

ONE

Introduction

Do you remember the first time?

Claire, a White British woman in her mid-thirties, was seven years old the first time. She was going to a party at her primary school but had forgotten to tell her parents it was fancy dress until the very last minute. Determined to make her something to wear, they rushed around the house, found a bin bag, and worked it into an outfit.

So bin bag liner went to school. It was dark on the way back and it must have looked to someone going past like I was wearing a mini leather skirt or something because they wound the window down and went ‘Wahay!’ I remember thinking, what’s that? Like what *is* that? I don’t understand what that is? This was a very small estate where I grew up so I probably wouldn’t have been more than about 200 metres from school. It was dark, the middle of winter, but it only would have been six o’clock in the evening, seven o’clock at the latest. I think that we probably had freedom at that age more than typical eight or nine year olds would now where everyone’s getting picked up and there’s always an adult to escort kids around. That risk.

Anyway, I vaguely remember everyone getting really angry about it and almost a kind of, ‘That’s because it’s too short. That’s why, it’s because of what you were wearing.’ So there was an anger at how dare

these people do this but combined with an, ‘Oh that would be the reason why, it’s because it looks like you’re wearing a short skirt.’ So they shouldn’t have done it but come on you’ve got to think about this as well. It was almost an equal weighting.

Delilah, a Black African woman in her mid-twenties, was older when it first happened, sixteen and self-conscious. She had been told she was overweight as a child and it had really knocked her confidence. When she was in her teens she started to lose weight and had gone out of her way to find a gym class she really liked.

I remember being on the bus, leaving the gym just reading a book and sitting there and the guy in front of me turned around and started talking to me. And I just thought it can’t be at me so I kept reading. Then he said, ‘Are you ok? I’m talking to you.’ So I said, ‘Oh no I’m sorry, I don’t know you.’ And he said, ‘I just thought we could get to know each other.’ I’m like, ‘No sorry, I don’t really want to get to know strangers.’ And then when I got off at my stop he got off as well. That’s when I thought, ok it’s really dark.

This guy just walked next to me on my way home and I had to actually take a really roundabout route – make sure I was always on a main road and that I wasn’t actually heading home. Which really annoyed me because I just wanted to go home, I didn’t want to have to lead someone up and down the road. I asked him to leave me alone but he just kept on, the whole way he was talking to me going, ‘I don’t know why you won’t talk to strangers. Strangers are only friends you haven’t made yet.’ Basically insinuating that I was being very rude and should give him the time of day and I was just very actively walking and then eventually I said, ‘Leave me alone or I’ll scream.’ At this point I was next to a hospital and it was really busy outside and so I think he thought she means it, and he went and scurried back home.

I completely stopped going to that exercise class actually because it was at that time of night. I just thought I'd rather go earlier, go straight after school. Which is a shame because it was such a good class, but I just thought I don't want to have to run into him again or anyone else who might want to follow me.

I remember the first time it happened to me, or the first time that I remember. I lived on the same street as my primary school, and my best friend would get dropped at my house so we could walk there together. On one of these walks, or maybe on the way home, we'd made a detour through the park on the corner. I'm guessing we'd stopped to get sweets of some sort as there was a shop on the edge of the park. We would have been nine or maybe eight, under ten for sure as after that she left for another school. And walking through the park one day a man, I picture him in a trench coat, flashed us. It's this strange kind of murky memory. I remember the light more than him. We were in this little dark patch but on the other side the trees cleared and it was bright startling light. I think we knew even then to just keep walking, to not tell anyone, to laugh it off. I'd forgotten completely actually until part way through the study this book is based on, when I called her and asked if it happened. It had, she said. She thought it had. She'd forgotten too. What's the point in remembering?

Small interruptions, ordinary intrusions. Shocking only because they happened too early, or because we see the consequence; the way they change our behaviour. At the time these play out as so trivial, so common, we learn to forget them. Nothing *really* happened. Like Claire, like Delilah, we make changes ourselves, to what we wear, to where we go. Learn to keep an eye on the possible. Hope it won't happen again.

And what about you? If you're a woman reading this, when is the first time that you remember attention from an unknown man in public? Being told to cheer up, being stared at, a whistle, a car horn, a comment, followed, touched? Singled out from all those that now you've learnt to block or manage. Maybe forgotten like mine, made less important as we learn that it's all just part of growing up. What about all the times that you're

not sure – you think that man might be staring at you but you couldn't say for certain. Don't want to be thought of as narcissistic. Don't want to be called paranoid. But maybe, you think, I'll just cross the road, duck into the shop, catch the next bus. Can't be certain, don't know for sure, but I'll walk a bit faster, just in case.

Maybe like Lucy, a White British woman in her early twenties, you've pulled out your phone to avoid being stared at, called someone to avoid being spoken to, stopped when you get off the bus, not sure if he's following, but you wait back to see. The work of being a woman in public.

I try not to look at people, like I look at them to see where they are and who they are but I don't look at them in the eye. I look straight ahead. And a lot of the time if I'm walking late at night I carry my keys between my hand, so I can stab. I think my mum's friend told us to do that. And try to stand quite big as though I'm tough and can handle myself. And don't really respond to people. If someone says something sometimes what I try to do is be quite polite but stop the interaction quickly, because I don't want to make them angry as well. So I've got to be polite but not too polite that they want to continue talking to me. And walk very fast, look like I know what I'm doing.

Sometimes I pretend to talk on the phone. Me and my friends a lot of the time will ring each other the whole way home, so both of you talking while you're walking to different places. And every time we leave somewhere you have to text everyone to say you got home and if you don't one of the girls will get really worried. Then sometimes I'll just pretend to talk on the phone, if no one's awake or it's really late. Also I try not to sit next to a man. Because I've had people on public transport grabbing or touching you, but I'm never sure if they're actually doing it or, like a lot of the time the tube's really packed and I feel like, 'Is that guy touching me?', but I'm not really sure if he is. You don't know what's going on. Oh and

I always make sure, it's really weird but if someone gets off at the same stop as me, I always think they're following me. So I try and stop or maybe that's when I pretend to phone someone, or I look in my bag so then they'll go in front.

Maybe like Becky, also White British and in her early twenties, you've told them to fuck off, changed buses when you didn't need to, crossed the street, avoided eye contact.

It's one of those things where if I had to I would cross the street to avoid them, play with my phone. I do that with lots of men that I think might say something. I'll try to cross the street but again you don't want to make it obvious that you're crossing the street because of them, because that in itself can attract their attention if you did that. I never make eye contact, I just look straight ahead where I'm going. I have responded in the past with 'fuck off you pervert', which often works with men in vans but then they often yell back, then you'll get, 'You're a prude', 'You're frigid'. It happened to me recently where someone sat down next to me and he was staring at me, drunkenly staring at me, and I was trying not to make eye contact with him and he kept trying to talk to me and I was just ignoring him and in the end I just got off the bus because I didn't want to be in that situation. Which was an annoying thing to do because then I had to wait for another one which isn't ideal but I just didn't want to stay there.

Despite the commonality, or perhaps because of it, we rarely even think about the things we do. We don't talk about the habitual, sometimes unconscious, choices and changes we make daily to maintain a sense of safety in public space. The list so many of us have like Lucy and Becky. Different tactics, similar reasons. Or if we do talk about it we concentrate on the big decisions rather than on our ordinary resistance. We find it even harder to speak about possibility, this could all be in my head. He

might just be walking the same way as me, I'm probably being stupid. It's nothing. How many times as women, as girls, have we thought this, dismissed this, always uncertain? How often have we second guessed others, second guessed ourselves, trying to read the behaviour of unknown men? Maybe a lot, maybe hardly ever. As Katie-Lou, a White British woman in her late twenties, explains, we're trapped either way.

I suppose you just have to get on with it, don't you, because there's nothing really you can do. You have no way of knowing whether in that kind of situation, well I wouldn't know if anything actually was going to happen. So it's not like you can say – and this is the kind of thing that men won't appreciate – because I would say to my boyfriend, in fact I did say to my boyfriend, 'Some guy was walking with a piece of wood and slowing down', and he just thinks I'm imagining it, just like, 'Oh isn't she melodramatic'. But you know, you try it and see how you feel. I suppose it's conflicting messages isn't it? It's take care of yourself but then if you imagine that someone is maybe a danger you're being a silly woman. You have to do just the right amount of panicking don't you?

Claire and Delilah, Lucy and Becky, me, Katie-Lou – like most of the women I have spoken to – don't want to think of ourselves as constantly on guard. Scanning our environment, scared. We were, we are, powerful, intelligent, *empowered*, 21st century women right? We'd loudly proclaim a woman should be able to walk anywhere, wear anything, be anyone, without fear of violence. And we'd mean it. I mean we should, right? We should. But we don't. Not really.

When we think about it, how often are we thinking about *it*. That unspoken possibility. That known reality. We change ourselves, subtly, slightly. Small decisions to limit the chance. Sometimes, screw it, we choose to act differently. Take the shortcut. Stay and loiter. All of us just trying to find the right amount of panic.

This book wants to change that.

The Right Amount of Panic is about the safety work that women do daily in response to the reality and possibility of violence, harassment and interruption from unknown men in public spaces. It is about the fact that ultimately there is no *right* amount of panic, there's only ever too much or not enough, and with no way to know when we're getting it right, we're left unable to measure success. Trapped inside a catch-22, giving up our freedom and blamed regardless. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Before we can change something, we need to understand it. Luckily, across the world, a number of women have been working to do just this.

The problem with no name

From large-scale studies to online and offline activism, we're starting to get a sense of the extent of the harassment that women and girls face in public. Often most common during women's adolescence, from the ubiquitous 'smile' or 'cheer up' to flashing, following and frottage (men rubbing their penis against women and girls in crowded spaces), such practices are frequently dismissed as harmless expressions of free speech, everyday annoyances, or too ambiguous to legislate against. And yet they comprise a huge amount of women's everyday experiences, as research is starting to show.

One of the most influential studies ever conducted on the issue was by a sociologist called Carol Brooks Gardner in the mid-1990s in the US.¹ Based on extensive research including in-depth interviews with nearly 500 women and men, Gardner found that all of the 293 women who participated reported experiencing some form of public harassment, and all but nine regarded it as 'troublesome'. Around the same time, another study conducted in London found that approximately 40% of women had been stared at, approached, followed or spoken to during the survey year.² Since these, a number of studies have attempted to record how common it is for women and girls to be interrupted by unknown men in public. Polling conducted across a number of countries found that at least 80% of women living in cities in Brazil, India, and Thailand have been subjected to harassment or violence in public.³ Studies from Australia and Afghanistan

both suggest that 90% of women have experienced physical or verbal harassment in public at least once in their lives, while studies from Canada and Egypt have found that 85% of women have experienced some form of what is most commonly called ‘street harassment’ in just the past year.⁴ Alongside this, one of the largest multi-country surveys on violence against women and girls was completed in 2014 with 42,000 women across member states of the European Union. It found that just over half of the women surveyed had experienced sexual harassment at least once in their life, and that almost half had restricted their freedom of movement based on the fear of gender-based violence.⁵

But even these figures may not be truly representative.⁶ Different studies measure different things, we forget so much that happens, and sometimes it’s all so ambiguous – ‘this could be in my head’ – that we dismiss it anyway. This is where social media has stepped in to dramatically increase what we know about the forms and contexts of street harassment – how it happens – as well as more about what it feels like, providing validation and support for the experience. Two of the most well-known online forums for this are in the US.⁷ In 2005, Emily May established what was to become the international *Hollaback!* movement, starting off as an online blog dedicated to collecting the stories of street harassment. *Hollaback!* now has chapters in over 30 countries, providing training, conducting research, and developing safety apps, including for online abuse. In 2008, Holly Kearn also started a blogging site, *Stop Street Harassment*, which has grown into a dedicated resource hub for research on street harassment, as well as launching in 2011 the international ‘Anti-Street Harassment Week’, and in 2016 a national street harassment hotline for support and information.

The use of online platforms to help understand street harassment extends beyond the United States. For example, in 2010 Rebecca Chiao launched *Harassmap* in Egypt as a way of changing the social attitudes that support the sexual harassment of women in public.⁸ The project has now been adopted in over 25 countries. It works as an anonymous reporting and mapping system, with those experiencing street harassment, as well as anyone who witnesses it, able to send a text documenting what happened and where. The map and reports are used to create

educational material which informs workshops and training taking place offline. *Harassmap* volunteers work with large and small businesses, transport companies, and schools and universities to help initiate and implement a zero-tolerance policy against sexual harassment in their spaces. This use of online reports to influence offline campaigning is also seen in England where, in 2012, Laura Bates started a small blogging site called *Everyday Sexism* to catalogue instances of sexism experienced on a day to day basis.⁹ Initially hoping to document 100 women's stories, the project now has well over 100,000 accounts of the experiences of women and girls, and has been replicated in over 20 countries. The collective weight of these individual experiences has been used by Bates and women's anti-violence groups to successfully influence UK policy on areas such as transport and education.

The growing evidence from these online spaces is combining with research showing just how common harassment is in women's lives, to help validate experiences that were previously dismissed as unimportant or inevitable. This is fuelling a groundswell of women's resistance and activism, something that is spilling over into public spaces themselves. After realising just how few women she saw in Karachi's public spaces, Sadia Khatri started one of Pakistan's fastest growing feminist movements, *Girls at Dhabas*.¹⁰ It began with Khatri posting a photo of her at a local Dhaba (roadside cafes popular in Pakistan), with the hashtag #girlsatdhabas. After posting photos like this for a few weeks, sometimes with commentary and sometimes as stand-alone images, she started to notice other girls and women were posting their own photos. Soon women from other countries were joining in, and researchers who had conducted a study on women in Mumbai's public spaces got in contact to say they had found something similar – that women were restricting their own access in public space; that they weren't just hanging out in public with no purpose or reason in the same way many men did.¹¹ The two groups joined forces and the *WhyLoiter?* movement spread, with women encouraged, once a week, to gather in public places and just ... well ... loiter.

The Katswe Sistahood, a movement of young women fighting for the full attainment of women's sexual and reproductive health rights in Zimbabwe, also brought attention to the issues through

public action, leading a powerful demonstration in 2014 against the public heckling and harassment of women.¹² The protest began partly in response to the experience of a young woman who was stripped publicly at a kombi (minibus) rank in Harare, by men who claimed that they did it because her skirt was too short. Dubbed the ‘mini-skirt march’, the demonstration marked the beginning of the Katswe Sistahood’s campaign to reclaim public spaces for women, making a clear statement against the policing of women’s clothing choices and supporting their rights to bodily autonomy and freedom of movement. Back in the US, Brooklyn-based artist Tatyana Fazlalizadeh is creating street art to issue a direct challenge to perpetrators.¹³ In the fall of 2012, Fazlalizadeh created the first poster, a sketch of herself with the caption ‘Stop Telling Women to Smile’, and pasted it across the city. She has since invited other women to be drawn, with their illustrated image used alongside messages speaking directing to men in public space such as ‘harassing women does not prove your masculinity’. Many women have now taken part in cities including Paris and Mexico City, with the focus mainly on women of colour in response to how the conversation around street harassment has been dominated by white women.

These are just a few examples; however, taken together they demonstrate the ways that the experience of public sexual harassment is finally moving into the spotlight. No longer easily ignored as a trivial occurrence, it is starting to be recognised as a serious issue affecting the freedom of women and girls worldwide. So far, the movement has focused on raising awareness of the range and extent of men’s practices, as well as highlighting the impact and calling for change. What remains largely unexamined is the range and extent of women’s responses. Even taking the most conservative estimate that two in three women have experienced this kind of harassment in public, it is surprising that there has been so little interest in how women manage both the possibility and the reality of intrusive male strangers. With so much safety advice focused on telling women what to do to be safe (to be discussed in more detail during Chapter Three), there doesn’t seem to have been much space to find out what we’re actually already doing. This is the absence this book seeks to address.

Understanding safety work

The research this book draws on was conducted in the United Kingdom, involving 50 women from different age groups and backgrounds taking part in a three stage process of talking with me about their experiences of men in public, and then keeping a notebook over a period of two weeks to two months of different things they experienced in public spaces from unknown men.¹⁴ We met up again at the end of this to go through what they had recorded, reflect on what they had said initially, and try to work out what we could say about it all.

The process asked a lot of the women who took part, from remembering and sharing previous experiences to actively challenging themselves to notice the amount of intrusion they experienced during the course of the study and the work they were doing because of it. This book is a tribute to their commitment, openness and generosity, as well as to the transformative possibilities of feminist research. Though a range of women took part, from different backgrounds, at different ages, and with a lot of different experiences, comparing their testimonies revealed some particular commonalities. Everyone had experienced unknown men in public space intruding, interrupting and harassing them at different times in their day and at different points across their lives, something that is to be expected for women who wanted to take part in this kind of study. Because of these experiences, those of friends, and what they'd read and heard, all of the women were also making habitual decisions about where to go or how to get there, what to wear or where to look, often without even thinking about it – not so much a choice as just 'what you do'. Again, this wasn't the biggest surprise, we all know that women do this, so much so that it's treated as common sense. The unexpected part was when women kept the notebooks, recording encounters and feelings, and reported back. For almost all of the women who used the notebook, they found significantly less *happening* than they initially thought, and yet were *doing* substantially more.

When I first met Alice, a White British woman in her mid-twenties, she spoke about how frequent men's intrusion was. She told me that she felt like she "can't leave the house without

feeling constantly like I'm being bombarded by all these men". After completing her notebook however, she noticed a distinct difference, something that surprised us both:

I think it was a feeling that didn't actually manifest as much as I thought it would. I feel scared and aware of myself and wary of men but whether, does that come to fruition? Not really to the same extent. Certainly not on a level I would describe as bombardment ... but it feels like that because the threat level is technically, well the threat is always there.

For Abbey, a White American in her early twenties, it was the same.

I think it was interesting that I don't get as many comments or as much staring as I thought I was getting. I think I maybe even said when we first talked that it would be weird if a day went by without this kind of interaction happening, but actually it doesn't happen every single day, or I might get some looks but nothing that would make me adapt my behaviour, that only happens every couple of days. So I definitely noticed that ... It feels like it's happening every day because I'm always preparing myself for it to happen.

While the forms and frequencies of men's harassment of women may be different across the world, the work that women perform in order to limit it is constant. In short, a lot of women are significantly restricting their activities, limiting their freedom, in order to feel safe enough to be in public without being interrupted. It's here that we start to see the full consequences of those apparently trivial or minor annoyances. All those studies I mentioned earlier, 80% of women, 90% of women, all this research and online testimony speaks mostly to what has happened. What about the threat and the preparation, the way we adapt our behaviour? Where and how are we recording what we do to stop it happening at all?

As shown in the research that inspired the *WhyLoiter?* movement, one of the most common ways that women and

girls cope is simply by removing themselves from public. A well-known study in Seattle found that 42% of women had avoided going out alone as a result of their fear of crime, in comparison to just 9% of men.¹⁵ However, such avoidance strategies are not the only way that women change their behaviour. A poll conducted in 2016 showed that almost half of all women in the UK take a range of precautionary and diversionary measures while in public space itself – looking down, wearing headphones, dressing in dark colours – measures that often take place without much notice or fuss, absorbed as part of just what it is to be a woman in public.¹⁶ This kind of work is not unique to the UK. In an autobiographical study, Iranian woman Fae Chubin, vividly describes the work she does in Tehran's public spaces:

The sun is relentlessly shining over my head and directly into my eyes, making me scowl even more than I've planned to. I walk down this long, wide usually crowded street of North Tehran, avoiding glancing at the kaleidoscope of colorful dresses displayed behind each shop window. I, again, hopelessly search into my big messy brown bag to look for my sunglasses and to realize for the second time that it is not there. 'It's ok', I think to myself as I make a ninety degree turn into a bizarrely uncrowded street to take a detour, 'it would ruin the plan anyways.' You see, it is part of the plan; not to look around, walk kind of fast, show this intense sour look while you frown a little, making everyone know you are not the type of woman they can joke around with. This is the walk I have designed and developed through these years; the one that, so I think, would help keep me out of trouble in the streets.¹⁷

It is a similar plan to one used in the UK by Shelley, a British Asian woman in her early thirties.

You've got to give off this vibe that you're just completely not interested in anyone or you're busy or on a mission going somewhere, doing something, you can't just be. You've got to have a look with you or look as if you're aggressive so people think,

‘Oh she’s probably not an easy target, I’ll leave her alone’. Because as soon as I started doing that and realising I’ve just got to look like I’m a bit of a bitch, people stopped approaching me as much. It’s hard work though.

It *is* hard work, though we rarely acknowledge it as such. Liz Kelly, one of the world’s leading sociologists working on violence against women and girls, coined the term ‘safety work’ to describe these kinds of actions, the habitual strategies that women develop in response to their experiences in public. Strategies like Shelley’s aggressive look or Fae’s frown, like Lucy’s keys between her fingers. Safety work refers to the range of modifications, adaptations, decisions that women take often habitually in order to maintain a sense of safety in public spaces. She describes it like this:

We have become used to commentary on how women change their behavior in order to control what can seem like an unavoidable risk, but women’s calculations and actions are more complex than mere self-limitation. I have termed the thinking processes, decision making and embodied watchfulness that women employ ‘safety work’. It is work because it occupies time, requires energy and effort – all of which could be used for more rewarding activities.¹⁸

The idea that we have become used to how women change their behaviour is key to understanding why safety work is so often overlooked, both by the wider world and by ourselves as we do it. We perform safety work often without thinking, it becomes part of our habits, ordinary. And this creates a problem.

Take the example of Theodora, a White British woman in her mid-twenties, who told me that contrary to expectations about women and fear, something discussed more in the following chapter, she feels safe most of the time.

I actually personally feel quite safe. The area where I live it’s not, people say it’s a bad area but I’ve never

felt unsafe walking around it. Maybe that's because that's where I grew up. But I've always felt quite safe to be honest.

This seems pretty straightforward, right? There's no right amount of panic here, there's no panicking at all. But the story becomes a little more complicated when Theodora begins to talk about what she does to maintain this sense of safety.

I always walk really tall because I know I am tall. I think I'm the height of the average man so whenever I walk, I walk quite tall. And I do think a lot of the time people say, 'Just don't make eye contact', and I find a lot of the time the reverse is true. If someone is checking you out and they look like they could be quite dodgy, you've just got to give them not even a dirty look, not even an aggressive stare, just like, 'I know what you're thinking, I'm onto you, I'm just going to keep walking now, why don't you stay there'.

Stop, check your phone, tie your shoe lace, anything like that. Always in a doorway though if you're tying your shoelace, don't get on the ground. Never, I would never. If I want someone to get past me I try to get my back to a wall. If you sort of stop and stand with your back to a wall and look at them, I never want to do that because I think it might cause a confrontation, but if you stand and sort of kneel down to tie your shoelace or something like that then it's a reason to stop if you see what I mean. As opposed to letting them know. Because I think if it gets to the point that someone's following you as opposed to giving you a funny look or whatever that's the point where it's stepped up in seriousness and you don't want to get too confrontational. But I would always put my back to a wall if I thought someone was following me.

What this shows is that the ability to create a feeling of safety through changing our own behaviour, means that sometimes

crucial information is missed when we ask broad questions about crime and safety. We become unable to see the full impact of the sexual harassment of women in public because we've separated out safety from freedom and are only measuring the former. But in women's lives, the two work *together*. So much work that goes unnoticed, just to feel safe. When did we all start doing this, and why don't we ever mention it? Is it even making any difference? What would happen if we stopped? These are the core questions to be considered in the following chapters, and below is a bit more detail about what you'll find in each one.

Structure and contents

This book is divided into six chapters, beginning with this introduction. All chapters prioritise the voices of participants, with some quotes slightly amended to assist in readability. To maintain their anonymity, identifiable information has been removed and participant names may be pseudonyms. The first time a participant is quoted her race or ethnicity (self-described) as well as her age is given. At the back of the book is a more detailed participant list, including information on sexuality, which isn't mentioned in the text itself as it wasn't available for all participants. To help the flow of reading, notes have been used sparingly and appear at the end of the book. They include both references to academic and more general writing, as well as suggestions for further reading. For readers interested in a more conventionally academic text, including greater detail on the methodology and theoretical foundations of some of what is presented here, you can find this in a previously published book on the same study: *Men's Intrusion, Women's Embodiment: A Critical Analysis of Street Harassment*.¹⁹

Chapter Two, 'Women, fear and crime', explores the evidence on gendered differences in fear of crime, and different reasons for 'the crime paradox' given in feminist criminology. The paradox is that while women routinely report higher levels of fear about being a victim of crime in public space, crime studies show that men have a greater likelihood of actually being a victim. There are generally four explanations given for this; that it's to do with gender stereotypes; that it's about women's fear of rape; or that

it's because crime statistics don't count all the types of crime women experience. This chapter addresses each in turn before suggesting that maybe what the paradox is telling us is that some of women's safety work is, in fact, successful.

Chapter Three, 'It's all part of growing up', takes us back to the beginning to try to understand how women's fear of crime develops and why women feel responsible for preventing our own victimisation. It draws on several large scale sexual violence awareness campaigns in the UK to explore how women are taught, by society and experience, that the cause and solution to sexual harassment is within them. These messages are then connected to what women learn in childhood and adolescence, that they are not the authority on their own experience, to explain why women express doubt about what is happening even while they are changing their behaviour because of it. It then looks at the ways in which young women are encouraged to 'take back control' by framing intrusion as a compliment, regardless of how it feels. The chapter ends in pulling these threads together to highlight how women are positioned as either paranoid or to blame for men's actions. Faced with these limited, and limiting, options, we learn to stay silent.

Chapter Four, 'The work of creating safety', gives real life accounts of women's different strategies to create a feeling of safety in public. It begins by giving more of a detailed explanation of women's safety work, highlighting its connection to other forms of invisible labour. Arguing that due to its complexity it is difficult to give an authoritative account of what safety work *is*, the chapter explores it by drawing heavily on the different practices and tactics that women spoke about. These are organised into three overlapping categories: behaviours that involve a change in movement, those that are about a change in clothing or appearance, and those that result in a change in being and the body. It ends in acknowledging how much of this work requires a reduction; women made to feel small and to take up less space in public.

Chapter Five, 'The right amount of panic', builds on what has been discussed in relation to the context and content of safety work, to explore in detail its consequences. It looks at how the individual changes women make over time, often made

in response to the actions of men, can hide themselves in their habits. It uses women's accounts to identify the ways that many conduct an escalation calculation in public space to choose the safest course of action, as well as how this leads them into a catch-22 where women are blamed if they do not act to prevent sexual violence, but if they act and do prevent sexual violence they are paranoid for acting *because nothing happened*. Stuck like this, it finds that the only way forward is for women to routinely trade their freedom for safety, something that is hidden in a focus just on women's choices and not on the contexts within which they are made.

The final chapter, 'Ordinary resistance', concludes by suggesting that to get out of the double bind created by the right amount of panic we need to change the messaging in anti-violence campaigns, and actively create opportunities to acknowledge successful women's resistance. It argues that effective sexual violence prevention is not about changing individual actions but about shifting gender norms, and claims that creating opportunities for women to see the success of our safety work is one way to do this. It ends in suggesting that contrary to longstanding criticisms, feminist self-defence offers a way of unlearning what we've learnt. Helping us to create new norms of women as capable and rational agents, skilfully assessing and responding to the actions and motivations of unknown men.

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