part of life for many women (1991: 1).

Several other studies investigate the behavioral restrictions that women's fear of rape places on their public presentation of self. Gardner (1990) studies the extent to which the fear of sexual assault limits women's ability to walk freely and participate in public life. Gardner discusses the elaborate techniques crime prevention literature encourages women to employ - including creating an "apparent escort," manipulating their manner and dress in order to appear less feminine, and such precautionary techniques as taking extra money, carrying a whistle, and carrying "weapons" such as hatpins or mace. According to Gardner, the fact that women must walk the streets in a constant state of self-defense - always "anticipating peril" (or suffer the consequences of being blamed for their rape), destroys the streets for all of us. Public communication between the sexes is severely limited and the possibility of positive interaction between men and women is greatly curtailed. As Gardner states:

It is important to appreciate that women's fear of crime in public places does not spoil public places for women alone, but that it also spoils, in some larger sense, men for women and women for men and public spaces for everyone (1990: 325).

Other studies of women's fear of rape focus on more specific populations of women. Scheppele and Bart's (1983) study of the impact of previous sexual assault on women's fear finds that women who have been sexually assaulted in acquaintance rape situations report higher levels of fear of crime than women who were assaulted in stranger situations that they felt were beyond their control. A study on the role that the physical environment has on precipitating women's fear finds that locations thought to be

dangerous, such as dark and isolated public parks, increase levels of fear among women (Nair, Ditton, and Phillips 1992). Various other studies focus on the degree to which self-defense training decreases women's fear (McDaniel 1993) and the role that fear of rape plays in single working women's decision to purchase a handgun (Thompson, Bankston and St.Pierre 1990).

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESES

Based on the assertions of radical feminist theory as well as a review of the literature, this study asks the following questions: How and in what ways are the everyday lives of women differently affected by their fear of crime -- especially rape? Are women more fearful in acquaintance or stranger rape situations? What kind of behavioral/emotional restrictions do women face? And finally, what are the social implications of women's fear?

Specifically, this study will focus on exploring several related hypotheses:

H (1): Women will be more fearful of crime than men.

H (2): Women will be more fearful of rape than any other crime.

H (3): Women will be more fearful of stranger rape situations than acquaintance rape situations.

H (4): Women will employ more crime prevention/avoidance measures than men.

H (5): Women who have had previous rape victimization will report high levels of fear as well as a high number and intensity level of precautions.

H (6): The number and intensity of women's precaution use will be related to fear of rape (more than assault victimization), fear of stranger rape situations, fear of acquaintance rape situations, and previous rape victimization (more than assault victimization).

CHAPTER IV: METHODS

4.1 SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The data in this thesis is derived from a self-administered questionnaire constructed exclusively for this research project entitled “The Fear of Crime at Virginia Tech”¹. Approved by the Institutional Review Board of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the Fall of 1994, this survey was conducted in the Fall of 1994 to a non-probability convenience sample of 217 male and female Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University students enrolled in three undergraduate sociology classes. Although the sample is not randomly selected, a sample from a college population is deemed to be especially meaningful for this type of research, as college students: “are a high risk group for rape because they are in the same age group as the bulk of both rape victims and offenders” (Wolbert-Burgess 1988: 4). A copy of the survey is included in the Appendix.

4.2 THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument is designed to examine the feminist contention that fear of rape operates as a form of social control for women. Therefore, questions in this survey are intended to assess both women’s fear of rape, as well as the degree to which women differentially employed avoidance behaviors/precautions. Many of the questions in the

¹ This title was chosen to be neutral and to avoid alerting participants to the fact that fear of rape was the major focus of the study.

survey involve descriptions of various hypothetical rape scenarios that require respondents to rate their fear of crime in these situations. Additional survey items request that respondents estimate the degree to which they employ various crime avoidance/prevention measures, their fear of particular crimes, if they have ever been a victim of crime, and various demographic questions. The survey is grouped in terms of sections or parts, each of which contains pertinent information relevant to my research questions.

A. PART I

Part I of the survey (questions 1-16) is designed to determine the degree to which respondents are fearful in various potential property crime situations. A variation of the Likert scale is used in which respondents are asked to rate their level of fear on a graduated scale ranging from 1- "Not Fearful" to 4-"Very Fearful." These first 5 questions are designed to be a non-threatening, interesting introduction to the survey (Dillman 1978) as well as to serve as a contrast with the personal crimes indexes "Acquaintance rape fear" and "Stranger rape fear."

In questions 6-16, I create various scenarios that are often associated with either stranger or acquaintance rape and ask respondents to rate their level of fear in these situations. It is important to remember that these situations are compiled from various *real-life* acquaintance and stranger rape scenarios as described in several sources (Caignon and Groves 1987; Booher 1981; University of Virginia 1991). They are amended to be

more relevant to college life at Virginia Tech.² In addition, these situations are amended to include both stranger and acquaintance rape situations in order to elicit fear levels for what most researchers believe to be the most common form of rape -- acquaintance rape (Warshaw 1988; Koss 1987). These questions are later used to form another additive scale for the acquaintance and stranger rape fear indexes. Both of these indexes were found to be reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha of .87 for both acquaintance rape fear and stranger rape fear. In Questions 15 and 16 a vignette is created, in which the gender of the potential perpetrator is varied (with question #15 utilizing a man as the potential perpetrator of crime, and question #16 using a woman) in order to assess the impact that the gender of the potential assailant has on levels of fear in both men and women.

Two methodological notes are of importance here. First, questions in this section ask respondents to rate their feelings of *fear* not the traditional fear of crime measure safety. This is deemed to be an important alteration because my study focuses specifically on women's feelings of fear, not safety. There is some evidence to suggest that individuals might be unwilling to report fear because they might view fear as a socially undesirable answer. However, Ferraro and LaGrange contend that fear should be specified in order to gain more valid results (Ferraro and LaGrange 1987: 81). This study should have implications for this contention as well. In addition, these questions, while hypothetical, offer much more concrete details of relevance to Virginia Tech students than more traditional "global fear" measures which ask respondents more abstract questions,

² For instance, more generic stranger scenarios such as experiencing catcalls on the street are amended to better reflect life at VPI & SU: "Imagine that you are walking down College Avenue and a group of men

such as: “How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood after dark?”

(Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garofalo 1978: 175) ³

B. PART II

Part II (questions 17-46) involves questions regarding specific precautions respondents take or have taken to protect themselves from and/or avoid crime. In part A (questions 17-38), a Likert-type scale is again used in which respondents are asked to rate how often they employ crime prevention measures, with response categories ranging from 1 -“Never” to 4 -“Frequently.” Included in this section are questions about precautions, such as locking the doors to their home (question #18), avoiding strangers (question #21), and carrying weapons (question #27). Part B (questions #39-46) involves questions about circumstances which the respondent would be unlikely to use on a regular basis, such as buying a dog for protection (question #39), placing last initials on the mailbox (question #44), and selecting an apartment/dorm located on an upper floor to avoid crime (question #46). Therefore, for these questions, respondents are simply asked to answer “Yes” or “No.” Answers to questions 17-46 are later used to form an additive scale for the two dependent variables -- indicating both the total number of precautions employed, as well as the relative intensity of their usage.

C. PART III

Prior victimization is dealt with in Part III (questions 47-51) where respondents are asked several questions regarding whether they, or someone close to them, has ever

across the street begin to loudly comment on your clothing and body. How fearful are you?”

been the victim of various property and personal crimes. Noteworthy here are the questions on rape (question #49) and knowing someone close to you who has been raped (question #50). Of note here as well, is that the question on rape utilizes a more inclusive question format similar to the one used in Koss et al's 1987 study of rape among college women (Koss et al 1987).⁴ This is deemed to be a more valid and precise measure of rape victimization than more traditional measures, which depend on respondent's own definition of rape.

D. PART IV

Part IV (questions #52-59) asks respondents to reflect on their perception of the likelihood that they, or some other person, might become the victim of crime in and around the VPI & SU campus. Part IV (A) asks respondents to estimate how likely it is that "*a person*" will be the victim of various crimes at Tech. In contrast, Part IV (B) asks respondents to rate how fearful they were that particular crimes might happen to *them personally*. These questions are of interest because they measure perceived vulnerability to specific crimes happening on the Tech campus. Ferraro and LaGrange suggest that measuring fear of specific crimes is better than more global fear measures (Ferraro and LaGrange 1987: 81). Of particular concern in this series are questions asking respondents to rate the crime they fear most (question #55) and how fearful they are of being raped (question #58).

³ The survey uses a variation of this question, as well. The wording is: "How safe do you feel when you are out alone on the Tech campus after dark?" (Question # 61).

⁴ The exact wording is: "Have you ever been forced to engage in sexual activity against your will?"

E. PART V AND VI

More general questions regarding how safe respondents feel on the Virginia Tech campus (questions #60) and how safe they feel after dark (question #61) are covered in Part V. These questions are variations of traditional measures of fear of crime, rephrased to reflect a college campus setting. Part VI involves three questions which were designed to discover whether students use specific crime prevention/precaution measures available at Virginia Tech such as rape awareness classes, crime reports in the student newspapers, or blue emergency phones/lights.

F. PART VII

Finally, in Part VII, respondents are asked various demographic questions which might be pertinent to the research question, including questions on their gender (question #65), age (question #69), race/ethnicity (question #67), and academic level (question #66).

4.3 OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

A. DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Consistent with my research hypothesis that fear of rape leads to the use of behavioral restrictions/precautions that result in the social control of women, the dependent variables used in this analysis are 1) the total number of crime avoidance/precaution measures respondents employed and 2) the intensity of precaution usage. As stated previously, the dependent variable, “total number of precautions” is created through an additive scale created statistically from a compilation of respondent’s answers to questions 16-46. One point is given for every answer greater than one (never

use this precaution). Similarly, the dependent variable “intensity of precautions” is also created from an additive scale of precaution frequency, with one point given to answers of “seldom,” 2 points given to answers of “sometimes” and 3 points awarded to answers of “frequently.”

B. INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Several independent variables are used in this analysis in order to determine the relationship between fear of rape and the number and intensity of crime precaution/avoidance measures women report employing. Independent variables to be used include: gender, whether or not the respondent has experienced previous rape victimization(s), whether or not they are fearful in stranger rape and/or acquaintance rape situations, and the degree of fear they have for the specific crime of rape.

C. DESCRIPTIVE AND CONTROL VARIABLES

Several descriptive and control variables are also included in the analysis, including previous assault victimization(s) and the degree of fear of assault. It is important to control for these variables for several reasons. First, some of the literature on fear of crime suggests that previous victimizations, particularly rape, may result in a higher degree of fear and the use of more precautionary procedures (Scheppelle and Bart 1983; Riger and Gordon 1991). Second, if we are to be certain that it is the fear of rape and not fear of some other crime that leads women to employ more precautions, then we must be certain that we take into account other personal crimes, such as assault, which may affect the number and intensity of women’s precautionary use as well.

CHAPTER V: DATA ANALYSIS

The sample is composed of 217 undergraduates enrolled in undergraduate sociology classes, with 61% of the sample consisting of women. Academic levels vary, with 23% first year, 24% second year, 17% juniors, 33% seniors, and less than 2% graduate students. The ethnic/racial distribution of the sample includes 87% non-Hispanic whites, 5% Black or African-Americans, 5% Asian/Asian-Americans, less than 1% of Hispanic origin, and 2% of some other race or ethnicity. The age range of the respondents varies only slightly, with 45% indicating that they are between the ages 16-19, another 52% indicating that they are between the ages 20-23, and less than 3% (6) reporting that they are between the ages of 24-27. The mean for rape victimization for the total sample is 1.86 (where 1 = rape and 2 = no rape). For assault victimization, the mean for the whole sample is slightly less, at 1.76 (where 1 = assault and 2 = no assault). Among the sample of women the means are somewhat reversed -- with the mean for rape at 1.77 and the mean for assault being slightly higher, at 1.85. Table 1A and 1B in the Appendix present the means, standard deviations, and range for the total sample (1A) and then for women (1B) on the dependent, independent and control variables used in this analysis.

5.1 RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTING

H (1): Women will be more fearful of personal crime than men. In order to test this hypothesis, subjects were asked to report their level of fear in five stranger and five

acquaintance situations. T-tests of differences in means reveals that women in this sample report significantly higher levels of fear in both stranger and acquaintance situations than men. Results of t-tests are supplied in Table 2A and 2B in the Appendix.

Women in this sample report their highest rates of fear in three stranger situations, including situations involving a man at their door asking to use their phone, walking past a group of men who are loudly commenting on their clothing and body, and jogging around the duck pond alone at night. The only situation in which men register fear levels over 2.0 (somewhat fearful) is the stranger situation involving men commenting on their clothing and body as they walk along the street. The acquaintance situation in which women report their highest rates of fear is a situation in which they become very drunk at a party, all their friends have left, and a male friend of a friend offers to let them spend the night. 84% (111) of the women in this sample indicated feeling somewhat to very fearful in this situation.

H (2): Women will be most fearful of the crime of rape. When asked to select the single crime they fear most, 64% of the women in this sample report that rape is the crime they most fear. Furthermore, when asked how fearful women are of “being forced to engage in sexual activity against their will while a student at Virginia Tech,” fifty percent of women indicate that they are “fearful” to “very fearful”. In contrast, men report being most fearful of burglary (52%), followed by assault (32.5%). Frequency distributions for both women and men, as well as the total sample are shown in Table 3 in the Appendix.

H (3): Women will be more fearful of stranger situations than acquaintance situations.

This hypothesis is also confirmed by this study. As shown previously in Table 1B in the Appendix, the mean score for women on the stranger rape fear index is 13.45, while women's mean score on the acquaintance rape fear index is 10.51. This difference is significant at the .01 level of significance (Student's $t = 11.47$). Thus, the women in this survey do reveal significantly higher rates of fear in stranger situations.

H(4): Women will employ more crime prevention/avoidance measures than men. This hypothesis is confirmed as well. T-tests comparing the means of men's and women's scores on number of precautions reveal that women report employing a significantly greater number of precautions than men, with a mean of 13.85 of the 30 precautions listed for women, while men report employing a mean of only 7.14 precautions. The t-value and significance levels are presented in Table 4A in the Appendix.

In addition, the intensity of precautionary use is also statistically significantly higher for women than for men, with an average intensity of crime precaution use of 37.55 for women, and 20.85 for men. Table 4B in the Appendix presents the t-value and significance levels for intensity of precautionary use.

Women and men did not differ significantly in their use of such crime prevention/avoidance measures as locking their car, home, or windows, or in their use of infrequent preventative measures such as putting only their first initials on their mailbox or in the phone book, or practicing self-defense. However, women in this sample are far more likely to employ avoidance precautions which limit their mobility, and perhaps even

their academic and social success in college. For instance, women in this sample are significantly more likely than men to report avoiding taking night classes ($t=4.89$, $prob=.001$), avoiding jobs which require them to work late at night ($t=2.50$, $prob=.01$), avoiding being out alone after dark around Blacksburg ($t=11.89$, $prob=.001$), avoiding going to movies, lectures, or concerts on campus by themselves ($t=7.55$, $prob=.01$), and avoiding tasks such as grocery shopping or doing laundry alone after dark ($t=10.41$, $prob=.001$).

On the other hand, men in this sample are significantly more likely than women to employ more of what I would call “reactive” crime prevention measures which do not necessarily restrict their mobility, such as purchasing a gun ($t=2.51$, $prob=.05$) or carrying a weapon like a knife or gun around campus ($t=2.80$, $prob=.01$). In fact, these two are the only crime prevention measures (out of a total of thirty) on which men scored statistically significantly higher than women. Women scored statistically significantly higher than men on twenty-two of the precautions included in the precautions index. Six precautionary measures showed no significant difference between women and men.

H (5): Women who have had previous rape victimization will report high levels of fear as well a high number and intensity of precautions. One of the most disturbing univariate results of this survey is the finding that 31 of the 132 women in the sample report that they “have been forced to engage in sexual activity against their will”. This is consistent with other research about rape on college campuses. Interestingly, although the question specifically left gender open so that both men and women would feel comfortable

responding, no men in the sample report rape victimization. With regard to the first part of this hypothesis, women in this sample who report having been the victim of rape are statistically significantly more likely than those who have not been victimized to report high levels of fear. This is consistent with the hypothesis. The mean rate of fear for women who were raped is 3.03, compared to 2.48 for women who report no rape victimization. Table 5A in the Appendix shows these statistics.

Contrary to my hypothesis however, women with previous rape victimization did not report employing a statistically significant higher number or intensity of crime precautions. As shown in Table 5B in the Appendix, the mean number of precautions employed by women who have been raped is 14.87, while the mean number of precautions employed by women who have not been raped is 13.53. This difference is not statistically significant at the .01 level. Therefore, it appears that previous rape victimization does not necessarily lead women to employ any more or less precautions than women who have not been raped.

Furthermore, women who have had previous rape victimization did not reveal a statistically significant higher intensity of precautionary use than women who did not report having been raped. As shown in Table 5C in the Appendix, the mean intensity of precaution use for women who were raped is 38.48, while the mean for women who were not raped is 37.27. This difference is not statistically significant.

H (6): The number and intensity of women's precaution use will be related to their fear of rape (more than assault victimization), fear of stranger situations, fear of acquaintance situations, and previous rape victimization (more than assault victimization.) This hypothesis is somewhat confirmed. On a bivariate level, the fear of rape is positively correlated with both the number and intensity of precautions used. Among the sample of women, as their fear of rape increases, so does the number of precautions they report employing and the intensity of their usage. In addition, consistent with my previous hypothesis (*Hypothesis 2*), women's fear of rape is more highly correlated with stranger rape fear than with acquaintance rape fear. Contrary to my hypothesis, however, women's previous rape victimization is negligibly correlated with most variables, with the exception of a moderate positive relationship with acquaintance rape fear and the fear of rape. These correlations are presented in Table 6A in the Appendix.

Regression analysis, however, does not necessarily support the conclusion that fear of rape(alone) is related to an increased use or intensity of precautionary measures for women in this sample. The regression model used here analyzes the relationship between the number of precautions women report employing and 1) women's fear of rape, 2) women's fear of assault, 3) women's fear in acquaintance and 4) stranger situations, controlling for previous rape and assault victimization. Rape and assault victimization are employed as dummy variables - indicating either the presence (1) or absence of victimization (0).

Regression analyses reveals that both acquaintance and stranger rape fear are statistically significant predictors of the number of precautions women report employing. This is surprising because hypothesis x found that women were statistically significantly more fearful of stranger situations than acquaintance situations. Although both were included in the regression analysis, it was assumed that stranger rape fear would be the predominate predictor of women's use of precautions.

In addition, as predicted, neither assault or fear of assault is significant. Surprisingly however, neither rape nor fear of rape are statistically significant predictors of women's precaution use either. This is inconsistent with my hypothesis. One factor that might lead the fear of rape to drop out as a significant predictor of women's use of precautions is the fact that there is high degree to correlation between several of the variables. Most importantly, as can be seen in Table 6A, both acquaintance rape fear and stranger rape fear are very highly correlated with one another. This can lead to a problem of multi-collinearity, which may have distorted the regression analysis.

Given the fact that the intensity of precautionary use is 94% correlated with the number of precautions women report employing, the regression models involving the second hypothesized dependent variable, intensity of women's precaution use, are not presented here. Analysis of the intensity of precautions results in virtually the same regression coefficients as analysis involving the number of precautions.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Using a sample of 217 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University undergraduates this research explored a series of hypotheses related to feminist social control theory. Among the hypotheses examined in this analysis are assessments of college women's relative fear of rape, the effect of previous rape victimization on women's fear of rape, and the relationship between women's fear of rape and their use of precautionary measures. As discussed in the previous data analysis section, the majority of the initial hypotheses are confirmed. Women do report a high level of fear of rape, rape victimization (at least on a bivariate level) does appear to increase women's fear of rape, and women's fear in both stranger and acquaintance rape situations does appear to be related to their increased use of crime precaution measures. All of the hypotheses are consistent with feminist social control theory which states that one important way in which men are able to maintain dominance "in both the public and private worlds" is through the behavioral and social restrictions the threat of rape places on women's lives.

6.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR FEMINIST SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY

While some might see women's greater rates of fear and amplified use of crime precautionary/avoidance measures as simply "a necessary evil," feminist social control theory argues that it is a sign of illness -- not as an illness of women, but of a patriarchal society in which the quality of women's lives are constrained by their fear of rape.

Feminist social control theory posits that rape and fear of rape are elements through which women are controlled by patriarchy. Due to the threat of rape, women are forced to employ many more precautions than men, and these precautions have social as well as emotional costs.

In an effort to substantiate feminist social control theories of fear of rape, this study has explored the extent to which the fear of rape leads college women to employ numerous crime precautions. As the data analysis here reveals, college women's fear leads them to use rape avoidance precautions which may limit both their mobility, and perhaps even their academic and social success in college.

Social control theory first asserts that women are fearful of rape. This study confirms this assertion. The college women in this sample do report high levels of fear of rape, as well as high rates of fear in all the stranger and acquaintance rape situations measured in this survey. For example, college women report high levels of fear in stranger scenarios such as when walking home from the library after dark and getting into an elevator with a strange man. In addition, this study finds that women are significantly more afraid of acquaintances than men. For instance, women in this sample are more fearful than men of 'going home with a man they do not know well.' In addition, college women in this sample are more afraid than men of such a commonplace college activity as accepting a ride home for Thanksgiving with a man who is only an acquaintance.

Social control theory then asserts that it is women's fear of rape that leads them to restrict their movements in society. Consistent with this assertion, this study finds that the fear of both stranger and acquaintance rape situations is positively correlated with

women's use of precautions. Women in this sample report being more likely than men to avoid giving out personal information about themselves to strangers, to limit their exercise work-out routine to daytime hours, to feel the need to carry "emergency money," to avoid being alone with acquaintances or those they do not know well, and to avoid public transportation after dark to protect themselves from crime. In addition, college women in this sample are more likely than men to avoid being out alone at night, avoid night classes, avoid night-time jobs, and avoid tasks which require them to go out at night.

Furthermore, college women are significantly more likely to report avoiding attending campus cultural, educational and entertainment activities such as movies, lectures, or concerts on campus by themselves. Women in this sample report avoiding strangers and isolated areas on campus, feeling the need to walk with someone when they walk around campus after dark, and altering their personal appearance specifically to avoid crime.

The plethora of precautions women in this sample report utilizing on a regular to frequent basis indicates, among other things, that the fear of rape operates as a form of social control over college women. However, there are further implications to be gained from this study as well. Most importantly, the fear of rape and its resulting behavioral restrictions may limit women's opportunities to participate freely in college life. College women may avoid parties where there might be drinking, dates with strangers, and even the freedom of simple conversations with men they do not know well. College women may miss intellectually stimulating and culturally meaningful lectures, night classes, and concerts which occur on campus because they are afraid of rape. In this sense, the fear of rape may lead college women to avoid the sorts of cultural, social and educational

activities that are the “stuff” of college life. This may significantly impair their mobility both on campus and beyond.

6.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF FEAR OF CRIME

In traditional criminology, fear of crime is equivalent to the fear of stranger crime. As stated previously, the typical measure of fear of crime is: “How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood after dark?” (Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garofalo 1978:175). Responses to this question are supposed to indicate respondent’s “global fear of crime.” Clearly, this question revolves around a situation indicative of stranger attack. This study indicates that for women, the fear of crime is linked not to just this stereotypical type of stranger encounter, such as “walking around their neighborhood alone after dark,” but is also linked to more specific and concrete fears of particular situations that are typical of both acquaintance and stranger rape victimization.

According to this research, it is not just stranger fear that leads women to employ a greater number and intensity of crime precautions than men -- acquaintance fear plays a statistically significant role as well. This fear is not a fear of the “shadowy stranger lurking in the bushes” or even of everyman, but a fear of particular situations that may make women vulnerable to rape attack. Women then, are fearful of a variety of specific situations, involving strangers and acquaintances, that are associated with both acquaintance and stranger rape attack -- including situations involving heavy drinking at campus parties, strange men on elevators, and picnic dates alone in the country with a man they do not know well. While women in this sample still indicate a greater overall fear of

stranger rape scenarios, clearly women are fearful of far more than “walking alone after dark.” This study indicates that college women are also fearful in various acquaintance situations as well. For example, college women report being fearful of spending the night at a male acquaintances residence after having a lot to drink at a party. College women are fearful of going to the residence of a man to which they are only acquainted. As described earlier, these situations are indicative of situations in which women are more vulnerable to rape and their fear reflects this greater perceived vulnerability.

Perhaps, then, there is no such thing as a “global fear” of crime for women. This research indicates that for women, the fear of crime is inextricably tied with their fears of particularly threatening rape situations. Criminologists should begin to realize that women’s fear of crime is in fact, a fear of a variety of concrete everyday situations associated with one particular crime -- rape. Criminologists must become more gender sensitive in measuring the fear of crime and begin to incorporate more concrete and specific situations into the analysis of fear of crime if we are ever to understand the true depth of women’s fear.

6.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This thesis reveals that the fear of rape is not just a social problem for women, but has implications for women’s equal access to higher education as well. If the fear of rape results in behavioral restrictions which create obstacles to women’s educational development -- the inability to study, attend lectures, concerts or take night classes -- then women’s education is significantly disadvantaged. Certainly administrators of higher

education cannot be expected to eliminate the fear of rape altogether. In fact, fear of rape probably does, to some extent, result in a reduced risk of victimization for women.

However, there are several things that college administrators should do to help reduce both rape and fear of rape on college campuses, including:

1. Establish more rape awareness/education classes aimed at men as well as women.

For years, women have had to bear the onus of responsibility for protecting themselves against rape. As this research demonstrates, all this fear and precautionary use has extraordinary social, emotional, and even educational costs for women. In reality, however, it is men who choose to rape, and it is men who ultimately must bear the responsibility for ending it. If we are to end rape, then men should be taught to take responsibility for their actions as well. Men should be educated about what rape is and how they can stop it. In this regard, rape awareness classes should be a required part of first year orientation for *men* as well as women. College men should be made aware of the types of situations which might make them more likely to become perpetrators of rape, men should be taught that “no means no” and they should learn how to communicate honestly about issues relating to sexuality.

2. Prosecute rape attempts which occur on campus. Most feminists would argue that a large part of women’s fear of rape is attributable to the fact that rape is often not prosecuted to the fullest extent. Rape is not treated as a real crime. This is especially true in university settings. Often colleges are more concerned with the maintenance of the school’s reputation than with prosecuting a known rape offender -- especially if the rapist is a fellow student and/or if the rape is an acquaintance rape. Frequently, student

offenders receive no formal legal punishment, and often no campus punishment as well (Warshaw 1988: 147-150). In order to help diminish women's fears, rape must be taken seriously on college campuses. If colleges are to successfully deter rape on campus, we must increase the cost to men of committing rape. Rape must be viewed in the same way as any other serious personal crime that takes place on campus and should be reported to both the campus and local police departments where every effort should be made to seriously prosecute the offender. When men are punished for committing rape on campus (and beyond), women will have less to fear.

3. Take women's fear seriously. Given the findings of this survey, it is clear that women are deeply concerned about being attacked on their college campus, and they employ a large number of precautions to prevent attack. Forty-two percent of women indicate that they feel that it is very likely that a person might be raped on the VPI & SU campus. Fifty percent of women are fearful to very fearful that a rape might happen to them while they are on campus. College administrators must realize that these women are not simply paranoid, but responding to a serious threat that may be reduced by the use of precautions like those outlined above. College women have used precautions to avoid crime for years, it's time that colleges did as well. Perhaps if universities begin to take more serious precautions to deter rape, we can eliminate both the fear and reality of rape on college campuses.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

Unfortunately, few of the findings of this thesis are surprising. Women clearly have good reason to fear. Despite the women's movement and various advancements in

the social, political, and economic well-being of women, rape is still a crime that reduces all women to its victims. This thesis demonstrates that the fear of rape is a logical reaction to a very real threat. Statistics, presented here and elsewhere, indicate that approximately one in four women will be the victim of rape or attempted rape in their lifetimes. Women both consciously and unconsciously carry these statistics, as well as stories of the rape attacks of friends, relatives, acquaintances and strangers as they walk through life. These nightmarish statistics and stories of rape lead women to fear, and this fear is concretely manifested in the behavioral restrictions and crime avoidance behaviors that become a part of their daily routine. As this thesis demonstrates, the fear of rape results in making women's everyday lives more than just "problematic" (Smith 1987), but confines and defines the quality of women's lives.

Appendix Part I - TABLES

Table 1A: Descriptive Statistics for the Whole Sample

Variable	Mean	Range
Intensity	30.91 (12.45)	3-64
Number of precautions	11.19 (5.35)	3-25
Acquaintance Rape Fear	8.65 (3.47)	5-20
Stranger Rape Fear	11.52 (3.77)	5-20
Fear of rape	1.99 (1.07)	1-4
Fear of assault	1.94 (0.80)	1-4
N	217	

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

Table 1B: Descriptive Statistics for Women

Variable	Mean	Range
Intensity	37.55 (9.90)	14-64
Number of precautions	13.85 (4.66)	3-25
Acquaintance Rape Fear	10.51 (3.13)	5-20
Stranger Rape Fear	13.45 (3.15)	5-20
Fear of rape	2.61 (.93)	1-4
Fear of assault	2.08 (.85)	1-4
N	132	

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations

APPENDIX TABLES 2A-2B

TABLE 2A: Comparison of Mean Acquaintance Fear Levels for Women and Men

	MEAN LEVEL OF ACQUAINTANCE FEAR	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
WOMEN	10.51	15.71	.001
MEN	5.73		

TABLE 2B: Comparison of Mean Stranger Fear Levels for Women and Men

	MEAN LEVEL OF STRANGER FEAR	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
WOMEN	13.45	13.55	.001
MEN	8.37		

APPENDIX TABLE 3

TABLE 3: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF CRIME MOST FEARED FOR WOMEN, MEN, AND THE TOTAL SAMPLE

	ROBBERY	BURGLARY	RAPE	ASSAULT	OTHER
WOMEN	4.6 (6)	16.8 (22)	64.1 (84)	9.9 (13)	4.6 (6)
MEN	9.6 (8)	51.8 (43)	0.0 (0)	32.5 (27)	6 (5)
TOTAL	6.5 (14)	30.4 (65)	39.3 (84)	18.7 (40)	5.1 (11)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX TABLES 4A-4B

TABLE 4A: COMPARISON OF MEAN NUMBER OF PRECAUTIONS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

	MEAN # OF PRECAUTIONS	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
WOMEN	13.85	12.39	.001
MEN	7.14		

TABLE 4B: COMPARISON OF MEAN INTENSITY OF PRECAUTIONS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

	MEAN # OF PRECAUTIONS	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
WOMEN	37.55	13.59	.001
MEN	20.85		

APPENDIX TABLES 5A-5C

TABLE 5A: COMPARISON OF MEAN LEVELS OF FEAR OF RAPE FOR WOMEN WITH PREVIOUS RAPE VICTIMIZATION AND WITHOUT RAPE VICTIMIZATION

	MEAN FEAR OF RAPE	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
RAPE VICTIMIZATION	3.03	3.00	.01
NO RAPE VICTIMIZATION	2.48		

TABLE 5B: COMPARISON OF MEAN NUMBER OF PRECAUTIONS FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN RAPED COMPARED TO WOMEN WHO HAVE NOT BEEN RAPED

	MEAN # OF PRECAUTIONS	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
RAPE VICTIMIZATION	14.87	1.40	0.16
NO RAPE VICTIMIZATION	13.53		

TABLE 5C: COMPARISON OF MEAN INTENSITY OF PRECAUTIONS FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN RAPED COMPARED TO WOMEN WHO HAVE NOT BEEN RAPED

	MEAN # OF PRECAUTIONS	T-VALUE	PROBABILITY
RAPE VICTIMIZATION	38.48	0.49	0.63
NO RAPE VICTIMIZATION	37.27		

APPENDIX TABLE 6A

Table 6A. Correlations for women on relevant variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) NUMBER OF PRECAUTIONS	1.00	-	-	-	-	-
(2) INTENSITY	.94***	1.00	-	-	-	-
(3) ACQUAINTANCE RAPE FEAR	.54***	.53***	1.00	-	-	-
(4) STRANGER RAPE FEAR	.63***	.61***	.61***	1.00	-	-
(5) RAPE	.11	.05	.17	.07	1.00	-
(6) FEAR OF RAPE	.40***	.36	.31***	.47***	.25**	1.00

*N= 132 ; Significant levels: * .05, ** .01, ***.001.*

APPENDIX TABLE 6B

TABLE 6B. Regression Models For Women
On Number Of Precautions

VARIABLE	MODEL 1	MODEL 2
ACQUAINTANCE FEAR	0.23** (0.35)	0.19* (0.28)
STRANGER FEAR	0.44*** (0.65)	0.41*** (0.60)
RAPE	0.03 (0.27)	-0.03 (-0.37)
FEAR OF RAPE	0.11 (0.55)	0.03 (0.13)
ASSAULT		0.16* (2.06)
FEAR OF ASSAULT		0.15 (0.82)
CONSTANT	.0173	.5057
R ²	.4492	.4910

* p < .05 , ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Note: Unstandardized regression coefficient is in parentheses.

Appendix Part II - Survey

**Fear of Crime at Virginia Tech:
A Survey of Student Attitudes**

- Fall 1994 -



Department of Sociology
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University
Blacksburg, VA 24061

FEAR OF CRIME QUESTIONNAIRE

A Note about the format of this Survey: Most of the questions in this survey will consist of describing various situations which might occur in and around the Virginia Tech campus and then asking you to assess your fear in those situations. Other questions will focus on aspects such as crime prevention techniques and awareness. There will also be a few more sensitive questions that will deal with whether or not you or someone you know has been a victim of particular crimes.

- We realize that crime is a sensitive issue. If you begin to feel uncomfortable, please remember that you can stop at any time -

In this first section, we are interested in your fears of having your property stolen. Remember: we are interested in your *fear* of having your property stolen -- not whether you think it will actually happen.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF FEAR IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS BY BLACKENING THE NUMBER CORRESPONDING TO YOUR ANSWER ON YOUR OPSCAN FORM.

1. How fearful are you of having your property stolen when you **are not** at home?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

2. How fearful are you of having your property stolen from you when you **are** at home?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

3. Imagine that you are walking across the drill field at night. How fearful would you be of having your backpack/wallet/or purse stolen from you?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

4. Imagine that you have a car. If you left your car unlocked in front of Burruss Hall, how fearful would you be of having your car stolen?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

5. Imagine that you are in Newman library. You consider leaving your backpack or purse on a table to check for a book in the shelves. How fearful are you of having your backpack/purse stolen?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

In this next section, we are interested in assessing your fears of crime in different situations involving both strangers and acquaintances. Remember: we are interested in your general *fear* of crime - not whether you think it will actually happen.

6. Imagine that you are jogging around the Duck Pond at 11:30 on a Sunday night. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

7. Imagine that you are at a campus party and a male friend keeps encouraging you to drink increasing amounts of alcohol. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

8. Imagine that you are invited on a blind date and your date wants to go for a picnic in the country. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

9. Imagine that you are in an elevator in McBryde at 11:00 p.m. and a man you do not know enters the elevator. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

10. Imagine that you are looking for a ride home for Thanksgiving and a man you know from your sociology class offers to drive you. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

11. Imagine that you go to a downtown Blacksburg bar with friends. You meet someone you are attracted to and he/she invites you to his/her apartment to talk. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

12. Imagine that you are walking down College Avenue after dark and a group of men across the street begin to loudly comment on your clothing and your body. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

13. Imagine that you are walking to your car alone after a night spent studying at the library. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

14. Imagine that you become very drunk at a campus party, all your friends have left, and the host - a male friend of a friend - offers to let you spend the night. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL

4 - VERY FEARFUL

15. Imagine that you are home alone on a weeknight and someone knocks on the door, you look through the peephole and discover that it is a **man** you do not know. He says his car broke down and asks if he can come in and use your phone. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

16. Imagine that you are home alone on a weeknight and someone knocks on the door, you look through the peephole and discover that it is a **woman** you do not know. She says her car broke down and asks if she can come in and use your phone. How fearful would you be of becoming the victim of crime?

- 1 - NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

In this next section we are interested in the precautions that you take to protect yourself from crime.

PLEASE INDICATE THE NUMBER OF THE ANSWER THAT BEST DESCRIBES HOW OFTEN YOU EMPLOY EACH PRECAUTION ON YOUR OPSCAN FORM.

REMEMBER: WE ARE CONCERNED HERE WITH PRECAUTIONS YOU SPECIFICALLY TAKE TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CRIME.

1 = NEVER 2 = RARELY 3 = SOMETIMES 4 = FREQUENTLY 5 = NOT APPLICABLE
--

- 17. How often do you lock the car doors when you are in your/someone else's car?
- 18. How often do you lock the door to your dorm/residence when you are **not** home?
- 19. How often do you make sure to walk with someone when you walk to your car after dark?
- 20. How often do you try to avoid isolated areas on campus?
- 21. How often do you avoid strangers in and around campus?
- 22. How often do you alter your personal appearance (e.g. wearing more conservative clothing, wearing sneakers instead of dress shoes, etc.) when you go out?

23. How often do you check to see if someone is following you when you are walking, jogging, hiking, biking, etc. around Blacksburg?
24. How often do you avoid giving out your telephone number, address, or other personal information to people around Blacksburg?
25. How often do you carry a personal safety device such as mace, a whistle, an alarm, pepper spray, etc. when you are in and around campus?
26. How often do you lock the door to your dorm/residence when you are at home?
27. How often do you carry a weapon such as knife, gun, etc. with you when you are in and around campus?
28. How often do you limit your outdoor workout i.e. jogging, walking, biking, etc. to daytime hours to avoid crime?
29. How often do you avoid using public transportation after dark?
30. How often do you avoid situations in which you may be alone and/or isolated with someone you do not know well?
31. How often do you lock the windows of your dorm/residence?
32. How often do you tell your roommate(s)/friend(s) when you will be returning home?
33. How often do you avoid being out alone after dark around Blacksburg?
34. How often do you try to walk confidently when you are walking alone around campus?
35. How often do you avoid going to movies, lectures, or concerts on campus by yourself?
36. How often do you check the back seat of the car before you get in?
37. How often do you make sure to bring "emergency money" with you when you go out?
38. How often do you avoid doing personal tasks alone after dark (i.e. grocery shopping, laundry, etc.) ?

In this section we are again interested in specific precautions you have taken to avoid crime.

39. Have you ever bought a dog to protect yourself from crime?
 - 1 - YES
 - 2 - NO
40. Have you ever placed only your first initial and last name in the telephone book to protect yourself from crime?
 - 1 - YES
 - 2 - NO

41. Have you ever purchased a gun to protect yourself from crime?

1 - YES

2 - NO

42. Have you ever avoided jobs that require you to work late at night to protect yourself from crime?

1 - YES

2 - NO

43. Have you ever practiced self-defense techniques (such as karate, judo, or taking a class in self-defense) to protect yourself from crime?

1 - YES

2 - NO

44. Have you ever placed only your last name and/or initials on your mailbox to protect yourself from crime?

1 - YES

2 - NO

45. Have you ever avoided taking classes at night to protect yourself from crime?

1 - YES

2 - NO

46. Have you ever selected an apartment or dorm which is located on an upper floor to protect yourself from crime?

1 - YES

2 - NO

In this section, we are interested in whether or not you or someone you know has been the victim of a crime.

47. Have you ever had your property stolen when you were not there (e.g. been the victim of burglary, break-in, etc.)?

1 - YES

2 - NO

48. Have you ever been physically assaulted (e.g. punched, stabbed, kicked, etc.)?

1 - YES

2 - NO

49. Have you ever been forced to engage in sexual activity against your will?

1 - YES

2 - NO

50. Do you know someone close to you (i.e. a friend or relative) who has been raped?
- 1 - YES
 - 2 - NO

51. Have you ever had your wallet, backpack, or purse stolen from you while you were carrying them with you?
- 1 - YES
 - 2 - NO

In this next section, we would like to know what you feel the likelihood is that a person might be the victim of different crimes in and around the Tech campus.

52. How likely do you feel it is that a person might be the victim of a robbery (having property directly stolen from them) in and around the Tech campus?
- 1 - NOT AT ALL LIKELY
 - 2 - SOMEWHAT LIKELY
 - 3 - VERY LIKELY

53. How likely do you feel it is that a person might be the victim of a rape (being forced to engage in sexual activity against their will) in and around the Tech campus?
- 1 - NOT AT ALL LIKELY
 - 2 - SOMEWHAT LIKELY
 - 3 - VERY LIKELY

54. How likely do you feel it is that a person might be the victim of a physical assault (e.g. punching, stabbing, kicking, etc.) in and around the Tech campus?
- 1 - NOT AT ALL LIKELY
 - 2 - SOMEWHAT LIKELY
 - 3 - VERY LIKELY

In this section, we would like to know your fear of particular crimes happening to you.

55. Which of the following crimes are you most fearful will happen to you while you are a student at Virginia Tech?
- 1 - ROBBERY (having property directly stolen from you)
 - 2 - BURGLARY (having property stolen from you when you are not present)
 - 3 - RAPE (being forced to engage in sexual activity against your will)
 - 4 - ASSAULT (being punched, stabbed, kicked, etc.)
 - 5 - OTHER

56. How fearful are you of being robbed (having property directly stolen from you) while you are a student at Tech?

- 1- NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

57. How fearful are you of being burglarized (having property stolen from you when you are not present) while you are a student at Tech?

- 1- NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

58. How fearful are you of being raped (being forced to engage in sexual activity against your will) while you are a student at Tech?

- 1- NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

59. How fearful are you of being assaulted (being punched, stabbed, kicked, etc.) while you are a student at Tech?

- 1- NOT FEARFUL
- 2 - SOMEWHAT FEARFUL
- 3 - FEARFUL
- 4 - VERY FEARFUL

In this section, we would like to know how safe you feel on the Virginia Tech campus.

60. In general, how safe do you feel on the Virginia Tech campus?

- 1 - VERY SAFE
- 2 - REASONABLY SAFE
- 3 - SOMEWHAT UNSAFE
- 4 - VERY UNSAFE

61. How safe do you feel when you are out alone on the Tech campus after dark?

- 1 - VERY SAFE
- 2 - REASONABLY SAFE
- 3 - SOMEWHAT UNSAFE
- 4 - VERY UNSAFE
- 5 - I NEVER GO OUT ALONE AFTER DARK

In this next section we are concerned with your awareness of various crime awareness/prevention efforts that are currently employed at the Virginia Tech campus.

62. Have you read about crimes that have occurred on/around the Virginia Tech campus in the Tech newspapers?

1 - YES

2 - NO

63. Classes on rape awareness are sometimes offered at Virginia Tech. Have you ever taken a class on rape awareness?

1 - YES

2 - NO

64. Blue emergency phones/lights have recently been installed around the Virginia Tech campus. Do they make you feel safer as you walk around campus?

1 - YES

2 - NO

3 - I WAS NOT AWARE THAT EMERGENCY PHONES WERE INSTALLED

In this last section, we would like to know a little more about you and your background.

65. Please indicate your gender:

1 - MALE

2 - FEMALE

66. What is your Academic level ?

1 - FIRST YEAR

2 - SOPHOMORE

3 - JUNIOR

4 - SENIOR

5 - GRADUATE STUDENT

6 - OTHER

67. What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself?

1 - BLACK OR AFRICAN-AMERICAN

2 - HISPANIC

3 - ASIAN AMERICAN OR ASIAN

4 - WHITE, NON-HISPANIC

5- OTHER

68. Which of the following best describes the area that you came from before you came to Virginia Tech?

- 1 - RURAL
- 2 - SUBURBAN
- 3 - SMALL CITY/TOWN
- 4 - URBAN/LARGE CITY

69. What is your age?

- 1. 16-19
- 2. 20-23
- 3. 24-27
- 4. 28-31
- 5. 32 or over

70. What are your living arrangements?

- 1 - LIVE ALONE
- 2 - HAVE ROOMMATE/S

71. What type of housing do you live in?

- 1 - DORMITORY
- 2 - OFF-CAMPUS APARTMENT
- 3 - HOUSE
- 4 - TOWNHOUSE/DUPLEX
- 5 - MOBILE HOME

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