

THE GREAT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE STREET:

A PHENOMENOLOGY OF MEN'S STRANGER INTRUSIONS ON

WOMEN IN PUBLIC SPACE

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For the patience and care of my friends on both sides have the world, and Christopher in particular, thank you.

And finally, for my brother.
I finished.
I miss you.

ABSTRACT

This thesis contributes new and unique evidence to the limited body of empirical literature on men's stranger intrusion in public space, commonly termed 'street harassment', through a transdisciplinary study bringing a philosophical framework to the study of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Analysis of 50 women's accounts given during a three stage research process is presented, alongside the development of a theoretical framework combining feminist approaches to VAWG with the gendered existential-phenomenology of Simone de Beauvoir and insights on habitual embodiments from Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Using this theoretical framework the empirical evidence is investigated for what it reveals about modalities of embodied subjectivity women enact in public spaces.

The research had four central aims and it is the achievement of these aims that forms the unique contribution of this thesis. Firstly it develops the reciprocal practice of translating philosophy into the vernacular of women's experiences of VAWG, finding that a philosophical perspective assists a feminist reframing of medical/legal models of VAWG. Secondly it explores reconnecting feminist research on VAWG to women's ordinary experience of men's intrusion, revealing how the necessary focus on policy has led to a steep rise in knowledge about some forms of VAWG to the detriment of investigating men's violence and intrusion in women's everyday lives. The third aim, to understand the consequences of men's intrusion for how women live and experience their bodily-self, resulted in a theoretical framework which suggests possibilities in the work of Simone de Beauvoir for feminists looking to reconnect questions of women's agency and autonomy to a context of structural power relations. Finally this research produced a new body of evidence regarding the practice and experience of men's stranger intrusion in public spaces, through a research process which created new tools for researching the ordinary. In the pursuit of these four aims this research found that, far from the trivialisation it is often afforded, the possibility and reality of men's intrusion forms a fundamental factor in how women understand and enact their embodied selfhood.

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For a purpose. – Of all actions, those performed for a purpose have been least understood, no doubt because they have always been counted the most understandable and are to our consciousness the most commonplace. The great problems are to be encountered in the street.

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak*¹

¹ Nietzsche (2003: 78).

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Even little things for example: the streets belong to everyone. But in fact, for a young woman, it doesn't matter if she's pretty or ugly, walking down the street can be an ordeal after 8 or 9 at night, or even during the day. Men will follow her, bother her, to such an extent that she'll prefer to go home. If you tell a man that he'll smile, act surprised, say 'I don't do that'... He doesn't realise what a weight it is for a woman to always feel like she's in danger.

(Beauvoir, 1975)

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Writing in the 19th century, Friedrich Nietzsche claimed that 'the great problems are to be encountered in the street' (Nietzsche, 2003: 78), heralding a philosophy where our existential situation, our daily 'being-in-the-world' (Heidegger, 1996), is taken as the

basis for philosophical investigation. Two centuries later, feminist researchers working in the field of men's violence against women and girls (hereafter, VAWG) expanded this claim, calling for the systematic analysis of what is taken superficially as purely personal experience (French, Teays, & Purdy, 1998) and foregrounding the importance of analysing ordinary experiences and practices in attempts to understand the mechanisms of gender inequality. This thesis addresses both calls in a transdisciplinary study combining the gendered existential-phenomenology of Simone de Beauvoir, insights on habitual embodiments from her colleague Maurice Merleau-Ponty, conceptual and theoretical approaches to VAWG, and an empirical study of 50 women's experiences of men's stranger intrusion in public space. Where Beauvoir directly addressed such intrusion, as above, she held it as constituting a uniquely gendered 'weight'; a heaviness that, over time, may adopt the illusion of the ordinary. For Merleau-Ponty this is a process of bodily habituation that in turn informs perception, impacting on our experience of the present: 'I have made it my abode, that this past, though not a fate, has at least a specific weight and is not a set of events over there, at a distance from me, but the atmosphere of my present' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 514). This, then, was the starting point for this thesis: to investigate the weight of men's intrusion identified by Beauvoir alongside Merleau-Pontian theorisation of how the weight of the past is lived through our bodies.

There has been a resurgence of Beauvoirian scholarship in the past thirty years seeking to reclaim her unique philosophical contribution, a contribution Beauvoir herself repeatedly denied (Simons, 1986; 2010; Le Doeuff, 1989; Kruks, 1990; Fullbrook & Fullbrook, 1993; Gothlin, 2001; Heinämaa, 1999; Moi, 1999; 2008). Combined with

this, there is what has been described as a ‘chronic need in contemporary feminist debates to theorise responsible female agency’ (Stavro, 2000: 133), particularly in regards to women’s embodied agency. Shelly Budgeon (2003) critiques the way in which analyses of female embodiment often figure women as passive objects of representation rather than subjects acting on, in and through the body, claiming: ‘too often women are cast as cultural dupes and victims of cultural constructions of femininity’ (Budgeon, 2003: 39). Bray and Colebrook (1998) advance a similar critique in their argument for a positive feminist ethics; foregrounding the ways in which Cartesian dualism of mind/body haunts much corporeal feminism. For both Budgeon (2003) and Bray and Colebrook (1998), approaches that focus on the body as a site of representation, and that posit such representation as a negation of materiality, hide the ways in which women live our bodies as sites of ‘practices, comportments, and contested articulations’ (Bray & Colebrook, 1998: 37), situated within a whole series of events, connections and contexts. Such a claim is comparable to the binary set up in the early 1990’s between ‘victim’ and ‘power’ feminisms, where the former was criticised as constructing women as lacking agency (Wolf, 1993; Paglia, 1994; Roiphe, 1994) and the latter as failing to acknowledge the complex and problematic relationship between feminists and power (Kelly, Burton & Regan, 1996). This tension is growing again in modern feminist debates between liberal and radical feminist perspectives on issues such as prostitution or pornography, where the radical feminist focus on the contexts in which women are making choices is held by many liberal feminists as the negation of women’s ability to choose. These debates demonstrate the need to find an accessible conceptualisation of women’s agency that can also hold the multifaceted and complex ways in which structural oppression impacts, conflicts, points to and limits choice and

action. It is here that revisiting Beauvoir offers particular possibilities for mobilising what Lois McNay terms a ‘reworked phenomenology’ (2004: 188), or what for Stevi Jackson (2001) is the need to develop and use theory in ways that do not reduce the material and social to the terms of social structure. Both Jackson (2001) and Budgeon (2003) critique the material/representation binary as reductive, looking instead for strategies to assist in ‘bringing materiality back into feminist analysis of the subject’ (Budgeon, 2003: 41). For Jackson, it is not enough to reveal the contexts whereby women’s bodily-selves are acted on:

We need also to account for subjectivity and agency; for patterns of gendered interaction in everyday life as well as the institutional hierarchies within which they take place; the ways in which such interaction is endowed with, and shaped by, the meanings it has for participants; the micro levels at which power is deployed and resisted, as well as the macro level of systematic domination (Jackson, 2001: 286).

What is needed, then, is a framework for theorising corporeality that foregrounds the temporality of human ‘being’ and ‘becoming’, alongside refusing to resolve the tensions of living² experience; choosing instead to hold the ambiguity. Simone de Beauvoir offers such a framework, though much corporeal feminist analysis has focused instead on the work of male philosophers such as Gilles Deleuze (1994) and Merleau-Ponty (2002). Focusing on Simone de Beauvoir’s germinal text, *The Second Sex*, this thesis will argue that Beauvoir’s insights into the self as a situated ‘body-subject’ offer a useful philosophical paradigm for exploring women’s living experience of the continuum of sexual violence (Kelly, 1988), reconnecting questions of agency and autonomy to a context of structural power relations. Coming from her focus on the material details of

² ‘Living’ is employed here rather than the more common ‘lived’ experience, to assist in emphasising our active, ever-evolving sense-making processes (see Chapter Four).

embodied existence, Beauvoir famously claimed that the impetus for writing what became *The Second Sex* was Jean-Paul Sartre's suggestion of sexual difference (Simons, 1999: 55). Guided by her desire to discover 'what circumstances limit women's freedom and how can she overcome them?' (Beauvoir, 2011: 17), Beauvoir's text posed a challenge to male cultural hegemony. Despite acknowledgement of the importance of *The Second Sex* for the feminist movement in France and, following the English translation, across both America and England, Beauvoir's text can be dismissed by modern feminisms as too impenetrable in its language and too dated in its representations of the lives of women. The former criticism is a result both of Beauvoir's philosophical training, meaning she employed language and concepts rooted in particular linguistic histories, and of the problems with original English translation of the text (see Chapter Four). The desire to translate philosophical concepts into accessible language whilst maintaining the uniqueness of the philosophical perspective is one of the central aims of this thesis and was a tenet guiding the project's methodology. Simone de Beauvoir succeeded in such a translation through her use of fictive philosophy, seen in her popular fictional texts such as *She Came to Stay* (Beauvoir, 1999) and *The Mandarins* (Beauvoir, 1982). *The Second Sex*, however, remains a dense and thoroughly philosophical text. The second criticism, that the situation Beauvoir was outlining is no longer representative of the lives of women in the twenty-first century, is one this thesis will argue to be too optimistic. It is true that in the post-war years when Beauvoir was writing the situation of women was remarkably different than it is today, not at all by chance but rather by the over 50 years of strategic committed feminist activism and political reform, some of which was ushered in by the publication of her book. Her discussions of the situations of the mother or the housewife may not

resonate with feminism's fourth wave, however there is a key area where Beauvoirian insights almost replicate the sentiments of many of the 50 women who participated in this research project; that is in her descriptions of the impact of men's intrusive practices.

If they wander the streets, they are stared at, accosted. I know some girls, far from shy, who get no enjoyment strolling through Paris alone because, incessantly bothered, they are incessantly on their guard: all their pleasure is ruined (Beauvoir, 2011: 358).

The resonance of this, written over fifty years previously, with the closing comments of one of this project's participants, 20 year old Lucy,³ shows that in terms of the living experience of men's intrusion, little has changed in the intervening years.

One of my friends the other day said, "I love walking home through [city] at night." I had to walk back from work because a friend couldn't give me a lift, at one o'clock in the morning. And he was like, "oh that's fine. It's nice to look at the river." And it might be nice to look at the river if I wasn't petrified the whole time. I'm not going to stop and look at the river because I need to get back quickly so I don't get raped (Lucy, INT40).

Men's intrusive practices as a context limiting women's freedom remains, and though there has been a steep rise in the knowledge base of some forms of VAWG, leading to new legislation and policy reform, men's stranger intrusion against women in public spaces, commonly termed 'street harassment', remains under-researched. The debate on harm retreads the silencing of feminist concerns through the guise of free speech, a silencing well known to the pornography debates in both historic and current contexts (Attwood, 2002; Dworkin, 1985; Mui, 1998; Strossen, 1993; West, 1987). The

³ All participants were given the opportunity to name themselves for the project. Names given throughout this thesis may be pseudonyms.

commonly held premise from this side of the debate is that the majority of practices included under the term ‘street harassment’ are trivial, relatively harmless expressions of free speech (Bowman, 1993), that at worst they are part of what psychologist Richard Lazarus has termed ‘daily hassles’ (Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1981; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), low-level stressful experiences that, despite having potential for negative health and adaptive impact, are an unavoidable part of life. At best, the harm of such practices is argued to be subjective and as such cannot be legislated against for one woman’s harassment may be another woman’s compliment (Fileborn, 2013). Feminist approaches to the phenomenon are varied, most frequently located in legal or sociological disciplines, however despite disciplinary perspective there is broad agreement in the feminist literature on the existence of harm. They argue that far from being trivial, the experience of intrusion from unknown men in public places is a routine manifestation of the continuum of sexual violence (Kelly, 1988), and plays a substantial role in generating and regenerating Connell’s (2002) ‘gender orders’, the historically constructed patterns of power relations between women and men.

The contribution of this thesis is both to this literature, demonstrating the importance of the ordinary experiences of VAWG, and more broadly to a gendered phenomenological analysis of the social world. It does this through exploring for the first time the experience of men’s intrusion for women from an existential-phenomenological perspective; looking at the impacts of men’s intrusive practices for how women think and live our relationships to our embodied selves and, through this, our world. In this way it forms part of the emerging body of philosophical literature developing a phenomenological analysis of sexual violence (Mui, 2005; Brison, 2002) as

well as part of the emerging empirical literature on women's experiences of what is commonly termed 'street harassment'.

AIMS OF THIS STUDY

This thesis has four central aims. At its core is the desire to translate philosophical concepts into everyday language, whilst maintaining the uniqueness of the philosophical perspective. This guided the methodological framework, which aims to develop the reciprocal practice of translating philosophy into the vernacular of women's experiences and women's experiences back into and through a philosophical language. This aim also manifests in the transdisciplinary nature of the project, whereby part of the study's findings was the development of a theoretical framework combining feminist analysis of VAWG with existential-phenomenological insights on embodiment.

The second aim is borne out of the theoretical resonance between the principles of feminist research practice and existential-phenomenology: to reconnect feminist research on VAWG to the importance of examining women's ordinary, living experience. The study seeks to explore the impact of the everyday, women's mundane encounters with men's personal and structural power, on how women understand and enact their embodied selfhood. Liz Kelly's (1988) concept of the continuum of sexual violence provides a conceptual framework through which to build connections from these mundane encounters to recognised practices of men's dominance. In coming from a focus on women's experiential realities, this thesis aims to develop Kelly's (1988)

continuum of sexual violence, introducing the concept of a continuum of men's intrusive practices to assist in shifting focus in VAWG policy onto the behaviours and decisions of men.

This turn towards the practices of men also underpins the third aim, to add to the phenomenological insights on female embodiment by theorists such as Iris Marion Young (2005) and Gail Weiss (1999; 2010) through suggesting the need for the modalities of women's embodiments to be examined in relation to the practices of men. That men's practices are absent from much of the literature on women's embodiment is noted, in fact Weiss (1999) critiques Young (2005) as inadvertently reinforcing an interpretation of women's contradictory bodily ways of being as a woman's individual problem. Despite this, Weiss goes on to again shift the focus away from men's practices, claiming that '(w)hat makes the social reference of "feminine" bodily existence so problematic, is that the imaginary perspective of these often imaginary others can come to dominate and even supersede a woman's own experience of her bodily capabilities' (Weiss, 1999: 47). This study seeks to explore this 'imaginary perspective' and 'imaginary other' in relationship to the experience of men's stranger intrusion, aiming to understand the consequences for women's embodied selfhood of one aspect of the continuum of men's intrusive practices.

The final aim of this project is to provide a new body of evidence regarding the practice and experience of unknown men's intrusion in public space. Empirical studies of what is commonly known as 'street harassment', its prevalence, manifestations, harms, and the meanings it holds for both the men who practice it and the women who experience it, is

a small body of work. The research conducted for this study, consisting of a three stage research process including initial conversations,⁴ a participatory notebook stage and final follow up meetings (see Chapter Three), a process engaged in by 50 women, adds to the growing body of evidence being collected through online forums documenting the type, frequencies and impacts of men's intrusive practices in public space. In addition it aims to begin an explicit conversation in the literature about naming, highlighting the importance of terminology for both expanding and limiting the stories of VAWG that can and can not be told.

OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

The thesis comprises seven chapters, beginning with this introduction. The existing literature on 'street harassment' is reviewed in Chapter Two. This literature is cross-disciplinary, including legal, sociological and psychological framings with this thesis seeking to add a philosophical perspective. It highlights the possible reasons behind the dearth of empirical literature through identifying four difficulties in researching the subject area; the problem of naming; difficulties in definitions; identifying the harm; and what is found and lost in counting an experience so ordinary as to be unremarkable. The difficulty in conducting empirical work on men's stranger intrusion created through this ordinariness informed the methodological framework given in Chapter Three. It is here, in the project's methodology, that the epistemological connections between existential-phenomenology and feminist theory will begin to be sketched. The challenge of

⁴ The ways in which conversation was developed for this project as a research method will be discussed in Chapter Three.

researching the ordinary is reflected in the links between the principles and practice of a feminist research methodology, and the ontological concerns of existential-phenomenology. Chapter Three will develop these connections through demonstrating how particular tools were needed for this project in order to help uncover aspects of participants' existence that are so common as to become hidden. It will also discuss the experience of intrusion by unknown men during the research process itself, suggesting the context of virtual public space produced through the internet creates new opportunities for men who practice forms of VAWG.

Chapter Four maps the theoretical foundations grounding this thesis. Following Beauvoir's injunction that 'we must derive our theory from practice, not the other way around' (Gerassi, 1976), this chapter forms part of the contribution to knowledge made by this thesis, a conceptual framework that developed out of both the study's methodology and its findings. As a transdisciplinary project – joining Simone de Beauvoir's gendered phenomenology of the situated self with empirical research – the theoretical basis and the philosophical theories of the bodily-self employed in analysis of the empirical data are outlined. Four key concepts form the theoretical foundations of this thesis: the importance of living experience as a context for both feminist sociologists researching VAWG and existential-phenomenology; Liz Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence; a Beauvoirian conceptualisation of the self; and an extension of Beauvoir's gendered development of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodied subjectivity and habitual bodily practices. All four are linked together through their operationalisation in the empirical analysis.

Chapters Five and Six present the empirical findings moving towards an exploration of the ways in which participants' responses to men's intrusive practices in public space can be seen as the development of a 'habit body' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002). Chapter Five presents the 50 women's accounts of men's stranger intrusions in public space given during the initial research conversations, with the intrusions categorised into: ordinary interruptions; verbal intrusions; the gaze (including 'creepshots'); physical intrusions (including rape); flashing and public masturbation; and following. Each practice is explored, outlining the quantitative findings and the ways in which they were experienced by participants. Chapter Six investigates in more detail how men's intrusive practices came to be experienced in the way they were, turning first to an examination of participants' early experiences of intrusion, and secondly to participants' habituated modes of embodiment.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis through locating the empirical findings within the context of the wider philosophical and sociological debates, and demonstrating the valuable and unique new insights into women's phenomenological life that this project has afforded. It reviews the findings of the research in light of the research aims and recommends the ways in which some of the discoveries could translate into feminist campaigning and policy reform. Finally it suggests ways in which further research could be developed to continue building our understanding of the interplay between men's practices and women's embodied selfhood.

TERMINOLOGY AND TRANSLATIONS

Terminology of ‘street harassment’ will be avoided in this thesis unless in direct reference to, or quotation from, literature using that framing. The reasons for this are addressed in detail within the literature review. The argumentation for using ‘men’s stranger intrusion’ can be found in Chapter Three. In addition, throughout the thesis, references made to *The Second Sex* are for the new English version (Beauvoir, 2011), translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallie. This is in recognition of the severe problems with the original English translation by Howard Parshley, outlined in detail by Margaret A Simons (1983) and Toril Moi (2002) and also addressed in part through this thesis (see Chapter Four). Toril Moi (2010) has also signalled problems with the Borde and Malovany-Chevallie translation, however at the time of writing it is the best possible version of Beauvoir’s text in English (see Daigle, 2013 for an evaluation).

Finally, it is important in this introduction to note that using the category ‘woman’ is not to imply one set of circumstances, applicable to all as a mysterious essential ‘quality’ of womanhood, though Simone de Beauvoir has often been wrongfully critiqued as suggesting just this (for more detailed discussion see Chapter Four). Relating the phenomenological experience for women of men’s stranger intrusion requires recognition of how this experience is lived in complex and contradictory ways. As such, this project was not conducted in order to universalise from the findings of the 50 women who participated. Without signifying a singular situation for all however we must also avoid ‘the masculine trap of wanting to enclose us in our differences’

(Beauvoir interviewed in Simons, 1999: 18). This thesis builds from Iris Marion Young's (2005) belief that the situation of women within a given socio-historical set of circumstances, despite the individual variation in each woman's experience, opportunities, and possibilities, has 'a unity that can be described and made intelligible... specific to a particular social formation during a particular epoch' (op cit: 29). 'Woman' is thus used for this study to acknowledge the existence of biological and social, shared, embodied realities, exploring the commonalities between and differences amongst a particular set of women, participating in this research at a particular moment in time.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

When one is concerned with giving voice to the experience of the word and showing how consciousness escapes into the world, one can no longer credit oneself with attaining a perfect transparency of expression... the world is such that it can only be expressed in 'stories', 'pointed at.'
(Merleau-Ponty, 1964: 28)

INTRODUCTION

During the 1970s key feminist texts began to raise the issue of VAWG both in its criminal and mundane manifestations. Susan Brownmiller (1975) theorised rape as a tool of social control and Germaine Greer (1971) used the concept of 'petty rapes' to describe the ways in which the everyday and the presumed rare 'sledgehammer' (Stanko,

1985) experiences of men's intrusion were connected. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, feminist research and activism combined to substantially build the knowledge base and theoretical frameworks available for understanding VAWG (Kelly, 2011). A number of key contributors during this period highlighted the danger in relegating such practices to a set of aberrant behaviours from a deviant minority of men, pointing to the importance of recognising the ordinary forms of VAWG (Hanmer & Saunders, 1984; Kelly, 1988; Stanko, 1985; 1990; 1993a; Wise & Stanley, 1987). Despite this early acknowledgment, women's experiences of intrusive men in public space remain an understudied area. The growing use of social network tools to share experiences is helping to validate women's individual concerns, and as such it may be that feminism is on the cusp of returning to the everyday. This possibility is further suggested in the present UK context through the immense popularity of the Everyday Sexism Project,⁵ launched in 2012 by Laura Bates (Bates, 2014).

The existing literature is cross-disciplinary, from legal and sociological studies exploring frequencies and remedies, to psychological perspectives examining impact and harm. There are also a number of academic theses at both undergraduate and graduate level readily available through the American based Stop Street Harassment website run by Anti-Street Harassment activist Holly Kearl.⁶ Across this body of literature, however, there is a gap in detailed explorations from an explicitly philosophical standpoint, with Sandra Lee Bartky's brief exploration of the experience of 'catcalls and whistles' (1990: 27) in her philosophical essay on psychological oppression a notable exception. Reasons for the sparse academic treatment across disciplines include: the trivialisation the

⁵ See <http://everydaysexism.com/>, [accessed 10th March, 2014]. Also Twitter handle @everydaysexism.

⁶ Available at: <http://www.stopstreetharassment.org/resources/articles/#thesis>, [accessed 10th March, 2014].

phenomenon is often afforded (Tuerkheimer, 1997; West, 1987); that the sheer commonality of the experience renders it invisible as a social problem (Bowman, 1993, Larkin, 1997); and the ways in which rules of conduct in streets and other public and semi-public places do not receive the same scrutiny as practices in private places (Gardner, 1995; Goffman, 1990; Lenton et al, 1999). In addition, the difficulty of naming deserves a central space in discussions of the relative silence given the expansion in the knowledge base on other forms of VAWG.

There is much discussion in feminist literature of the difficulty in using existing language to define and challenge the gender order (Cameron, 1998; DeVault, 1990; Penelope, 1990; Rich, 1980; Spender, 1985). It is not only practices uniquely experienced by women that struggle for articulation, however, the impacts of these experiences also are limited based on what McKenzie-Mohr and Lafrance (2010) term ‘dominant narratives’, the wider stories on social phenomena readily available for use as explanatory frameworks. For June Larkin, identifying the ordinary incidents of men’s intrusion is problematic because: ‘we have yet to develop the language to name the intrusions that are considered by male standards as “acceptable” or “normal” behaviour’ (1997: 120). Feminist legal scholar Robin West also claimed that injuries ‘uniquely sustained by a disempowered group will lack a name, a history, and in general a linguistic reality’ (1987: 85). Deborah Tuerkheimer (1997) develops this, stating that:

In order to translate the reality of women’s lives into a meaningful linguistic reality, we must begin by talking to one another about the nature and the extent of the harm being done to us. Once named, an injury previously ignored or trivialized by the victim becomes speakable, shaping the very way in which we experience it (Tuerkheimer, 1997: 174).

The importance of starting from women's accounts is thus highlighted, an epistemological standpoint that was crucial in the earlier, successful campaign for the acknowledgment of the sexual harassment of working women (see MacKinnon, 1979; also later in this chapter). Over twenty years later, anti-street harassment activist Holly Kearl agrees, stating in reference to the problem of defining what she terms street harassment that '(p)roblems without names tend to stay hidden' (Kearl, 2010: 5). Yet despite this acknowledgement of the importance of naming forms of men's intrusion in various studies published in the intervening years (Davis, 1993; Kissling, 1991; Tuerkheimer, 1997), an explicit debate on naming, with an exploration of how language creates both openings and restrictions of what can be said, has yet to be had in the literature.

The absence of consensus on naming is not the only definitional obstacle encountered in studying men's stranger intrusion in public space. There is also a lack of agreement as to what practices constitute the phenomenon, which together with the variation in terminology creates a particular difficulty for researchers. Comparing the scant empirical work that exists is complicated given the difference in practices included in their various definitions. Where there does seem to be consensus is in identifying the experience of the various range of practices as harmful, and it is here that this thesis contributes to the discussion, exploring harms not solely through an individual, psychological framework but also through the possible ontological impact on women's embodied selfhood.

This chapter draws on these obstacles to explore the literature. The first section details the different ways in which the phenomenon is named and defined, identifying the

relative silence on the limitations and benefits of existing terminology, even within studies recognising the problem of bringing women's experience into language. This is followed by an exploration of what practices are incorporated into the different definitions, comparing what is included/excluded and how questions are framed, to help illuminate the gaps in what is recorded and researched. The third section examines how harm has been recognised and named, looking first at how the harm of 'street harassment' is framed as a particularly gendered harm before exploring the efficacy of using existing literature on women's fear of crime, and particularly the 'crime paradox', as an entry point to analysing women's accounts. The chapter concludes with what is known about scale, focusing on the impact of definitional differences across studies. Here discussion covers how, and indeed if, existing modes of measurement can meet the demands of counting an experience so ordinary that women have developed a range of preventative strategies which work to minimise their exposure to, and the impact of, men's intrusion. It reveals the paucity of empirical studies that include a discussion of women's agency, responses and/or resilience. The conclusion pulls together the difficulties covered in a review of the literature through the explication of the terminology used in this research. It acknowledges the limitations of the framing used here, as well as pointing to how it can also help fill some of the gaps in the existing literature, and assist in the wider project of building the knowledge base on the phenomenology of VAWG.

THE PROBLEM OF NAMING

The importance of recognising and exploring the difficulties of naming forms of VAWG is critical to attempts to combat historical silencing, as well as to provide a workable framework for policy and legal reform. In her explorations of the relationship between African American women's experiences of embodiment and 'street harassment', Deirdre Davis (1993) describes it as being 'the harm that has no name'. While the harm may be difficult to bring into language (see later in this chapter), attempts at naming the phenomenon itself encounter the problem of a multiplicity of names. There is no consistent term used in the literature to capture the range of women's encounters with men's stranger intrusion in public space, highlighting the need for an explicit debate on naming, similar to the debates that have been had across other forms of VAWG (see the discussion of the usefulness of the term 'violence' in Dobash & Dobash, 1998; or of using 'paedophile' to name child sexual abusers in Kelly, 1996). Though necessary to build both the knowledge and theoretical base, this debate must be engaged with carefully to acknowledge both the powers of and barriers to, developing a shared definition.⁷ The debate on language must also engage with questions about the role and limitations of criminalising behaviours or marking out as distinct the practices that are extensions of commonly accepted gender relations, questions this thesis picks up in the following chapter through exploring Liz Kelly's (1988) conception of sexual violence as existing on a continuum.

⁷ Such a consideration reveals similarities with some of the concerns expressed by Simone de Beauvoir, whose work sits at the centre of this thesis' conceptual framework. Beauvoir warned against the building of totalising philosophical systems in favour of embracing the plurality of the concrete situations of particular human beings engaged in their own projects (Beauvoir, 1976).

Reviewing the literature solely through terminology reveals multiple namings within the same work or across different studies by the same writer. For many, the location of the experience in public space is important, thus it is variously described as: ‘public harassment’ (Guano, 2007; Gardner, 1995; Ilahi, 2010; Kearl, 2010; Lenton et al 1999; Lord, 2009; Rosewarne, 2005) or ‘public sexual harassment’ (Osmond, 2013; Thompson, 1994). Robin West (1987) uses the term ‘street hassling’, with Gardner (1980) using the similar terminology of ‘street remarks’. In addition Nielsen (2000; 2004) uses the term ‘offensive public speech’, explicitly including in this speech that is racialised as well as gendered. Long (2012) employs ‘sexual harassment on the street’, and both Laniya (2005) and Lenton et al (1999) use ‘sexual harassment in public places’. Laniya (2005) and Lord (2009) attempt to address the degendering of the phenomenon through using ‘the harassment of women in public places’ (Laniya, 2005) and the less explicit ‘gender based public harassment’ (Lord, 2009; also a single mention in Bowman, 1993).

For several authors, the frequency and/or mundanity is definitionally important, often at the exclusion of the location. Kelly (1988) uses the term ‘commonplace intrusions’ and Esacove (1998) names encounters as ‘everyday unwanted sexual attention’, though the problems of limiting the phenomenon to being ‘unwanted’ will be discussed later.

Kimberly Fairchild, a key author in the psychological literature, also recognises the importance of frequency in her use of ‘everyday stranger harassment’ (Fairchild, 2007; Fairchild & Rudman, 2008), though she also focuses solely on identifying the perpetrator through using ‘stranger harassment’ in her 2010 study. The degendered term of ‘stranger harassment’ is also used by Wesselmann and Kelly (2010) in their study of

the same year and earlier by Macmillan, Nierobisz and Welsh in 2000. By far, however, the most common terminology is that of 'street harassment' (Bowman, 1993; Davis, 1993; Fogg-Davis, 2006; Ilahi, 2010; Kears 2009; 2010; Kissling, 1991; Laniya, 2005; Larkin, 1997; Lenton et al, 1999; Macmillan, Nierobisz & Welsh, 2000; Nielsen, 2000; O'Neill, 2013; Oshynko, 2002; Rosewarne, 2005; Thompson, 1994; Tuerkheimer, 1997; Walkowitz, 1998), with some authors simply identifying these practices under the umbrella of 'sexual harassment' (FRA, 2014; Quinn, 2002; Rosewarne, 2007; Wise & Stanley 1987).

Many researchers acknowledge that the lack of a unified term for the range of behaviours and practices that are studied arises from the difficulties women encounter in attempts to identify and label their experience (Kears, 2010; Kissling, 1991; Laniya, 2005; Larkin, 1997; Lenton et al, 1999; Long; 2012; Tuerkheimer, 1997; West, 1987). This gap is exemplified through the acknowledgment by the authors of one of the largest prevalence studies currently available (Lenton et al, 1999), that comparisons between surveys are complicated by different definitions, without engaging in an explicit discussion themselves of the reasoning behind their choice of terminology. This is a particularly interesting omission given the multiple namings within their paper where 'sexual harassment in public places', 'public harassment of women' and 'street harassment' are all used interchangeably. These are variations that become important in recognising that, for example, men can experience 'sexual harassment in public places' but cannot experience 'public harassment of women.' Similarly, where racialised harassment can be covered by both 'street harassment' and 'public harassment of women', many of these practices would not qualify for inclusion in the category of 'sexual harassment in public

places'. Elizabeth Arveda Kissling (1991) argues that there is no agreed label for what she terms 'street harassment', a claim remade by Holly Kearl almost twenty years later. Kearl (2010) recognises that some researchers reject the term 'street harassment', though Kearl doesn't explicitly explore how her use of this framing impacts on her wider project of developing a name for the phenomenon from the women who experience it.

The most common framing across the literature then is as a form of harassment, be it stranger, street or public. Liz Kelly (1988) stands out as not using the harassment framework (adopting instead the term 'commonplace intrusion'), alongside Stanko (1985, 1990) who conceptualises the phenomenon as both an intimate intrusion and everyday violence. Authors who are located within a legal paradigm (for example Bowman, 1993; Laniya, 2005; Tuerkheimer, 1997) often use the term 'street harassment' in order to build on the existing body of literature on sexual harassment in institutional contexts such as employment and education (see Estrich, 1991; Fitzgerald, 1993; Fitzgerald, Gelfand and Drasgow, 1995; Fitzgerald, Shullman & Bailey, 1988; Hill, 1992; Hill & Kearl, 2011; MacKinnon, 1979; 1987; 2001; Mott & Condor, 1997). Alongside this, writers from a feminist-sociological perspective (see Fogg-Davis, 2006; Kissling, 1991; Larkin, 1997) also utilise both 'street harassment' and the wider sexual harassment literature, to link the practices to Carol Sheffield's (1987) concept of sexual terrorism, with Larkin (1997) naming the phenomenon as 'sexual terrorism on the street'. Yet despite the variance in terminology and the acknowledgment of the complexity of bringing a harm uniquely experienced by women into man-made language (Spender, 1985), a detailed discussion of the grounds behind the different terms used by writers themselves is largely absent. There are limitations in the use of both 'street' to

narrow the spaces where the phenomenon takes place (particularly given the wide range of behaviours experienced on public transport)⁸ as well as ‘harassment’ to define how women experience these behaviours. These limitations may be unavoidable or may even prove beneficial in narrowing the focus of a given study, however what is missing across the academic literature is an explicit, self-reflective examination of the authors’ choice of terminology, and recognition of any impact this may have had on their findings.

Other ways of naming, with the exception of ‘sexual harassment of women in public places’, risk hiding the gender specific nature of the harm as well as the links it has to other forms of VAWG as a cause and consequence of gender inequality (Sen & Kelly, 2007). The focus is diverted to location or, in the case of stranger harassment, relationship, rather than the gender of the perpetrator and target. Such concepts also risk excluding experiential realities that do not fit the sexual harassment framework, such as the impact of anticipation, or intrusions that are not ‘sexual’ in nature. Labelling an encounter as street harassment then, risks decontextualising the experience, removing who is the actor (and why), who is acted upon (and why) and how the meanings for both are located within a wider system of structural gender inequality. This wider system of structural power is theorised by R.W. Connell (2002) as the ‘gender order’, a concept used throughout this thesis and picked up during the discussion of Simone de Beauvoir’s concept of ‘situation’ in Chapter Four. For Connell, gender ‘is the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and the set of practices (governed by

⁸ Cynthia Bowman (1993) acknowledges this, stating in a footnote that ‘(a)lthough the street is in fact one very common venue, I use the word "street" here simply as an abbreviation for any public place; this type of harassment takes place in many other venues, such as buses, trains, taxis, bus stations, and the like’ (n7, 25). This use of ‘street’ as a marker for everyday public spaces is similar to that employed by Nietzsche in the quote used to title this thesis.

this structure) that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes' (2002: 10). Connell distinguishes between the 'gender order', the name for the enduring structural patterns of gender; 'gender regimes' being institutional gendered power relations such as within a university or the family; and 'gender relations' between individual women and men. Both gender regimes and gender relations may diverge from the overarching gender order, though crucially the structures of the gender order 'cannot be "enduring", unless they are reconstituted from moment to moment in social action' (Connell, 2002: 55).

Separating out the practices of men's stranger intrusions from their basis as a particular set of gender relations operating within a wider unequal gender order, hides the position of the act within the continuum of men's VAWG, and its consequent function as an expression of men's power. It is this separation that formed part of the critique feminist sociologists Sue Wise and Liz Stanley made in 1987 about the sexual harassment framework.

By picking out particular behaviours (those supposedly 'sexual') for inclusion within the definition of sexual harassment, and picking out particular kinds of men as 'the men who do' sexual harassment, the impression is given that sexual harassment is extraordinary, clearly sexual and always clearly objectionable, and so quite different from usual male behaviours and quite different from women's run-of-the-mill everyday experiences of men (Wise & Stanley, 1987: 61).

It is thus useful to revisit the sexual harassment framework to investigate the problems and benefits of using it as a conceptual apparatus through which to talk about women's experiences in public space.

Sexual harassment itself is a term feminists brought into language (Spender, 1985). Prior to its naming it existed as what Miranda Fricker (2007) terms a hermeneutical injustice, hidden from collective understanding through the limits of language and through this concealment negatively impacting on a particular socially disadvantaged group, women. Catherine MacKinnon's groundbreaking work helped to bring the concept of sexual harassment into everyday language (MacKinnon, 1979). Following the focus of MacKinnon's legal work, the field of sexual harassment has long been centred on the workplace, with a recent shift in the UK towards a focus on 'sexual bullying' as a form of sexual harassment in schools.⁹ Public space as an arena, and everyday life as the context, has been largely passed over by the literature on sexual harassment, with the work of feminists in the late 1980s such as Kelly (1988), Randall (1987), and Wise & Stanley (1987) key exceptions. This omission may relate to the desire for legal and policy redress. The success of the sexual harassment literature in giving women 'a name for their suffering and an analysis that connects it with gender', together with 'a forum, legitimacy to speak, authority to make claims, and an avenue for possible relief' (MacKinnon, 1987: 103), has meant that feminists working to legitimise women's experiences in public space with the aim of providing a structure for legislative redress, have focused on gaining recognition for men's stranger intrusion as a form of sexual harassment. If the aim shifts to finding ways of explicating women's experience both to the wider realm and to ourselves, tensions emerge with this framing.

There is variance across the sexual harassment literature on how to define the practice. For MacKinnon (1987) it is firmly embedded in work and educational settings, and

⁹ See Coy & Garner (2012) for a critique of 'sexual bullying' as degendering sexual harassment and taking it out of the VAWG frame.

operates as sexual pressure imposed on someone who is not in a position to refuse it. Developing a psychological scale, Fitzgerald, Gelfand and Drasgow (1995) suggested that sexually harassing behaviour can be largely grouped into three categories: sexual coercion; unwanted sexual attention; and gender harassment. Examining the more recent literature on 'sexual bullying', Maxwell & Wharf's (2010) toolkit developed for work in schools defines a range of similar practices with the qualification that the behaviour is repeated over time and has the intention to hurt the receiver. Turning to policy, the Equality Act (Great Britain, 2010) for England and Wales defines sexual harassment as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Across these definitions there are categories that need to be unpicked and key factors that need to be disregarded in order to adequately capture women's experiences on the street. Calls to 'cheer up' would be difficult to define as sexual harassment using any of these definitions yet they form a significant part of some women's experience of unknown men in public space and are uniquely gendered (see Chapter Five). Also the ways in which women experience these behaviours are predefined through the 'harassment' framework, again missing particular practices, for example wolf-whistles, the meanings of which may not be experienced in all contexts by all women as harassing. In this way bringing the complexity of the ways women experience what they may or may not name as 'street harassment' is necessary to explore its particular influence and women's responses.

June Larkin (1997) found that identifying the routine, everyday incidents of men's intrusion is problematised as such encounters are so normalised they are rarely named as harassment. Using a methodology similar to that in this project through her use of participant notebooks (see Chapter Three), Larkin found that for her participants,

‘being harassed on the street was so routine that many hadn’t bothered to include these incidents in their journals’ (1997: 120). Such a finding demonstrates how the very pervasiveness of men’s intrusion means it is not perceived by some women to count as harassment, and thus can be missed in studies using this framing. Given the repeated recognition in the literature of the need to begin from a woman defined place to articulate gendered experiences, it is surprising that so little work has asked women themselves how they define their experiences. As identified by Kissling ‘(t)he variety of labels used by English-speaking writers points to the absence of a label from the women who experience it’ (1991: 457). This may relate to a critique of Kelly’s (1988) concept of the continuum of sexual violence which places women’s own understandings of violence at the centre of theory, as being a conceptualisation that creates uncomfortable legal challenges (see Chapter Four). There are, however, also problems in locating men’s intrusion solely within a legal paradigm as, though such a framework assists in legitimising the experience as harmful, it may alienate those who do not feel entitled to legal remedies or who feel that seeking to do so would negatively impact on the social power they are able to access (Laniya, 2005). Recently activists such as Holly Kearl (2010) have made steps towards filling the gap in identifying women’s definitions born of experiential knowledge. It is important to note, however, that despite her intent to examine the definitions of ‘ordinary’ women, when none of her published responses from the women she surveyed included feeling ‘harassed’¹⁰ Kearl follows the dominant framing and names the experience as street harassment.

¹⁰ In asking women how they define street harassment, Kearl (2010) gives examples of definitions which pull on the concepts of intrusion, disrespect and intimidation and states the most commonly used words in responses were ‘unwanted’, ‘sexual’, ‘uncomfortable’, ‘touch’ and ‘threat’.

There is thus a tension between providing a framework that can be used and understood by individuals as reflecting lived realities, without hiding the revolutionary aspects of bringing an unexamined experience into language. Sally Merry's (2006) work on translating human rights concepts across borders is an example of the attempt to overcome the difficulty between making something understandable without being absorbed into the dominant discourse. For Merry, '(i)t is the unfamiliarity of these ideas that make them effective in breaking old modes of thought' (Merry, 2006: 178), something which will be seen in this project's methodology as underpinning the decision behind invoking philosophical ideas to answer feminist VAWG questions. She argues that in order for new concepts (or new language for old concepts) to effect practical change they must be seen as familiar but never fully indigenised. In light of this, naming the intrusive practices of unknown men on women in public space as a form of harassment might deny the potential for illuminating a new aspect of women's situation in an unequal gender order. To explore this further, this chapter now moves beyond terminology, into an exploration of the ways in which the practices are defined across the various namings in the literature.

DEFINING MEN'S PRACTICES

Carol Brooks Gardner, a student of sociologist Erving Goffman, was one of the first to complete an in-depth empirical study of what she termed 'public harassment' in Indianapolis in 1995. For Gardner: '(p)ublic harassment is on a continuum of possible events, beginning when customary civility among strangers is abrogated and ending with

the transition to violent crime: assault, rape or murder' (1995: 4). This concept of a continuum links, though not explicitly by Gardner, to one of the key theoretical foundations of this thesis, Liz Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence (see Chapter Four). It is also one of the reasons behind the differences across the literature. A recent factsheet from the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) on street and sexual harassment highlights this.

The boundaries between sexual harassment and street harassment and other forms of sexual violence are not easily defined. That is, they are blurry and overlap... This can make labelling these forms of sexual violence particularly difficult. For instance, terms such as sexual harassment or "minor" sexual violence can at times downplay or occlude the harm of these forms of sexual violence. Yet, at other times "sexual violence" seems too serious or broad a label for certain behaviours or experiences. For example, how useful or meaningful is it to categorise unwanted verbal comments alongside rape? (Fileborn, 2013: 2)

This thesis will argue that it is useful and meaningful to both categorise men's intrusive practices separately as well as connect them together conceptually, as it is through their cumulative impact that individual encounters have the particular impact that they do (see Chapter Five). The ways in which the literature approaches the continuum of men's intrusive practices, however, similar to how it approaches naming the problem itself, is varied. The largest body of work is found in the American legal literature, reflecting the dominance of criminal justice framings of VAWG. This literature outlines the particular behaviours involved in what it terms 'street harassment' as a means of gaining recognition of the practice as criminal. Some practices, however, that are already criminalised or that maintain experiential ambiguity are not included (for more on experiential ambiguity see Chapter Five). Cynthia Bowman (1993) is one of the first in the legal literature to attempt a definition of 'street harassment', building on a definition

given by anthropologist Micaela di Leonardo (1981), though also acknowledging the broader definition of harassment as any unsought intrusion by men ‘into women’s feelings, thoughts, behaviours, space, time, energies and bodies’ given by Wise and Stanley (1987: 71). In recognising the breadth of practices included in the conduct generally taken to constitute the phenomenon, and how this works to problematise attempts to define the practices, Bowman instead aims to outline its defining characteristics.

(1) (T)he targets of street harassment are female; (2) the harassers are male; (3) the harassers are unacquainted with their targets; (4) the encounter is face to face; (5) the forum is a public one such as a street, sidewalk, bus, bus station, taxi, or other place to which the public generally has access; but (6) the content of the speech, if any, is not intended as public discourse. Rather the remarks are aimed at the individual (although the harasser may intend that they be overheard by comrades or passers-by), and they are objectively degrading, humiliating, and frequently threatening in nature (Bowman, 1993: 3).

Developing this into a legal definition, Bowman suggests that: ‘(s)treets harassment occurs when one or more unfamiliar men accost one or more women in a public place, on one or more occasions, and *intrude* or attempt to *intrude* upon the woman’s attention in a manner that is unwelcome to the woman, with language or action that is explicitly or implicitly sexual’ (op cit: 22. Emphasis added). Deborah Tuerkheimer, who conducted an investigation into the nature of gender specific harm, also defines street harassment as occurring: ‘when a woman in a public place is *intruded* on by a man’s words, noises or gestures’ (Tuerkheimer, 1997: 167. Emphasis added). In comparing the concepts of intrusion and harassment what is uncovered is the ways in which the former allows for a broader scope of effect as well as intention. Intrusion implies an intentional breaking into or entering without consent. Harassment is linked more to the experience

of intimidation, connected to behaviours such as physical attacks or aggressive pressure. Intrusion in the context of public space can be used to encompass a wider range of behaviours without predefining the ways in which they are experienced. It is the actor who intrudes onto, or crucially, as will be conceptualised through the theoretical framework of this thesis, *into* the acted on. The feelings of the acted on are not prescribed by the actions of the actor; that is one does not necessarily have to experience the act as intrusive for it to be an intrusion.¹¹ Harassment defines the experience for the acted on, limiting the stories that can be told of actions which are not subjectively experienced as harassing and yet form part of men's intrusion. Harassment has the benefit, and the limitation, of connection to an existing legal framework. Despite the difference in meanings between intrusion and harassment, however, and their acknowledgement of intrusion as fundamental to the experience, both Bowman and Tuerkheimer do not question their naming of the phenomenon as 'street harassment'. Laniya (2005) does explore the importance of naming the phenomenon yet applies a limited definition to the practices included. Following the definitions of Bowman (1993), Leonardo (1981) and Kissling and Kramarae (1991), Laniya defines 'street harassment as the unsolicited verbal and/or nonverbal act of a male stranger towards a female, solely on the basis of her sex, in a public place' (2005: 100). She goes on to critique Robin West's (1987) use of 'street hassling' by claiming that naming the phenomenon as harassment: 'does not couch the injury in euphemism, but calls it what it is: harassment' (Laniya, 2005: 100). Whether the effect on women is always one of feeling harassed is unquestioned.

¹¹ One can imagine, for example, a home intrusion that occurs regardless of our awareness or experience of it.

Laniya's critique raises interesting questions in regards to Nielsen's (2000; 2004) use of 'offensive public speech' in her study of women and men's attitudes towards legal regulation. Using this degendered approach enables Nielsen to capture a wide range of practices including sexually suggestive speech, race related speech and even begging. Practices are thus put on a broader continuum which illuminates points of intersection with race and gender – where for example women of colour are more likely to experience sexually suggestive speech and race-related speech than white women – though Nielsen does not address whether women of colour are also more likely to experience race-related speech than men of colour (Nielsen, 2004). This expansion through conceptual differentiation is also apparent in the sociological work of Lauren Rosewarne. Through defining street harassment as 'disrespectful behaviour occurring in public space that is engaged in by men and directed at women' (Rosewarne, 2005: 5), Rosewarne is able to extend the practices involved to include graffiti and outdoor advertising, an extension that was considered during the early stages of this project (see Chapter Three). There are both benefits in opening out the frame, allowing for a broader range of experiences, and limitations. In Nielsen's narrow framework there is a risk that focusing only on 'sexually suggestive speech' loses the ways in which the practice is located within the wider framework of structural gender inequality. Speech can be sexually suggestive from both women and men, however it has particular meanings when directed from men to women given the prevalence of VAWG, a difference in meaning explored more in the following section and uncovered in the empirical findings of this project (see Chapter Five). In addition, it is in and through the wider context that individual acts of speech gain meaning. As such, what constitutes harmful speech may not be the same as that which would be categorised as 'sexually suggestive', as well as practices that could not be

defined as speech. In Rosewarne's broader framework, there is also a danger of collapsing the differences in experiencing one's freedom diminished by another subject compared to living in a threatening or objectifying environment. There is a uniqueness to the experience of another's freedom being acted over one's own which sits in tension with Rosewarne's attempt to categorise this alongside the experience of objects in public space as creating or adding to an atmosphere of hostility. In feminist and psychological literature this uniqueness is commonly referred to as 'objectification' (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Hill & Fischer, 2008) however this framing will be critiqued as one that can act to simplify the living experience of having another's freedom acted on/over one's own, an experience which is more accurately described as a 'curious paradox of being both object and subject' (Tuerkheimer, 1997: 186). The mechanisms of objectification are in fact a recognition of our subjectivity at the same time as a diminishment of it, producing what Iris Marion Young (2005) has termed a 'contradictory embodiment', and what will be conceptualised in this thesis, through Beauvoir, as 'ambiguous embodiment' (see Chapter Six).

Although writers from a legal perspective do use the connections women make between men's intrusive practices to forge a case for recognition of gender-specific harms in law (see later in this chapter), one of the key findings of Kelly's (1988) research was that: 'the range of men's behaviour that women defined as abusive was neither reflected in legal codes nor in the analytic categories used in previous research' (Kelly, 1988: 74). The difficulty of legal definitions is the reliance on binaries, either something *is* 'street harassment' or it is not. This fails to capture the ways in which experiences of the routine and mundane operations of the gender order can be lived as ambiguous, defined

differently both between women and also by the same woman given different contexts, (not only external contexts but also their own ever-changing, internal world). This difficulty is picked up in Nadia Ilahi's (2010) work on street harassment in Cairo, and its implications for women's access to public spaces. Ilahi highlights how, without the conceptual history of 'sexual harassment' to rest on, the meaning of the term when translated into Arabic, 'carries serious and negative connotations' (2010: 59), thus similar to the difficulties found in Larkin's (1997) study, translating women's experiential realities into the given terminology encounter the problem of what counts.

None of these tensions deny the importance of using the legal system to legitimise women's harms and delegitimise men's harmful practices. The Council of Europe (2011) Convention on Preventing and Combating VAW, which Westminster government signed in June 2012, includes the pledge to pass legislation or other measures to criminalise or impose other sanctions for 'unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment'. Such legislation would mark a significant step forward in recognising the harms of men's stranger intrusion in public space. There is however a risk, as suggested by Evan Stark (2009) in relation to domestic violence, that 'new laws raise the expectation that victims will use the law' (1518), and that those that do not choose to seek legal remedy have their harm disregarded. This suggestion is also raised by the literature under review here, particularly, though not solely, sociological studies examining the intersections of race and 'street harassment'. This literature demonstrates the ways in which race, appearance, class, age and sexuality all influence the likelihood of

women defining men's practices as harassing and of seeking legal remedies for harm (Davis, 1993; Fogg-Davis, 2006; Gardner, 1995; Ilahi, 2010; Laniya, 2005).

IDENTIFYING THE HARM

The lack of a definitional consensus, combined with the problem of inadequate terminology, meets a further difficulty in the various ways the literature on men's stranger intrusion has identified and measured harm. The challenge in articulating women's experiences of unknown men in public space reflects the difficulties feminist theorists have identified in bringing aspects of women's unique phenomenological experience into man-made language (Cameron 1998; Spender, 1985; West 1987). Despite moving across different terminologies and encompassing different practices, there is broad agreement across the literature as to the gendered nature of the harm of 'street harassment'. This agreement, however, creates another difficulty. Finding a language adequate to the expression of gender-specific harm is vital to making that harm visible, a dual process of: 'validating our experiences as we live them and then communicating the nature of these experiences to those who do not share them' (Tuerkheimer, 1997: 174). This suggests an additional explanation for the paucity of the literature; women's marginalised position in terms of their ability to make truth claims about the world or what Robin West (1987) terms the 'phenomenological difference in women's hedonic lives'. As Beauvoir's (2011) 'inessential Other', (see Chapter Four), women's experience does not appear 'as the source of an authoritative general expression of the world' (Smith, 1990: 51), thus social phenomena that are experienced in different

ways by women and men encounter the problem of naming, as seen in the previous section. Evidence for this claim is found in the contradictory language often used in reference to forms of violence overwhelming targeted at women. Where the same event is experienced differently by men and women, existing discursive framings mean that women are obliged to acknowledge the meanings men attach to the experience as well as to describe it from a women's phenomenological standpoint. Some women thus use terms such as 'sexual harassment', which defines the experience both from the perpetrator's perspective (sexual), and their own (harassing) rather than come from a label solely referring to the experience from a woman's standpoint such as, for example, 'sexist harassment'. I would also suggest terms such as 'rape joke' and even 'sexual violence' could be included in this category where the statement is experienced by men as a joke but by women as an expression of rape culture, or where the act is understood by men as sexual but experienced by women as violence. Dale Spender (1985) claims this is a product of women's historic conceptual and material exclusion from the production of knowledge, blocking women's meanings and explanations from acceptance as valid truth claims about the world. The effect of this, for Spender, leaves women's reality untranslatable, 'seen as unintelligible, unreal, unfathomable' (Spender, 1985: 2).

The knowledge base that has been built in the past thirty decades from the explosion in feminist consciousness-raising, research, theory and practice on VAWG, illustrates vast contributions to the undertaking of defining the world from women's phenomenological position. The urgency, however, of developing frameworks for understanding men's violence that could be translated into the language of law and policy, combined with the limits of survey methodology (see next chapter), has meant there has been an increasing

disconnection from the initial calls to articulate women's everyday experience. Kathleen Cairn (1997) highlights some of the problems in how psychological framings of sexual harassment address the harms of the experience. She claims there are obstacles to the development of women's personal agency, a claim advanced in this thesis through the concept of 'situated agency' (see Chapter Four), that psychological perspectives do not address in their exploration of gender specific harms.

Because of these limitations on women's development of agency, the use of standard psychological concepts such as self-esteem, self-concept, body image, locus of control, assertion, personal boundaries, autonomy and so on to discuss women may obscure, rather than clarify, their experiences. Such constructs, drawn from a male psychology of the male person, presuppose an individual acting as an agent. That is, they are formulated from the entitlement perspective and assume that the subject has the freedom and resources to enact a personalized vision of self. Their use to describe women's experience ignores the reality that most women do not have such freedom or such resources (Cairns, 1997: 103).

Cairn's critique is similar to that of Tuerkheimer (1997) in addressing Bowman's (1993) framing of the harm as one of the loss of liberty, a framing also used by Evan Stark (2009) in his exploration of coercive control in intimate partner violence as a 'liberty crime'. For Tuerkheimer this conceptualisation of harm is gender-neutral and 'fails to explain our greater, gender-specific suffering' (1997: 181). It is in reference to Tuerkheimer's claim, that this thesis will build on Simone de Beauvoir's concept of freedom and agency as situated, and explore the role of men's stranger intrusion in public space as a constitutive element of that situation.

Cairns' critique plays out in the psychological literature of what is mostly termed 'stranger harassment' (Fairchild, 2007; 2010; Fairchild & Rudman, 2008) or 'everyday

sexism' (Berg, 2006; Swim, Eyssell & Murdoch, 2010; Swim, Hyers, Cohen & Ferguson, 2001). The harms are addressed in this literature through appeal to Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) objectification theory (Fairchild, 2007; Fairchild & Rudman, 2008, Lord, 2009) and/or to body image and self-esteem (Lord, 2009, Swim & Hyers, 1999; Swim, Hyers, Cohen & Ferguson, 2001) with Susan H. Berg (2006) claiming a moderately strong correlation between 'everyday sexism' and post traumatic stress disorder. The difference in women's phenomenological lives is not addressed through measuring harm in this way, which can result in a particularly degendered approach despite focusing on women's experiences. The findings of Fairchild and Rudman's (2008) study, for example, support treating stranger harassment as a significant form of harm targeting women, yet at the same time miss the contextual backdrop of the gender order and how 'stranger harassment' operates within current structures of gendered power. This decontextualised perspective is replicated in Fairchild's (2010) study on the impact of context on women's perceptions of stranger intrusion, and her finding that 'when women are catcalled on the street they assess the context in formulating their reactions' (215). Fairchild focuses on external contextual factors, such as attractiveness of 'harasser' or time of day, missing internal contextual factors that may greatly influence perception, particularly contexts of previous histories of sexual violence or the broader context within which the experience is located, that of structural gender based inequality.

The contribution of feminist-legal literature offers specific insight here, claiming that the denial of difference in women and men's realities is enshrined in legal statutes based on the principle of the 'reasonable man' which claims to represent an objective standard

against which any individual's understanding or conduct can be measured. This literature focuses on identifying the harm in a step towards evidencing the need for a legal remedy and as such, the gender specific nature of the harm is clearly articulated. Though the legal language of many countries has now changed to 'reasonable person' in order to reflect equality before the law, borrowing from the legal arguments for feminist jurisprudence from feminist legal scholars such as Cynthia Bowman (1993), Catherine MacKinnon (1979), and Robin West (1987), there is a need to acknowledge gendered differences in understanding or conduct. The denial of such differences in relation to men's stranger intrusions onto women in public space is often found in the wider social framing of the phenomenon, where women's statements of harm are met with variations of the narrative that their experience is invalid as women do it too and when they do, men enjoy it. Such a gender-neutral framing of the issue is also argued in Katz, Hannon and Whitten (1996) through the findings of their psychological study that both women and men identified the same behaviour given in vignettes as being sexual harassment. Bowman (1993) exposes the flaws in such mirror-image arguments through linking the harm here to women's fear of rape. For Bowman (1993): 'the reasonable man may not be placed in apprehension of receiving a battery by a stranger yelling, "Hey, cunt," the response of a reasonable woman may differ, because of her constant awareness of the violent consequences of male hostility to women and her realistic fears of rape' (554). Unable to identify which intrusive encounter will lead to rape, Bowman (1993) and Thompson (1994), claim that a reasonable women must regard every encounter as potentially dangerous. This link is also seen in Gardner's (1995) finding that many women: 'considered street remarks and exploitative touch on a continuum with rape, a possible "preamble to rape", "verbal rape", "a little rape", or connected to "sexual

terrorism” (183). Similarly for Tuerkheimer (1997) the harm of ‘street harassment’ is in its reminder to women of male dominance and women’s vulnerability in the face of this. In this way, without explicitly acknowledging Kelly’s (1988) continuum of sexual violence (discussed in detail in Chapter Four), the feminist legal literature connects women’s responses and understandings of ‘street harassment’ to the wider literature on women’s fear of crime and explicitly the fear of rape (see Ferraro, 1996; Gardner, 1990; 1995; Hall, 1985; Hanmer & Saunders, 1984; Harris & Miller, 2000; Madriz, 1997; Poropat, 1992; Scott, 2003; Stanko, 1990; 1992; 1993b; Warr, 1984; 1985; 1990).

Addressing the harm through a link to women’s fear of crime is not limited to the legal literature. Across disciplines, writers refer to the phenomenological difference in women’s experiences of intrusion in public as related to the threat of victimisation. Some agree with the ‘crime paradox’ (Gordon & Riger, 1989; Rosewarne, 2005), where research has consistently found that women fear violence in public spaces more than men yet their risk of victimisation by strangers, at least as measured by crime statistics, is far lower (Ferraro, 1996; Harris & Miller, 2000; Warr, 1984; 1985, 1990). Others recognise that the experiences measured in crime statistics may not represent the amount of violence women experience in their everyday lives, suggesting that women’s higher fear of victimisation may stem from their daily experiences of ‘minor victimisations’, a term suggesting reliance on a hierarchy of harm (Fairchild & Rudman, 2008; Harris & Miller, 2000; MacMillan, Nierobisz, & Welsh, 2000). For Betsy Stanko (1993a; 1993b; 1995) and Michael Smith (1988) the fear of crime paradox fails to capture women’s living and lived experiences of physical and sexual violence. Stanko argues that conventional criminology tends to look at street crime and not crimes

happening behind closed doors with known perpetrators, thereby undermining the detection of crimes of violence against women. Additionally Madriz (1997: 43) suggests that studies which do find women have a higher fear of crime than men are tainted by the fact that: 'women, by virtue of their socialization, are more open to admitting their fears'. In this way, the fear of crime paradox can be critiqued as failing to acknowledge the ways in which men's definitions of what is criminal become enshrined in law, and thus the claim that men experience more crime in public space misses the frequency of 'non criminal' intrusions that women experience (or those women experience but do not report) which may in fact form a central part of perceptions of susceptibility to crime.

Feminist sociologists argue alongside legal scholars that this fear of rape acts to deny women's freedom of movement and thus works as a form of social control (Holgate, 1989; Gordon & Riger, 1989, Madriz, 1997). Hamner and Stanko (1985) report negative psychological effects of this fear, particularly on forcing behavioural change and reduction in quality of life. Such a framing of the harms of men's stranger intrusion brings forward the importance of lodging the meanings of practices in embodied experience, an experience which includes the different meanings associated to different bodies including, though not solely, differently racialised or abled bodies. Davis (1993) recognises this importance in arguing that: 'we cannot hope to understand the meanings of a person's experience, including her experiences of oppression, without first thinking of her as embodied, and second thinking about the particular meanings assigned to that embodiment' (214). For Davis, exploring the racialisation of street harassment results in a particular harm she terms as 'spirit murder' to represent the cumulative effect of a multitude of microaggressions on African American women in particular. Hawley Fogg-

Davis (2006) picks up Davis' claims through examining same-race street harassment as a behavioural pattern rooted in black patriarchy. Across much of the literature, however, disruptions to embodiment are highlighted through exploring the adaptive methods of resistance women adopt in response to this fear of rape (Gardner, 1990; Hamner & Stanko, 1985; Kearl, 2010; Poropat, 1992; Valentine, 1989). Different studies examine the various ways in which women respond to the potentiality of men's stranger intrusion. In her 1995 study of experiences with what she termed 'public space harassment' in Indianapolis, Carol Brooks Gardner outlined seven strategies of women's responses to men's intrusion that involve the body: invoking an absent protector; ignoring, blocking and repressing; the pretence that 'nothing is happening' to provide defence or to screen or mask their own reactions (including, for example, the use of sunglasses, business like walks); staged compliance; answering back, acting back; redefining an already redefined situation; scening and flaunting; acting up by acting out; and finally official and informal complaints. She found that: 'the most common restrictive behaviours women said they regularly engaged in related to being "on guard" while in public, particularly when they are alone' (1995: 113). Similarly Esther Madriz's (1997) study of women's fear of crime based in interviews from Black, Latino and White women living in New York City revealed bodily strategies including: self isolation; hardening the target; strategies of disguise; looking for guardians; ignoring or denying fears; carrying protection; and fighting back including accessing police protection. Kelly (1988) observed that as: '(m)ost women recall an awareness of being watched or possibly followed. It is these perceptions and realities that result in women feeling they have to be constantly aware of their environment, watching and checking the behaviour of men they may encounter, trying to predict their motives and actions' (98). Both Elizabeth

Stanko (1985) and June Larkin (1997) suggest that this routine vigilance takes on the illusion of normalcy for women, a habitual attitude which will be examined during this thesis through a combination of Beauvoir's 'situation' and appeal to Merleau-Ponty's (2002) concept of a 'habit body' (see Chapter Four). Such methods of resistance however, though acknowledged in some studies (Kelly, 1988; Stanko, 1990; Wise & Stanley 1987), are often not captured in attempts to measure the prevalence of VAWG. This suggests another consideration for those supporting the crime paradox, whereby these statistics on prevalence are used as the measure against which to work out whether women's fear of crime or fear of rape is justified, without acknowledgement of the amount of men's intrusion women are successfully disrupting. Intrusion which impacts on women's sense of safety, yet does not show up in crime statistics.

COUNTING THE CONTINUUM

Empirical studies of what is commonly known as 'street harassment', its prevalence, manifestations, harms, and the meanings it holds for both the men who practice it and the women who experience it, is a small body of work. This may be indicative in part of the ways in which the medicalisation and criminalisation of instances of VAWG have taken hold as dominant frameworks, however it also represents some of the difficulties already outlined in this chapter. The lack of agreement on what constitutes the phenomenon, the harm it causes and how to define it, even what to name it, renders comparison between studies complicated and also presents problems for survey methodologies. Across attempts to count the continuum of men's intrusive practices,

studies are often measuring diverse and/or dissimilar practices and the terminology used has a powerful impact on who responds and whether they see their experiences reflected in the questions asked. The particular limitations of studies using survey methodologies, though beneficial in capturing large representative samples, is the same as that encountered in reviewing the legal definitions where the ambiguity which can be central to experiences of men's intrusion in public is lost. Predefining practices into survey questions raises several problems, some of which will be covered in the next chapter's methodological discussion. Separating particular intrusive practices into distinct categories does not represent the ways in which these practices are lived (see Chapter Five) and risks normalising practices that are excluded from question construction.

With these issues in mind, several prominent studies have attempted to measure the frequency with which women and girls experience intrusion from unknown men in public space. Carol Brooks Gardner's 1995 study, based on extensive research including in-depth interviews with nearly five-hundred women and men, is still cited as one of the most influential. With a methodology that did not rely solely on survey research, combined with her broad category of 'public space harassment', Gardner finds the phenomenon extremely common: all of the 293 women in her study reported experiencing some form of public harassment, and all but nine regarded it as 'troublesome' (Gardner, 1995: 89). This high prevalence finding was replicated in an American study based on a nationally representative telephone survey of 612 adult women conducted in 2000 (Oxygen/Markle Pulse, 2000). The poll found almost 87 per cent of women in America between the ages of 18 and 64 had experienced some form of harassment on the street by an unknown man at sometime in their life.

Canadian findings also correlate with this American data. A large survey of 1,990 Canadian women conducted in 1992 was used as the basis for Lenton et al's (1999) study on what they termed 'public harassment'. The study critiques previous feminist analyses based on 'personal experience, case studies, and in-depth interviews' such as Gardner (1995), Kelly (1988), Stanko (1990) and Wise and Stanley (1987), many of the same authors that this literature review has found to be the most concerned with representing women's lived experiences, by claiming that these studies are devalued through their lack of generalisability (Lenton et al, 1999: 522). This illustrates the motivations of many attempts to measure the practice, as seeking evidence in order to feed into legal and policy frameworks. Nearly 81 per cent of the women surveyed in the Lenton et al (1999) study reported having been stared at in a way that made them feel uncomfortable one or more times since the age of 16, 28 per cent had experienced 'indecent exposure', and over 22 per cent indicated that they had experienced 'other; types of unwanted harassment. Only 9 per cent of women surveyed reported that they could not remember experiencing any form of unwanted attention from a man in public. MacMillan, Nierobisz and Welsh (2000) analysed telephone interviews of a national sample of 12,300 Canadian women, aged 18 years and over living in 10 provinces. The study remains one of the largest samples to date, and attempted to measure the impact of stranger harassment on perceived safety. The vast majority (85%) of the women surveyed had experienced 'male stranger harassment in public' and those experiences had a significant and detrimental impact on perceived safety in public. The study thus substantially backs up the claim that experiences of 'street harassment' may explain the 'crime paradox'. The authors make a strong case for the inclusion of what they term

‘stranger harassment’ in research on sexual harassment, identifying that the conditions normally considered key in facilitating sexual harassment, being sociocultural, institutional and traditional gender role socialisation, may need to expand to include criminological concerns such as opportunity and guardianship. The study, however, does not include experiences of non-sexualised intrusions.

Despite the different ways in which the authors’ of these studies attempt to capture the breadth of the continuum of men’s intrusive practices, many still suffer from the limitations of language. Recalling some of the ways of defining men’s practices discussed earlier, the use of ‘unwanted’ seen here is common across the literature. There is an unasked question here about what counts as unwanted or unwelcome in a gender order where women are socialised to expect and even to desire evaluative sexual attention from men. The assumptions underlying the use of the terms ‘unwanted’ or ‘unwelcome’ are that intrusive practices that are not experienced in this way are unproblematic or at least do not ‘count’. It moves focus away from the practices of men, who in practicing intrusion are unaware of whether particular practices are wanted by individual women. Their motivations are left unexamined, as is the possibility of negative impact for the women who may experience such intrusions as wanted or desired. It also decontextualises how women make sense of men’s intrusion based on both wider social messages and previous histories of intrusion and men’s violence (see Chapter Five). From this follows a further question about what or who is being missed in the prevalence literature, and what would they be able to tell us about the harms of the practice.

Referring to articles in women's magazines from 1981,¹² Elizabeth Kissling identifies that many women do 'read street remarks as a form of compliment, carefully distinguishing them from obscene or violent street harassment' (1991: 452). Similarly towards the end of this project, prominent trans activist Paris Lees wrote an article in Vice magazine titled 'I Love Wolf Whistles and Catcalls; Am I a Bad Feminist' (Lees, 2014). There is an interesting and important question here, beyond the scope of this thesis, about the differences between growing up identified externally as female and growing up identifying as this only internally, particularly given the findings in Chapter Six of men's intrusion for women as 'all part of growing up'. Even outside this question, however, when 'unwanted' excludes the experiences of women who experience particular practices as complimentary, the ability to explore if there is a difference in harm for experiences that are lived as desired is closed off.

Moving to a cultural context closer to that lived in by most of the participants for this project; the poll conducted by the End Violence Against Women Coalition (EVAW, 2012) continues this labelling of the experience as unwanted and also the framing of sexual harassment. During the London Mayoral elections in 2012, EVAW, the UK's largest coalition of organisations working to end VAWG, commissioned a survey asking women who live in London about their experiences of unwanted contact or attention of a sexual nature in public spaces and on public transport over the last year, giving the examples of wolf-whistling, sexual comments, staring and exposure. Their findings drawn from 523 women, demonstrate the impact of generational differences: 41 per cent of

¹² Diane Salvatore (1981) Letter: *Ms.* September: 7 and Carol Weston (1981) 'Viewpoint: Why Squander Your Wrath on Catcalls and Wolf Whistles? Be Honest. Don't They Sometimes Give You a Nice Ego Boost', *Glamour* July: 118.

women aged 18-34 had experienced unwanted sexual attention in public spaces compared to 21 per cent of all women surveyed. They also found high levels of unwanted sexual attention on public transport, particularly for women aged 18-24 (with 31% reporting experiences), reflecting both generational differences in terms of what is lived as 'harassment' and also perhaps who is more likely to regularly use public transportation. Inspired by the EVAW study, Jane Osmond's (2013) study of women in Coventry, England, has an even further limited definition of practices, restricted to wolf-whistling, groping and unwanted sexual comments. Using both an online survey (n=193) and follow up interviews with sixteen of the survey participants, Osmond found that 61 per cent of participants reported experiencing one or more these incidents – which she terms 'public sexual harassment'. These findings sit alongside that of one of the only other England specific surveys (Crawford et al, 1990), which found that approximately 40 per cent of women in Islington, North London, reported having been harassed (defined as being stared at, approached, followed or spoken to) during the survey year. The findings of women's experiences over the past 12 months (measured by these English studies) are thus expectedly lower than those of studies measuring women's experiences since the age of sixteen. In addition the difference in cultural contexts may also impact on findings, contexts that are operating to set Goffman's (1990) unspoken rules of engagement between people in public places, or Connell's (2002) gender relations.

Towards the final stages of writing this thesis, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published the results of an EU-wide survey of violence against women, based on interviews with 42,000 women across the 28 member states of

the European Union (FRA, 2014). It is difficult to draw directly from this survey for the phenomenon under investigation in this thesis, as sexual and physical violence was separated out from behaviours such as ‘inappropriate staring’ or ‘unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing’, with information on the setting of the act given for the former but not the latter.¹³ Broadly, however, the survey found that almost a quarter (22%) of the women surveyed had experienced physical or sexual violence from a non partner, with 31 per cent of this physical violence being perpetrated by a stranger and 23 per cent being sexual violence perpetrated by a stranger. For this non-partner violence, 20 per cent occurred in public environments, such as out in the street, a car park or other public area. In addition, the survey asked specific questions about sexual harassment, finding just over half (n=21,180) women surveyed had experienced sexual harassment at least once in their life. In most cases since they were 15 years old, the perpetrator was an unknown person (68%), with the most common forms being indecent exposure (83% of women experiencing indecent exposure indicating the perpetrator was unknown) and cyberharassment (73% indicating an unknown perpetrator). Questions about the location of sexual harassment were not asked and, in addition, the framings used were again those of only measuring intrusions experienced as unwelcome or offensive. The FRA survey however does powerfully connect women’s experiences of VAWG with their fear of victimisation, finding that almost half of women surveyed reported restrictions in their freedom of movement based on the fear of gender based violence. The findings on

¹³ Even where location questions were asked, data was not analysed in terms of the number/percentage of women who had experienced stranger intrusion in public spaces. Though one can reasonably assume a large proportion of unknown perpetrators offend in public spaces, strangers can also occupy home or work settings and similarly partners or known men can perpetrate in public spaces such as shopping centres or public transport.

cyberharassment are also particularly interesting for this study as it appears to be a new and growing public space arena for men to practice intrusion.

CONCLUSION

The literature on what is most commonly termed ‘street harassment’ is a cross-disciplinary body of work, including legal, sociological and psychological perspectives. This chapter has explored the literature through focusing on the disparities and similarities, specifically: how different studies name the phenomenon; define the practices it includes; identify its harm; and measure its frequency. The relative dearth of literature on men’s stranger intrusions when compared to other forms of men’s VAWG, may relate to the lack of consensus on what constitutes the phenomenon, combined with the difficulties of researching an experience so ordinary as to be absorbed into the background.

There was no consistent term used in the literature to capture the range of women’s encounters with men’s stranger intrusion in public space. Terminology was most often focused on the location of intrusion or its frequency, highlighting that what is missing is an explicit, self-reflective examination of the authors’ choice of terminology, and recognition of any impact this may have had on their findings. The different practices included across the literature as forms of men’s stranger intrusion, evidenced how little work has asked women themselves how they define their experiences. Within the legal literature, which dominates attempts to define the practices, there is a reliance on

binaries, either something *is* ‘street harassment’ or it is not; Liz Kelly’s (1988) concept of a continuum, however, enables the maintenance of the ways in which experiences of the routine and mundane operations of the gender order can be lived as ambiguous, defined differently both between women and also by the same woman given different contexts. There is thus a tension between providing a framework that can be used and understood by individuals as reflecting lived realities, and providing one that can be operationalised easily in legal and policy contexts.

The need to develop frameworks for understanding men’s violence that could be translated into the language of law and policy, has meant that much of the literature also has a specific focus on attempting to measure the harms of unknown men’s intrusion, a focus that has resulted in an increasing disconnection from the initial calls to articulate women’s everyday experience. Different studies that attempt to identify the harm, frame the nature of the injury in terms of gendered differences in understanding or conduct. This highlighted the importance of lodging the meanings of practices in embodied experience; an experience that includes the different meanings associated with different bodies in particular cultural contexts. Lack of agreement on what constitutes the phenomenon renders comparison between different prevalence studies difficult. Across the sparse literature detailing men’s stranger intrusions, findings ranged from 80-100 per cent of women in North American studies measuring experience over a lifetime (Lenton et al, 1999; MacMillan, Nierobisz & Welsh, 2000; Oxygen/Markle Pulse, 2000), to 40-60 per cent of women in English based studies measuring experience over the previous survey year (Crawford et al, 1990; EVAW, 2012; Osmond, 2013). In this way it suggested that attempting to measure the practice to inform criminal and policy

frameworks, may sit uneasily with examining women's ordinary, daily, lived experience. The tension between the concepts of a continuum of sexual violence and those of law and crime (see Kelly, 2011), problematises the project of translating women's reality into the categories necessary for certain types of sociological, legal and psychological studies.

It is here that this thesis aims to fill a gap, bringing forward a philosophical perspective to provide a framework that can be used and understood by individuals as reflecting living realities, without hiding the revolutionary aspects of subverting dominant narratives. In addition, this project attempts to avoid the separation of practices that can result in supporting a hierarchy of harm, losing the impact of the more everyday or commonplace intrusions (Kelly, 1988) as well as those that may not be experienced as harassing by all women in all contexts. Finally, it aims to highlight the ways in which the routine vigilance many women adopt in response to their perceptions and realities of VAWG, is often lost in attempts to measure prevalence, denying women's expression of an agency situated within a context of gender inequality. It is here, in marking out the gap for this study, that this review of the literature on men's stranger intrusion in public space will conclude, shifting focus to how this project attempted to negotiate the difficulties encountered in the process of researching the ordinary.

CHAPTER THREE

Researching the Ordinary

INTRODUCTION

The methodological framework for this project arose from a distinct challenge, that of researching the ordinary. This challenge is reflected in the connections between the principles and practices of feminist research, and the ontological concerns of existential-phenomenology that guided Simone de Beauvoir (2011) in attempting to uncover the circumstances limiting women's freedom. As will be seen in Chapter Four's outlining of this project's theoretical framework, both disciplines challenge positivist views whereby truth is objective and 'out there', by examining subjective existence in its material everydayness. This lived or living reality is a necessarily situated, embodied reality that, far from being subjective and thus less valid than 'objective' understandings, is the only

access to reality we can ever truly achieve. Embodied experience then, for both materialist feminist approaches and existential-phenomenological philosophy, is at the core of claims to knowledge.

For this thesis, existing at the intersections of these two approaches, a methodological approach was needed that enabled participants to speak of aspects in their living experience that, due to their very basis as part of women's situation, are absorbed into the background becoming unremarkable and, through this, unspoken. In a climate where women are coping with threats to their safety posed by known men and unknown men, where rape and/or intimate partner violence form the plots of Hollywood movies and best seller novels, and media representations focus on the exceptional and sensational instances of violence, there is a risk that ordinary encounters are lost. The concern here is that the focus on fear may override attention centring on practices that impact women's freedom. Recalling the notion of 'dominant narratives' (McKenzie-Mohr & Lafrance, 2010) and the discussion detailing some of the limitations of the harassment framework in the previous chapter, the stories available to understand and speak of experiences in public space are mainly framed in a binary of either compliment (sexual) or threat (harassment). Such narratives hide the ways in which encounters may be experienced as both, as well as discount experiences, such as ordinary interruptions (see Chapter Five) that do not fit into either framing. The methodological task was, therefore, how to combat such framings in the research process, widening out the stories that can be told and/or unearthing those that cannot. As seen in the literature review, despite common reference to the daily, innocuous nature of many encounters, much empirical research still focuses on criminalised behaviours or argues for legislating against

those that are not criminal already. This project sought to avoid such a separation, to find a way to explore the continuum of men's intrusive practices. In order to manage both of these challenges, particular research tools were developed and it is through these, combined with the experience of men's intrusion following the process of recruitment, that the methodology of this project has its most significant implications.

This chapter begins by outlining the transdisciplinary nature of the project, an underpinning further developed in the following chapter on theoretical foundations, yet important here in establishing the epistemological basis from which the methodology was designed. It briefly highlights the principles grounding materialist feminist research approaches and how the concerns of existential-phenomenology, being the self as it is lived, a situated, embodied, relational self, connect to these principles. The research was formed and framed through piloting an online survey and reviewing the London based 'Hollaback' blog.¹⁴ The ways in which the blog posts were operationalised as framing data will be discussed, pointing to the ways in which some of the gaps that had been identified in the literature could be addressed in this study.

The recruitment process will be focused on in detail in acknowledgement of the often overlooked impact of recruitment on research participants and thus research findings. It will detail here some of the ethical considerations of the research, particularly around balancing women's disclosures of sexual violence in the research context and my professional role as a frontline support worker for female survivors of rape and childhood sexual abuse. There is, however, a particular reason why the recruitment for this project

¹⁴ See <http://ldn.ihollaback.org/> for the London based site [accessed 18th march, 2014].

requires substantial discussion. The phenomenon under investigation played out during the very process of the research itself, with the chosen method of online recruitment inadvertently creating a public space for men's intrusion. This intrusion from men into and onto the research site will be outlined, exploring how the public online space used to recruit participants was taken up by unknown men and used as a context through which to intrude and abuse, both my participants and myself. This experience furthered my location within the research site as a variation of Humphrey's (2007) 'insider-outsider', and assisted in my development of an analytic framework.

Pulling together the experience of intrusion during recruitment, together with insights from the pilot and the framing data, led to the development of particular tools. Ann Oakley's (2005) work on conducting an interview as if it were a conversation was expanded through the use of conversation as a research method, and a research process was developed including participant notebooks and follow up conversations. The chapter concludes by outlining the process of analysis and writing. It will highlight the inductive nature of the research design and how this led to a process of analysis that constantly evolved through the course of data gathering, data preparation and writing through the data. It argues that analysis, similar to ethics, cannot be separated as a particular 'event', nor seen as a contained 'stage' of the research. Both analysis and ethics for this project are best described as fluid, evolving and iterative processes. This chapter ends in considering how the creation of a poetic transcription (see Appendix One) enabled a method of data preparation that preserved the singularity, and sometimes sheer bizarreness, of men's intrusive practices. These particular methodological choices

illuminated a gap unexplored during the review of the literature, and one that is grounded in, and itself creates, the difficulty of researching the ordinary.

CONCRETE CONNECTIONS: PHENOMENOLOGY AND FEMINIST PRAXIS

The epistemological basis of the project's methodology is best explained through appeal to Rosi Braidotti's (1993) concept of 'transdisciplinarity', alongside Sally Engles Merry's (2006) model of 'translation into vernaculars' (see Chapter Two). For Braidotti (1993), transdisciplinarity refers to the crossing of disciplinary boundaries without concern for the vertical distinctions around which they have been organised, a style that is methodologically resonant with the 'bricolage' of structuralists. Such vertical distinctions would traditionally separate philosophy from feminist social research, with grand philosophical theory raised above knowledge generated through empirical studies, particularly studies concerned solely with women's experiential realities. Instead the methodology of this thesis follows the calls of Braidotti and of Stevi Jackson to make 'use of conceptual tools that seem useful for a particular purpose rather than being guided by dogmatic allegiance to a particular set of concepts' (Jackson, 2001: 286).

The research was designed as a transdisciplinary study, linking feminist VAWG research practice and existential-phenomenological theory, with a desire to hold onto the principles of translation outlined by Sally Engles Merry. Merry (2006) claimed that rhetoric or structures need adjusting when brought into new contexts so they are

understandable, but this must be balanced with an attempt to keep new concepts from becoming fully indigenised – a process whereby they may inadvertently lose their revolutionary possibilities. Such positioning is found in the work of Audre Lorde, who also declared the importance of bringing old concepts into new contexts to test their efficacy and potential for change.

Sometimes we drug ourselves with dreams of new ideas. The head will save us. The brain alone will set us free. But there are no new ideas still waiting in the wings to save us as women, as human. There are only old and forgotten ones, new combinations, extrapolations and recognitions from within ourselves, along with the renewed courage to try them out (Lorde, 1986: 35).

Following this, the notion of revisiting Beauvoir's exploration of women's situated self in light of modern day feminist questions is intriguing. The research design borrowed the notions and concepts of existential-phenomenology and operationalised them in the context of a feminist social research project on VAWG, as a means of uncovering new perspectives for understanding the impacts of men's intrusion. The philosophical underpinning of the research needed to be translated into an accessible form for participants who may not have had a background in academic philosophy. This translation will be seen in the ways in which conversation as a method sought to uncover everyday living experience and how the use of participant notebooks built on Edmund Husserl's (2001) concept of the phenomenological epoché, to illuminate the taken for granted aspects of the world. Already, however, existential-phenomenology's history of in-depth philosophical examination into the meanings and significance of lived experience and the self as situated had a great compatibility with feminist theory and research.

Deriving from the Greek *phainomenon* (appearance) and *logos* (reason or word), phenomenology was founded by Edmund Husserl at the turn of the 19th century. Husserl held that the world of immediate or lived experience takes precedence over the objectified and abstract world of the natural sciences, as it is that which makes itself first known to consciousness. What came to be known as existential-phenomenology was developed by Martin Heidegger, Husserl's student. Where Husserl had seen the task of phenomenology to be the description of the lived world from the viewpoint of a detached observer (using the phenomenological epoché, where experience is bracketed and things are examined 'as they are'), Heidegger claimed the observer cannot, in actuality, separate their self from the world, and that Husserl's prioritising of 'lived experience' still supported a false dichotomy between the world as we live it and the world as it is. Consequently, for existential-phenomenology, the modalities¹⁵ of conscious experience are also the ways one is in the world, a shift from the 'lived-world' to the concrete experience of being-in-the-world, or 'being there', Heidegger's (1996) concept of *Dasein*. Crucially 'in' here refers to an inextricable *entanglement with* the world; human beings are not 'in' the world as water is 'in' a glass. We cannot know our world outside of ourselves in it, and similarly we cannot know ourselves outside of existing in the world. Departing from Husserl then, the existential-phenomenologists claimed that our material reality, Stanley and Wise's 'doing' of everyday life (1993), is the only access to reality we can ever truly claim. Human reality is thus necessarily

¹⁵ The terminology of 'modes' and 'modalities' when used in this thesis are evoked not to represent set and stable categories of experience but rather are used with the acknowledgment that our temporality and agency create modes that shift across situations and contexts. Such a use of 'modes' also appears in Gail Weiss (1999): 'embodiment suggests an experience that is constantly in the making, that is continually being constituted and reconstituted from one moment to the next. To talk about modes of embodiment therefore, is not to invoke a set of Kantian categories, absolute and inviolable, but rather, to talk about modes that are themselves continually changing in significance and appearance over time' (43).

situated. Any claim to reality or knowledge is at the same time always the expression of a particular standpoint; a perspective originating in our embodiment.

If existential-phenomenologists explore what living experience means ‘from the existential vantage point and in the language of the experiencing person’ (Garko, 1999: 169), then there is great compatibility between this perspective and many of the principles underlying feminist methodologies. Sketching the links between the two, Michael Garko (1999) pointed to five points of similarity: everyday experience or the ‘life-world’; illumination of concealed phenomena; intentional consciousness; the relationship between subject/object; and suspending the taken for granted. There is no single, definable feminist research methodology; rather there are multiple methodologies that can be employed for a feminist purpose. For Kelly, Burton and Regan (1994: 46) ‘(w)hat makes research ‘feminist’ is not the methods as such, but the framework within which they are located, and the particular ways in which they are deployed’. The lack of single definition encourages a flexible research practice that creates opportunities for raising new questions or discovering innovative research techniques in an attempt to excavate and examine the social oppression of women. Feminist research then is a form of praxis, seeking to enable new understandings to address aspects of women’s oppression and which can then be used as a resource in the creation of social change. In recognising marginalised experience, it aims to uncover subjugated knowledge, ‘listening through the gaps in talking – attending to what is not stated but present’ (Hesse-Biber 2007: 16). Feminist research thus problematises hierarchies of power that privilege one way of knowing over another (similar to Heidegger’s critique of Husserl), questioning not only what we know but how, and importantly who or what is defining and defined

by it. The illumination of such hierarchies of power, and recognition of the importance of women's voices in understanding women's living experience, becomes an important entry point for many feminist methodologies. Such a perspective resonates with that held by many existential-phenomenologists. Beauvoir's conceptualisation of situation, explored in detail in the following chapter, has much to offer feminist research praxis here.

... (I)t is no doubt impossible to approach any human problem without partiality: even the way of asking the questions, of adopting perspectives, presupposes hierarchies of interests; all characteristics comprise values; every so-called objective description is set against an ethical background. Instead of trying to conceal those principles that are more or less explicitly implied, we would be better off stating them from the start (Beauvoir, 2011: 16).

Similarly, Beauvoir's frequent claims that she was a writer, not a philosopher, (see Simons, 1999), can be construed as a subversive act recognising knowledge as situated and refusing the hierarchies of power inherent in claims of a totalising system. This epistemological position is also found in feminist critiques of a purely phenomenological approach to research, grounded in the ability of the researcher to bracket off their own assumptions and come to the research free from hypotheses or preconceptions. Such an understanding also appears in Donna Haraway's (1988) paper on the science question in feminism where Haraway argues for the recognition of 'situated knowledges' in which the researcher asserts all knowledge as partial and never universal. Elizabeth Grosz goes further, suggesting that the concept of 'knowledge' itself is embedded in a patriarchal history and that one of the tasks of feminism is to conduct a 'structural reorganisation of positions of knowing, their effects on the kinds of object known, *and* our pre-given ways of knowing them' (Grosz, 1993: 207). Feminist sociologists Liz Stanley and Sue Wise,

proponents of the call to examine the ‘personal, the everyday and what we experience – women’s lived experience’ (Stanley & Wise, 1983: 146), also question alongside existential-phenomenology the notion of an impartial observer in social research. Despite the usefulness of phenomenology in illuminating normative assumptions, feminist perspectives aim to also keep the researcher visible in the frame of the research; an interested and subjective actor (Stanley & Wise, 1993), who guides the research process and both construes and claims findings. The call here is for what Stanley and Wise (1990) term ‘accountable knowledge’, where the situation giving rise to a project’s findings is made visible, including the situated reasoning process of the researcher.

The methodology of this project then is grounded in the development of research tools informed by existential-phenomenological and feminist perspectives. Following this, my own role as researcher, asking questions, interpreting responses and making decisions throughout the writing process of omission and inclusion, is the frame through which all findings are situated. My position in relation to the research topic is both insider-outsider (Coy, 2006; Humphrey, 2007), having experience of many but not all of the intrusive practices being studied. In addition, throughout the research I was employed at a London Rape Crisis Centre, providing support for female survivors of rape and childhood sexual abuse. This living experience, of both intrusions that I had experienced and the narratives of hundreds of survivors, was and still is combined with an academic background and deep-seated passion for philosophical inquiry, primarily existential-phenomenology. A core tenet of the existential-phenomenological position is that our world, our being, has no pre-existing meaning. Our existence precedes our essence, turning focus to the ways we make meaning out of our world rather than believing our

world has an inherent meaning which we uncover through our engagement with it. From an outsider perspective, VAWG and the image of the ‘existentialist’, complete with black beret and cigarette may have very little in common, however both passions embodied in me, freely chosen, as Sartre would say as my fundamental project, gave rise to a very clear sense that the two were connected in ways left unexplored in the literature of either. I made the connection between sexual violence and philosophy because of the ways in which my life straddled both worlds. This concept of embodied experience as providing forms of useful knowledge that may not be accessible through more objective means, is a key concept in both feminist research and existential-phenomenology, and thus central to the epistemological basis of this project. Susan Brison, an American philosopher, also made the connection between philosophy and rape, coming to this through embodied experience. Going for a jog in the French countryside at 10.30 in the morning on the 4th of July 1990, Brison was raped by a stranger and left in a ditch by the side of the road. She survived and went on to write the first work of philosophy specifically focusing on survivors’ responses to rape, *Aftermath* (2002). The links then, between feminist research practice and existential-phenomenology, are not for this project simply born of theoretical resonance. Instead, they are also based in my own material, embodied, living experience, both abstract and concrete connections.

FORMING, FRAMING AND NAMING

The absence of literature on women's experiences of men's stranger intrusion in England, revealed at the project's initial stages, led to a need to discover different forms of evidence to help frame the research questions, in particular those that aimed to unearth mundane or routine experiences. In addition, as identified in the previous chapter, existing studies encountered the problems of terminology and definitions, whereby a lack of consistency in language, lack of agreement about what constitutes the phenomenon and the difficulties of unearthing ordinary experience, combined to problematise measurement and exploration. This created particular challenges, primarily around my own choice of terminology, as well as offering an opportunity to use unconventional forms of data to assist in forming and framing the research questions.

Ethical approval was sought, and gained, at the early stages of the research based on the prioritising of participant welfare over participation in the research, as well as the principles of informed consent, confidentiality and the capacity to withdraw at any stage. This meant that not only were the ethical guidelines of the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2002) adhered to throughout the research process, but also, given the field of study, the World Health Organisation's guidelines on researching Violence Against Women (Ellsberg, Heise & Shrader, 1999). Both guidelines were key in developing a research methodology that would enable women to make an informed choice about participation at every stage. As men's stranger intrusion was being explored as part of Kelly's (1988) concept of a continuum of sexual violence, a central ethical consideration was the possibility of women's disclosures of sexual violence in a context

they had not anticipated; that is, applying to participate in research on ‘street harassment’. In line with feminist theory on the importance of weaving self-reflexivity into the process of research my role as a support worker for Rape Crisis was acknowledged in recruitment material sent out after women expressed an initial interest in participating (see Appendix Two). As highlighted by Humphrey in her 2007 discussion of feminist action research, the researcher must acknowledge themselves as a person who may come to contain within themselves the pre-existing difficulties in the research site, and as a professional who bridges various worlds in the conduct of the research in a manner which raises novel contradictions. Although the role of insider-outsider can be difficult to balance, it sometimes provides unique opportunities for information gathering. It is in the potential value of the information that may be accessed through this project that the benefits of my position as a support worker in the field of sexual violence balanced with its possible difficulties. Rebecca Campbell (2013) suggests that in researching survivors of rape, questions about sexual violence are asked early on in the process, in order that participants are not holding their anxiety about answering such questions longer than necessary. This suggestion was incorporated into this project through explicitly identifying at the outset, including in recruitment, that Kelly’s (1988) concept of the continuum of sexual violence was being used and that, following this, experiences of other forms of men’s intrusion and violence, including forms such as rape and childhood sexual abuse, may be explored during participation. Such consideration connected with how my engagement with the language struggle identified in the literature had resulted in alternating in thinking and writing between different ways of naming the same experience in order to frame the research for participants and form my research questions. Similar to McKenzie-Mohr and Lafrance’s

(2010: 54) difficulty in finding a way to invite participants to their study ‘without prefiguring the stories that could be told’, this project met with the challenge of the limits of language as well, a need to subvert the dominant narratives identified in the previous chapter. Returning to the project’s epistemological framework, the founding principle of phenomenology is that experience should be examined as it presents itself to consciousness, that is as it occurs and in its own terms (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In everyday life we are actively engaged in a taken for granted experience of the world. Feminism challenged this ‘taken for grantedness’ by pointing out how the everyday world can only be taken for granted if one is entitled to do so. This is a variation of feminist double vision, one eye on the world as it appears pre-reflectively, and one eye on the ways in which it is created by, and re-creating, the current gender order. Using the idea of the phenomenological epoché and the bracketing of experience (Husserl, 2001) this suggests that attempts to ‘bracket’ the dominant narrative of ‘street harassment’ requires careful negotiation of terminology to enable wider stories which may not fit into categories of harassment, both those seen as too trivial and too criminal to be categorised in this way.

Initially in framing the research, Kelly’s (1988) term ‘commonplace intrusions’ was used as a way of labelling experiences phenomenologically, that is as they have meaning to the women experiencing them through naming their widespread existence in women’s lives. On further reflection however, to name these particular experiences as commonplace risked presupposing their frequency. Naming experiences as intersubjective was then tested (through both the pilot survey and pilot conversations), hoping to situate the intrusions within a history of philosophical reflection on the problem of the Other (see

Beauvoir, 2011; Sartre, 2007). Such a framing, however, degendered who is doing and who is being done to, effectively turning focus away from the structural towards the individual without holding the ways in which the two are lived together. In ensuring one aspect of women's experience is not silenced I did not then want to minimise or discount the existence and impact of another. I also explored the use of male stranger intrusion, in order to keep both gender and relationship of perpetrator in the frame. Critical masculinities theorists including Malcolm Cowburn and Keith Pringle (2000), however, have suggested the use of 'male' can work to hide how men's violence is the result of men's practices, not their biological 'maleness'. Likewise, I did not want to lose what can be gained from naming actions as violence: the power not just for legislative redress but also acknowledgement of harm. Yet, as seen in the literature review, terminology that carries particular connotations, such as 'violence' with its intimations of physical attack and outward aggression, can work to silence experiences that are more diffuse than this. Here then is where the continuum assists as a concept, able to balance seemingly competing positions. The issue of naming then becomes one of balance. Balancing claims that the power of discourse means that speech outside of it will not be heard, and the practical limitations of research tools that are insufficient at capturing the range, complexity and subtlety of events as they reveal themselves to consciousness, with the revolutionary potential of attempting to do both. What was needed in the formative parts of the project was to develop tools, including language, to enable the disclosure of a socially hidden issue. This, combined with the particular gaps identified in the literature, led to the seeking out of alternative sources for data through which to test terminology and frame research questions, primarily through piloting an online survey and reviewing of online forums on 'street harassment'. As will be seen in this chapter, the

Careful negotiation of language, particularly during recruitment, was thus conducted in order to protect women from additional harm due to participation – seeking to disrupt the potential in the research process to mirror some of the dynamics of men’s violence, such as boundary shifting. A significant ethical consideration of the project that was missed from reflection at the outset, however, was the possibility of harm from men’s stranger intrusion into the process of research itself. This will be fully discussed later in this chapter.

Pilot survey

A survey for the study was piloted during November and December 2010 using the online survey tool ‘Survey Monkey’.¹⁶ Titled ‘Women’s Experiences of Public Space’, it attempted to avoid, at this stage, the problems with terminology given above. The survey collected data for two weeks, with the link sent out to 20 women known through both personal and professional networks. A total of 14 women responded and, of those, nine fully completed the survey. The survey began explaining how the research was situated and asked demographic information, followed by questions on five categories of experiences that had been labelled across the literature. The questions asked: how often the form of intrusion had been experienced over the participant’s lifetime; the most recent incident; participant’s feelings about that particular form of intrusion; and their responses to intrusion more broadly. The final questions asked for detail about both the most recent and the worst of any of these experiences and provided a reflective space if there was anything further a participant wished to add. The survey questions were followed by piloting questions regarding how long it took to complete, whether any

¹⁶ Survey available online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/publicspacepilot> [accessed 20th January, 2014].

questions were missing or needed adjustment and how participants felt at the end of the survey.

The results of the pilot significantly influenced future methodological decisions, most powerfully through the ways in which it colluded in the invisibility of the very issue it set out to explore. Everyday encounters, the daily, not overtly sexualised, intrusions and interruptions that women experience as part of their embodied experience in public space, the very phenomena I intended to make visible, were excluded in the pilot survey questions. The questions covered practices such as verbal intrusions or following but not the everyday manifestations of men's intrusion, the practices I came to group together as 'ordinary interruptions' (see Chapter Five). Liz Kelly, who was both my primary supervisor and a key theorist in my conceptual framework (see Chapter Four), wrote about this omission in 2012, reflecting on the concept of the continuum of sexual violence.

The everyday, routine intimate intrusions which were so key to the continuum have dropped off many agendas – leading to the oft quoted cliché that domestic violence is the most common form of violence against women. It is without question the most researched and counted, but where prevalence surveys include a series of questions on harassment, as recent French and German studies did (European Commission, 2010), it emerges as considerably more common in women's lives. A further example of this loss involves a current CWASU PhD student who is revisiting the continuum through the lens of street harassment: in the first draft of her questionnaire neither she nor I noticed that key questions which might illuminate ambiguous experiences were missing (Kelly, 2012a: xviii).

The ordinary intrusions had become invisible, normalised, or perhaps superseded by the more overt violations women can experience in public space. This prompted further

thinking about the ways in which the concept of the continuum, not a hierarchy of sexual violence but a chart of its manifestations and mutations, is invaluable in exploring how women experience public space, and sparked the challenge of finding methodological tools that would encourage or enable illuminations of the routine. Whilst an oversight for this study, even had the ordinary been remembered, crafting questions able to capture the ambiguity and complexity of such intrusions would have been difficult. This led to consideration of how the necessary focus on women's safety in public space, by both researchers and women in everyday interactions may overshadow discussion on practices impacting on women's freedom – a concern that came to motivate my methodological decisions. It was the primary reason behind the decision to abandon the use of an online survey, with its requisite separations, and seek instead to find tools that allowed for an exploration of both freedom and safety as they are experienced, that is alongside each other, rather than as separate and in tension.

The absence in the pilot survey of the very questions I set out to explore also provided an insight into the ways in which the benefits afforded by my position as both insider and outsider, allowing access to implicit knowledge (Humphrey, 2007), sit alongside the challenges of such a position, particularly in terms of how the routine experience of men's intrusion gives rise to this particular kind of coping conceptualised by Kelly and Radford (1990) as 'nothing really happened'. The fact that despite my own understandings of this, and those of my supervisors, this daily experience was inadvertently overlooked in surveying women's experiences in public space, helps to demonstrate the pervasiveness of its invisibility. Minimising and discounting as coping mechanisms appear so embedded in my own response to ordinary interruptions

experienced in public space that even when my gaze was focused upon it, these mundane practices were blurred out of focus. On reflection, this was not about omission, but about an active coping response that had itself become hidden (see also Chapter Six). To have uncovered such a habitual mode of experiencing and understanding intrusion so early in the research process significantly influenced my methodological decisions, as well as the expansion of my theoretical framework to include the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2002) on our habituated modes of embodiment.

The use of online blogs

As seen in the literature review, there are limited academic studies on the prevalence and range of women's experiences with men's stranger intrusions in public space. The rapid growth in the use of online spaces such as blogging platforms and social media during the twenty-first century has provided researchers with unprecedented access to the narratives of individual everyday lives (Page, 2012). The growth of online forums for experiences of street harassment such as the international Hollaback! sites,¹⁷ American based Stop Street Harassment,¹⁸ and the England based Everyday Sexism Project,¹⁹ offer a means of supplementing empirical studies, though also raising important ethical questions about the use of data posted online (see Buchanan & Ess, 2007). Such spaces have the unique capacity of offering public /semi-public forums for women to record and share experiences of violence, at the same time as maintaining relative anonymity and

¹⁷ Begun by Emily May in 2005 (Kearl, 2010), Hollaback! Currently has sites in 25 countries hosted on the [ihollaback.org](http://www.ihollaback.org) blog: <http://www.ihollaback.org/about> [accessed 17th december, 2013].

¹⁸ Established by Holly Kearl in 2008 as a website and companion blog, Stop Street Harassment has developed as a resource hub for research, articles and prevention work on street harassment as well as an online blog space.

¹⁹ The Everyday Sexism Project was established in April 2012 by Laura Bates, encouraging women in England to submit and share stories of sexism faced on a daily basis (Bates, 2014). The project went international in 2013 and is currently in 18 countries.

low risk of censorship. Over a decade ago, Janet Morahan-Martin considered such a capacity in her evaluation of the potential for the internet to create spaces for women, claiming that for online spaces: 'the lack of physical presence, anonymity, and disinhibition can foster more open communication and feelings of safety, while online communities can provide a feeling of belongingness and acceptance with like-minded individuals' (Morahan-Martin, 2000: 686). These same qualities provide an unfortunately fertile ground for online sexual harassment, where relative anonymity and disinhibition combines with public access to create disruption to community forums or discussions by hostile individuals (Herring et al, 2002; Suler, 2004). This practice, commonly called trolling, will be covered in more detail later in this chapter, as during the course of this project, both the benefits and challenges of online spaces were experienced.

Focusing on the benefits, the use of online spaces for building communities amongst women with shared experiences of socially silenced issues such as breast cancer has been widely discussed (Page, 2012; Pitts, 2004; Sharf, 1997; van Uden-Kraan et al 2008). Literature on online forums with specific reference to personal narratives of VAWG however, remains underdeveloped and there is a gap in knowledge around the ways in which women use online spaces to share experiences across the continuum of sexual violence. Recently studies are focusing on the use of support forums for women experiencing intimate partner violence (Berg, 2014), with the reporting of routine intrusions online only beginning to be researched in detail (see Bates, 2014) despite the growing use of online sites and social networks for posting experiences of street harassment, including smartphone applications for mapping harassment such as

Fightback,²⁰ Harassmap,²¹ and Hollaback!'s iPhone application.²² The popularity of using online spaces to record experiences of this particular phenomenon may stem in part from contextual factors inherent in the encounter itself, occurring in public spaces unlike most forms of VAWG. It may be that such experiences singularly lend themselves to being shared online due to both this public nature and to the ways in which responses at the time may be impossible for reasons of safety, the inability to conclusively identify the perpetrator or the difficulty in validating one's own experience. The accessibility of the internet in public space, accelerated by the popularity of smartphones, provides an avenue for immediate active response to intrusion whilst avoiding the potential for escalation perceived in responding to the perpetrator. As such, online 'street harassment' forums offer a source of rich data on the experience, context and impacts of men's stranger intrusion, data that for the UK was not available in the literature. The forums also enable users to post immediately after encounters, helping to manage the minimisation or forgetting that becomes a form of coping, and suggesting possibilities for a research design able to meet some of the challenges encountered during piloting the survey.

Online exploration revealed that an inactive Hollaback! UK site existed, and that a Hollaback! London site had been launched concurrent with the beginnings of the study's literature review in early 2010. Following ethical guidelines for online research

²⁰ Based in India, the Fightback application includes a panic button that uses location services such as GPS, SMS, email and Facebook to alert others if a woman feels in danger. <http://www.fightbackmobile.com/>

²¹ Harassmap is an application created for women in Egypt which uses an SMS system to anonymously and immediately report incidents of sexual harassment. <http://harassmap.org/>

²² Hollaback! launched their iPhone application in 2010. The app, which is available worldwide, enables women to quickly post a story to the Hollaback! website and enter their location either through GPS or manually. The location is then recorded on a publically available map and women are contacted via email to ask for more details.

(see Eysenbach and Till, 2001; Kraut et al, 2004; Mann & Stewart, 2000), contact with the administrators of the live site was made and, after an initial meeting, administrative access was granted to the blog data. There are particular ethical issues involved in research with online communities, most commonly around user assumptions of privacy in online spaces (Eysenbach and Till, 2001). More recently there has been recognition that due to the rapid changes in technology, ethical practice for research with online communities should be guided by principles rather than prescriptive rules (Markham and Buchanan, 2012). As such, I decided to use the blogs as framing data, to assist along with the pilot survey, in suggesting ways of designing a research methodology that would enable the disclosure of a socially hidden issue, rather than quote directly from the data without informed consent from the site users.

A data collection period of one year was set, resulting in an initial dataset of 104 separate posts submitted to the Hollaback! London site between the start of April 2010 and the end of March 2011, of which 94 were analysed thematically. Several core themes recurred throughout the dataset: feelings of inadequacy; focus on appearance; and questions of ‘what counts’, themes that returned in the empirical work for this study. Throughout the posts, there was a common thread of perceived inadequacy in the ability to respond appropriately. Women wrote of confusion in determining the ‘correct’ response to a range of intrusive encounters, resulting in feelings of frustration, powerlessness and often shame. Following from this, and mirroring gaps in the literature, was recurrent reference to a second felt inadequacy, that of language. Women indicated a sense of not having the words to accurately describe both the encounter itself and the impact or emotions it created. In addition, individual posts detailing men’s intrusive

practices were augmented by descriptions of what the women writing the post were wearing at the time, ostensibly in an attempt to make sense of perpetrator motivations or to challenge the commonplace framing of the practice as complimentary. They also, however, revealed the extent to which this commonplace framing operates diffusely, to limit the stories that can be told and to invert responsibility. Descriptions of appearance were made to either discredit the motivations of the perpetrator as being driven by the target's scant or desirable clothing or on the rare occasions where such clothing had been worn, to justify their use, typically through appealing to the weather. Stories where women wore 'revealing' clothes for pleasure rather than necessity were absent. In this way, the focus on appearance and clothing in the blog posts subtly endorsed the evaluative aspect of men's public intrusive practices, with the confusion born of the fact that *this time* it was not warranted. Such a discovery suggested the importance of in depth qualitative tools to capture complexity and contradiction, and highlighted that understandings of the issue were steeped in a binary framework of threat or compliment. The gap identified in the literature concerning experiences that do not fit traditional categories of what counts as violent or intrusive, was also found to a lesser extent in the online data where the majority of accounts were of encounters where 'something' had happened; the woman had either been spoken to or touched or experienced a particularly frightening incident. What was interesting for the initial formation of research questions was the way in which occasional posts also captured the more everyday intrusions, typically as part of a wider story. This suggested the possibility that the silence and separation found in the literature could be filled through the careful design of research instruments aimed at capturing both extraordinary and ordinary experiences of men's public intrusion. Forming a methodology for researching the

ordinary required the development of a specialised approach to working with participants to unearth routine experience, something best conceptualised as conversation as method which, though piloted prior to recruitment, will be fully discussed later in this chapter.

RECRUITMENT

The process of recruiting participants for feminist research is rarely explored in detail. Debates in the literature, where they exist, focus on a discussion of sampling and ethics, typically around accessing ‘hard-to-reach’ populations and/or the use of personal networks to minimise the perceived separation of researcher and researched in the research context (Browne, 2005; England, 1994; Madriz, 2003). Little space is given to the ways in which, during recruitment, locating a research project as feminist can support or discourage the stories that can be told and can have unexpected personal impact in the form of experiences of sexism directed towards the researcher (with Stanley and Wise, 1979 a key exception). Decisions must be made during the recruitment stages about whether material will make explicit the research’s epistemological location, through both terminology used and the means of dissemination. It was here that many of the ethical implications of the research were seen. As discussed during the literature review, terminology is of particular significance when researching VAWG as not only are the terms used for naming individual forms of violence constantly evolving, the very positioning of certain practices as harassment or violence may inhibit participation from those who do not identify their own experience

within this frame. One of the first challenges encountered was how to speak to and encourage speaking from women who may not feel they have a 'big story' to tell, without discouraging women who have experiences of criminalised forms of men's violence. The term 'street harassment' was deliberately avoided in an attempt to appeal to participants who may not recognise their experiences as 'counting' within this category. The research unit through which the study was taking place, the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, was replaced with the name of the university in which it is based, to avoid explicitly situating the research within a VAWG perspective. No mention was made to the epistemological framework of the research or to my professional background within the sexual violence support field in the initial recruitment publicity, however both were explicitly mentioned in the material sent out after expressions of interest. Difficulty came in the need to name experiences of criminalised forms of VAWG, and to recognise that these may be discussed during the research. It is here that the feminist positioning of the research became apparent. I felt the notion of informed consent had embedded within it a responsibility to make participants aware that the ways in which their experiences related to other experiences along the continuum of sexual violence would be explored during the research conversations. Although participants were not going to be systematically asked which practices of men's violence they had experienced, there was a definite focus in the project's theoretical framework on the links between and within different forms of sexual violence. Such a framing would both guide the research conversations and be evident in the research findings. To hide this from participants even at the recruitment stage felt unethical, particularly as it would set up a dishonest and imbalanced power relationship between researcher and researched, replicating an abusive dynamic. Recruitment material thus made explicit the ways in which different

encounters with intrusive men would be explored, with more detailed information about the research project sent out after initial contact including that a space for discussing other experiences of sexual violence from both known and unknown men would be provided during research conversations (see Appendices Two and Three). This additional information also included my professional background working within a support capacity at a London based Rape Crisis Centre, which may have motivated some women to participate or to disclose experiences of rape, intimate partner violence and/or childhood sexual abuse during the research conversations.

The ethical choice to make women aware in advance of participation of the ways in which men's violence and intrusion were being conceptualised as connected for this project, had an unexpected impact that bears consideration for future feminist research employing methods of online recruitment. The experience of men's intrusion online was an unforeseen outcome of the method of recruitment for this project. The ability of such a practice to obstruct the recruitment process through creating unsafety for potential participants was avoided for this project as it came after the call for participants had closed, however the personal impact of the interruption is unavoidable and will be discussed later in this chapter. In recruiting for a feminist research project then, these ethical considerations are prominent: how to inform women about the disclosures that may result from participation; how to frame the research so that women who may or may not identify themselves as feminist feel able to participate and interested in participation; and, sadly, how to manage potential disruption of the recruitment process from men who are averse to feminist research.

Circulating the call

Several different routes were chosen to circulate the call for participants. Using the free blogging tool Wordpress, an online blog was created to advertise the research. The creation of a research blog site enabled a web link to be used, which contained the bulk of information women would need to decide whether or not to participate. The blog consisted of two pages, one outlining the main aims of the study and a second giving a more detailed explanation of what was involved in participation. This second page also formed part of the consent form given to participants during the initial conversation.²³ Notable for future research, although a blogging platform was chosen for the website as being a free and accessible means of creating a site easily and without prior skills, the particular mechanisms of a blog provided another opportunity in that the site itself became interactive. Participants used the site not only to get contact details and more information about the research, but also to post their own experiences of men's intrusion. This use of the site for the sharing of such stories was unexpected, though it is understandable on reflection given the popularity of online forums as discussed previously.

Printed flyers with clear information about the research, the web address for the research site and contact information were placed in female toilets in London Metropolitan University and a London based Rape Crisis Centre. This strategy attempted to access potential research populations without frequent internet access. The two sites chosen had additional benefits of advertising the research to the large black, minority and ethnic student population of the university, containing many groups that have been considered

²³ Research site available at <http://publicspaceresearch.wordpress.com/> [accessed 20th march, 2014].

‘hard to reach’ for sexual violence research due to low rates of disclosure and barriers to help-seeking (Kanyeredzi, 2013; Washington, 2001; Wilson, 2014), and also providing a direct route through the Rape Crisis Centre to what can be considered a hidden population, female survivors of sexual violence. The posters were displayed for a month and during that time no contacts were made. No participants in the final project came to the research through this method.

The website link was posted on a variety of Facebook pages with the specific communities targeted by the printed flyers including black women’s forums and specialist sexual violence services, and circulated amongst my own networks, both personal and professional. Again few contacts came through this method and the decision was made to redesign the research site and spread amongst existing networks for street harassment and UK based feminists, networks that had not been utilised in the early stages of circulation in an attempt to avoid feminist bias in the sample. In March 2012 the link to the redesigned site was distributed through a combination of using a Rape Crisis Centre’s Twitter and Facebook account, of which I was administrator, as well as email contact with several feminist blogs such as the F-Word, one of the UK’s biggest blogs about contemporary feminism, Black Feminists and the London Feminist Network. The intention was to use the participants recruited through this method combined with those recruited through non-online methods, to create a more balanced sample in terms of women linked to feminist groups and those who were not. The link to the research site, however, went viral after being picked up by the F-Word and tweeted to over 10,000 followers. In just an hour, over 100 requests to participate were received, significantly exceeding initial expectations of the levels of research

participation, though this slowed as the link stopped being circulated. From these expressions of interest, initial conversations were set up with 54 women, 50 of whom participated in the final research process.

Sample characteristics

The careful design of recruitment materials in order to avoid locating the research within an explicitly feminist paradigm did not help with the unexpected pick up of the call for participants through feminist social networks. The problems of recruitment for research focusing on specific groups or experiences that are not validated by society are explored in Browne (2005). This project met with the challenge of over-recruitment, suggesting that particular socially marginalised experiences may result in an increased desire for participation from affected groups. An area of particular concern for all recruitment methods, including online recruitment, is the presence of bias in the sample (Hamilton and Bowers, 2006), particularly in a convenience sample. Despite the care taken in terminology, the speed with which the call for participants circulated, and the networks through which it moved, resulted in the recruitment of a predominantly feminist sample. Thirty-six per cent of participants (n=18) explicitly cited being feminist as one of the motivations for participating in the study, with many more expressing a commitment to feminist principles during the conversations. That such a standpoint would be evident in participants is understandable given the topic under study, which may particularly interest women who have an acknowledged interest in gender inequality. It does mean, however, that the sample cannot be taken as representative of the experiences or opinions of women more generally and also that an additional dominant narrative needed consideration during analysis, that of feminist identified women always

experiencing men's intrusion as 'harassment' (exemplified in the title of Paris Lees' (2014) article 'I love wolf-whistles and catcalls; Am I a bad feminist'). Instead of seeking a more representative sample, the decision was taken to allow the sample to shape the research. That most participants came to the research site with a feminist vocabulary assisted in the collaborative dynamic of the research conversations, with several participants suggesting useful literature, and helping to actively test out my emerging findings and theoretical approaches in the follow ups.

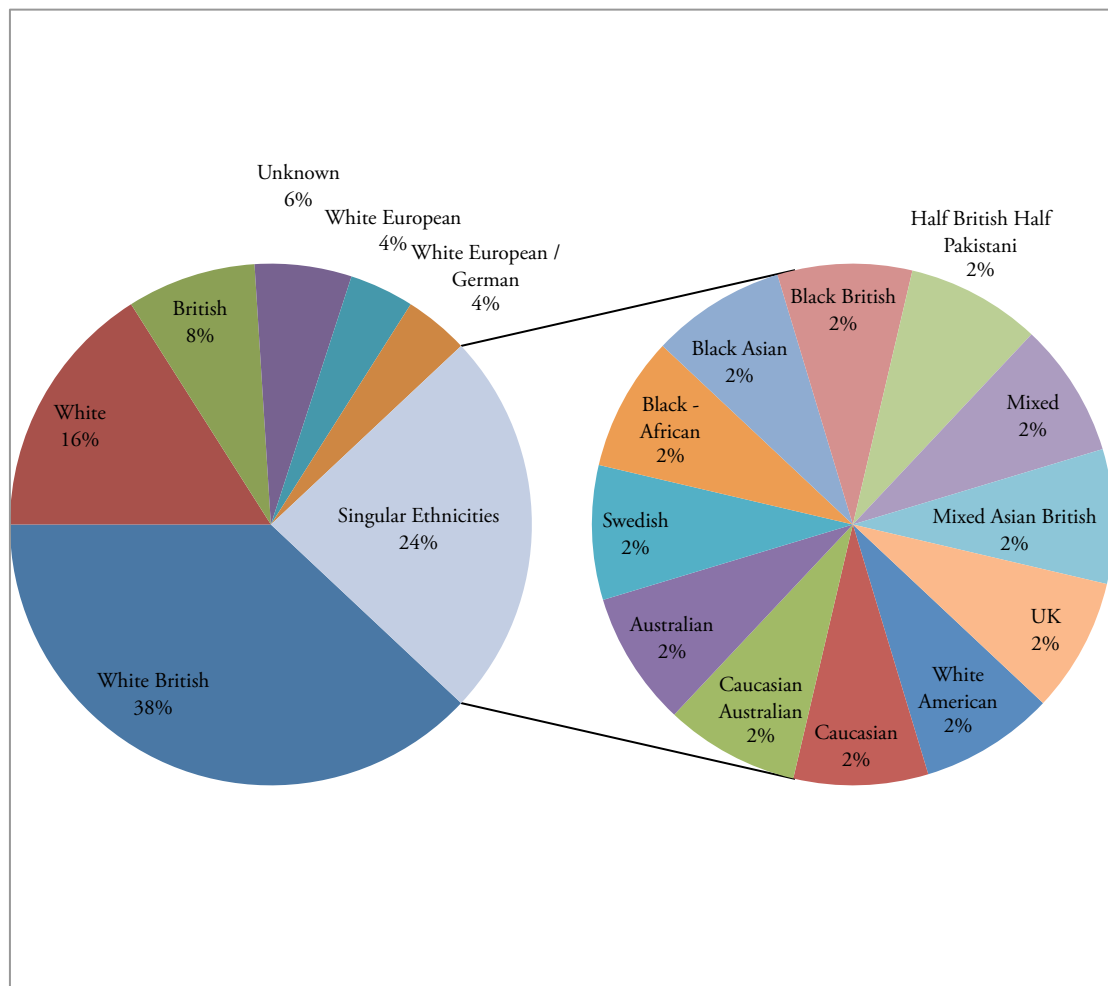
Turning to the embodied characteristics of the research sample, Ann J. Cahill has critiqued phenomenological analyses of embodiment such as that conducted by Iris Marion Young (2005) and Sandra Lee Bartky (1990) as being 'notoriously unraced' arguing that 'there are many different standards of femininity, that are particular to economic classes or ethnic groups' (2001: 153). Cahill acknowledges that modalities of embodiment for raced women's bodies may differ from that described in analyses that focus on the experiences of predominantly white women. Given recent conversations about the dominance of white feminists in online spaces,²⁴ and the fact that the majority of research participants were recruited through online feminist networks, almost three quarters (72%) of the sample were women who identified as being from various white ethnic backgrounds²⁵ (see Figure 1). Whilst this is an under-representation of the national picture for England and Wales, where 86 per cent of census respondents are listed as coming from a white background, it is an over-representation for London,

²⁴ In August, 2013, Mikki Kendal brought attention to the imbalances in online feminist media through the creation of a Twitter hashtag #solidarityisforwhitewomen (see Kendal, 2013).

²⁵ Monitoring information was sent out to participants following initial conversations (see Appendix Seven). Participants were asked to define their own ethnicity and sexuality rather than select from pre-defined options, hence the different terminologies used.

where the vast majority (78%) of participants lived. Census data for London has almost 60 per cent of the population identifying as white, just over 20 per cent as Asian, and close to 16 per cent as of Black and mixed-Black descent (ONS, 2011).

Figure 1: Participant Ethnicity [n=50]

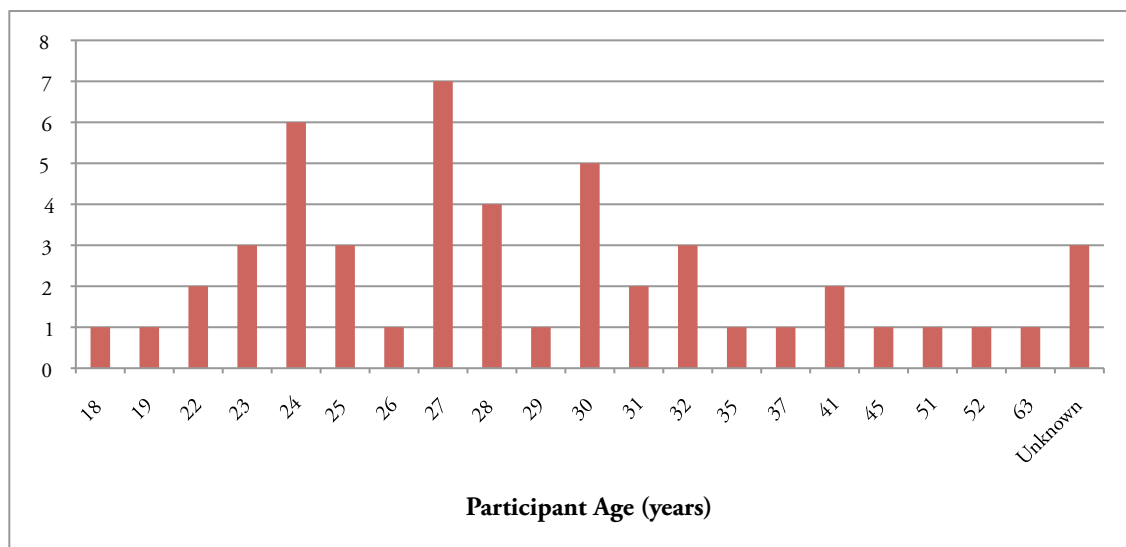


This over representation cannot be accounted for by online demographics in general, which are estimated to be roughly representative of the general population (Hamilton & Bowers, 2006), though it may relate both to the predominance of white feminists in

online spaces mentioned earlier (and thus to the demographics of women belonging to the networks through which the call for participants was disseminated), and/or reflect who felt they counted for the research and the research counted for them. It may also reflect that not all of the women who participated were based in the United Kingdom; four women were living in Cairo, Rabat, Berlin and Paris, though all had previous experience of living in England.

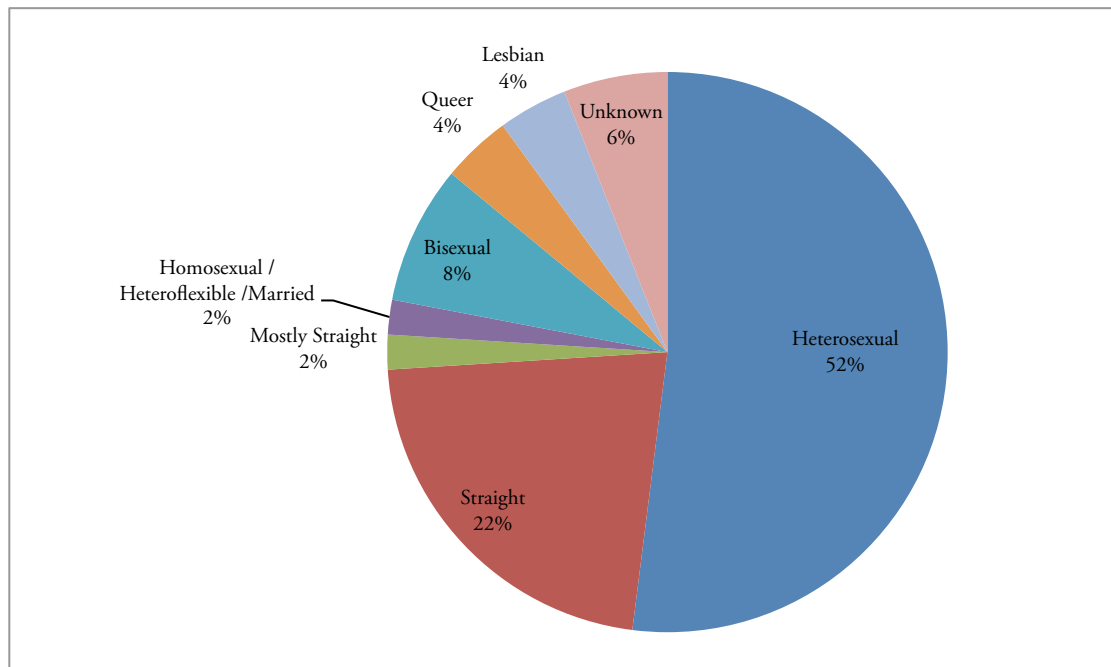
Carrying Cahill's (2001) critique forward, embodied differences across diverse ages and sexualities also influence both experiences of men's intrusions and their meanings. The age range for participants showed a much greater breadth than anticipated (see Figure 2). This age range was from 18 – 63 years, with just over a third (n=18) of participants aged 30 years and over.

Figure 2: Participant Age [n=50]



The sexualities of participants also showed a greater range than anticipated (see Figure 3), with almost a quarter identified as belonging to an LBQ group.

Figure 3: Participant Sexuality [n=50]



Similar to ethnicity, participants were asked to self-define their sexuality, leading to some categories that sit outside of those comparable to other studies or to the national picture given by the census (ONS, 2011). The research sample recruited thus, though not representative, can still be considered a diverse group of women with a range of embodied differences.

‘FUCK YOU AND FUCK YOU ALL’: EXPERIENCING INTRUSION

The research site remained online after the sample was recruited in order to enable ease of dissemination of findings to women who did not participate but had shown interest in the project. This decision revealed an unanticipated consequence of using online spaces for feminist projects which, as it mirrors the topic of this study, is an important finding in itself. In June 2012, the research website was targeted by men, perhaps linked to several media articles about street harassment published late in the previous month in which I had been quoted speaking about the research topic (Taylor, 2012; Topping, 2012). Within hours the site received 39 comments ranging through threatening and abusive, to sarcastic and dismissive. After using internet search engines to trace the commentators and the research website, a YouTube video disparaging the research and encouraging others to troll²⁶ the research website was discovered, which contained an additional 119 derogatory comments about the project and myself.²⁷

Research has documented the ways in which feminist forums in the emerging internet era face disruption from men posting misogynistic messages (Reid, 1999), however given the steep rise in women’s usage of the internet in the past decade (Abraham, Mörn &

²⁶ The term ‘troll’ refers to the fishing practice where a lure is dragged through the water with the intention of provoking a feeding frenzy amongst fish (Donath, 1998; Binns, 2012). There is no single agreed upon definition academically (see Hardaker, 2010 for a discussion of terminology), and here the use of the ‘troll’ follows the broad definition given by Herring et al (2002) as being a user of computer mediated communication who is ‘hostile to the purpose of forums, actively seeking to disrupt and undermine them’ (357). This definition captures both the strategies of pseudo-sincerity and blatant abuse or flaming used to disrupt and instigate argument for the purposes of amusement, experienced during the research.

²⁷ Video available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=eOhuqb2Udhk [accessed 20th June, 2012].

Vollman, 2010), new opportunities for gender based harassment have arisen, particularly surrounding the popularity of social networking and feminist blogging sites. The abusive and argumentative responses received during the course of this project included comments that would be defined as ‘flames’ (direct, personal insults) and those seen more widely as examples of Herring et al’s (2002) gendered online harassment. Both kinds of messages are interesting given the research subject as they each relate in different ways to the experience of men’s stranger intrusions in public space. The aggressive nature of the flames encouraged me to engage in what Liz Kelly (2012b) terms ‘safety work’, conducting similar calculations based on escalation as those seen by participants to evaluate the ‘right amount of panic’ (see Chapter Six). Following Emma Jane’s (2012) suggestion to use the citation of the messages received without censorship as a deliberate strategy to challenge the ‘tyranny of silence about the sexually explicit nature of this material’ (2012: 2), what follows are examples of the explicit flames posted on the research blog site. These messages were directed at me with the exception of the first comment, posted underneath a message from a disabled woman who shared her experiences on the research site, including being kissed in her mobility scooter while being unable to get away, though ultimately not participating in the final research project. The names of the commentators have been removed, however the punctuation and spelling has been replicated directly from the posts.

The laughing thing is even this disabled and handicap bitch thinks that she is something that men will die for, fuck you and fuck you all.

Initiatives like this are nothing other than a public expression of rape fantasy and the unspoken desire to be ravaged.

What a cunt. Look, bitch, you can hate men all you want. I don't care, because you're obviously a sick cunt I wouldn't want anything to do with.

Bitch, please find the tallest skyscraper near you, and jump off of it. You would be doing a great service to society.

These posts came after recruitment had closed and as the site was moderated, many comments that personally attacked women who had earlier posted their own experiences and asked to participate were not made public. The video disparaging the research was hosted on YouTube however, with comments moderated by the user who uploaded the video and not by the researcher. As such, all the comments below are public and were made directly against myself as researcher or against feminists in general, but not against women who had asked to participate in the project. Men posting flames tended to post once and, as the messages were not engaged with, did not continue with abusive comments. Most of the commentators who posted flaming responses can be identified as male either through the pseudonym they posted under or through referring both directly and indirectly to this in their comment. Such flames appear to be even more uninhibited than those on the research website, perhaps due to the perceived unlikelihood of anyone involved in the research finding the YouTube video.

(F)eminists women are disgusting they bleed form those nasty holes every month and drop that shit on the floor, they need to be neutered!!

(F)uck you for being a fucking retard bitch. I am sick and tired of these mad womyn.

(Y)our vagina must be the size of the grand canyon.

(S)ounds like a snobby little princess type. theres only one real way to cure them but its illegal
:|...ummmm

The other kind of messages received were those which follow Herring et al's (2002) criteria for a troll in that they attempted to waste time through provoking futile argument whilst appearing outwardly sincere. These comments were based largely on a repudiation of the concept of the continuum of sexual violence and the invalidation of women's experience. Again there was a difference in responses posted on the research site itself, where commentators were able to read and respond directly to the information given about the project in the call for participants, and on the YouTube video site where commentators seemed to use the space for more general messages aimed at negating the subject of men's intrusion in public spaces as one worthy of study, condemning feminists and feminism, and linking the vocalisation of the experience of men's stranger intrusion to female narcissism. Those on the research site focused mainly on a rejection of the concept of the continuum, a conceptual framework not explicitly mentioned though evidenced through the list of behaviours used to invite women to participate. The comments thus give insight into how some men separate out intrusive experiences into aberrant and ordinary, a separation that was not seen in the living experience of men's intrusion for most participants.

The third bullet point is a serious problem. In fact, the disgusting part here is how that third bullet point (actual crimes) were put on the same bullet list as potential annoyances.

The only bullet point that should be considered a problem is the third. The others... if you can't deal with these things yourself- you are a special precious snowflake so don't go outside.

Oh I see, “being pathetic” is now on the same scale as groping (AN ACTUAL crime)? How dare you minimize the evil that is groping. You do realize **YOU ARE TRIVIALIZING GROPING**

The third bullet point being referred to in all of these comments, listed being followed, assaulted and touched, legally sanctioned forms of intrusion or violence. Such responses to the concept of the continuum illustrate the stark lines drawn between ‘normal’ and ‘criminal’ intrusion, the lines represented in legal and policy frameworks and also seen in the fear of crime paradox, which claims women are more likely to fear crime but men are more likely to be victims of crime (see Chapter Two). The problem lies in how these strategies of inclusion and exclusion do not reflect the ways men’s intrusive practices are experienced, marking a contradiction between dominant definitions and women’s own experiential knowledge (Kelly & Radford, 1990). Interestingly, as demonstrated in the last comment listed above, where this tension is made explicit, women’s experiential knowledge is subjugated. In this way instead of the continuum raising the experience of men’s stranger intrusion in all forms to the same level of legitimacy as the experience of criminal intrusions such as groping, it is suggested that linking intrusions together in this way delegitimises, and thus trivialises, intrusive practices currently on the criminal end of the continuum. This tension between dominant and subjugated knowledges (Foucault, 1980), with the ultimate negation of the subjugated, is demonstrated through many of the comments posted on the YouTube page. Here the arguments focused on the invalidation of men’s stranger intrusions as being a legitimate source of concern for women and study for ‘real’ (male) academics.

Male scientists don't get involved in these kinds of thing because they are busy researching real things that may have an impact on the world.

This doesn't seem like a real problem in society. I mean, were all atomized and alienated from each other enough. With the exception of being flashed, groped and stuff, I mean seriously? A look, or casual talking is not something to get worked up about. Ideally we want to be a people who can be friendly towards one another.

I do feel for women who do get groped (which is pretty rare, as much as you'd love to claim otherwise), I just can't see how being looked at, complimented or being told to 'cheer up' is oppressive. Annoying maybe.

I remember one time being savagely beaten while walking home from high school. If those guys just decided to randomly wag their penises at me instead of beat the shit out of me I would have been overjoyed. Oddly enough nobody thought I was oppressed.

This final comment demonstrates another technique for invalidation, equating female and male experiential realities and using men's reality as the basis for establishing what does and does not count as violence. Such comments were evident on both the YouTube and the research website. Where a difference in reality was acknowledged it focused on traditional misogynistic stereotypes of women as lying, paranoid, jealous of or competitive with other women, and narcissistic.

Women complaining about male attention = veiled bragging.

I'll tell you what this is about. It's a woman's way of saying men are checking them out by complaining about it. Like the one where they complain about how men are always looking at their breast. It's to let other women know that men are paying attention to them.

They are self-absorbed nut-jobs.

I see many narcissistic and delusional womyn here who think that they are beautiful and entitled and should attract men "flies"

The resistance to the research topic illustrated through the responses posted online demonstrates some of the issues surrounding the silence of men's stranger intrusions in both the literature and in wider policy and/or criminal frameworks. That such opposition was experienced online, despite the careful use of terminology and the considerations given to not explicitly locating the project at the recruitment stage within a feminist framework, suggests that some of the key concepts covered during the exploration of women's experiences of men's intrusion may be relevant within the research context itself, particularly where that context crosses into both on and offline public spaces. Susan C. Herring, one of the most prolific writers on the experience of gendered abuse in online environments, (Herring, Johnson & DiBenedetto, 1995; Herring, 1999; 2000; Herring et al, 2002) suggests that the experience of trolling presents a gender disparity common to forms of sexual violence, with victims mostly being women and perpetrators mostly men. Herring also connects the resistance to acknowledging the harassment experienced by women in computer mediated communication to libertarian values, highlighting how what she terms the 'rhetoric of harassment' employs liberal principles of freedom of expression to construct women's resistance as censorship (Herring, 1999), and that such libertarianism is also gendered (Herring, 2003). Such rhetoric mirrors the arguments raised in resistance to criminalising 'street harassment' as well as some other forms of VAWG such as pornography. This combined with similarities in the gender disparity of perpetrators and victims, suggests the possibility of conceptualising experiences of online gender-based harassment as a modern day extension of Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence.

RESEARCH TOOLS: CONVERSATIONS AND NOTEBOOKS

The lessons from the pilot survey, online forums, together with the intrusion experienced through the research website, revealed the importance of developing tools which would assist in making experiences that were outside of the criminal or complimentary narrative 'speakable'. The approach taken was a three stage process for participants involving: an initial conversation; a notebook stage in which participants were asked to record men's intrusion as it happened over a period of two weeks to two months; and a follow up conversation to explore the notebooks. The research process enabled women to opt in or out at each point of participation. Of those participating in the initial conversations (n=50), 34 (65%) went on to complete the notebook, with three of these notebooks being lost and one having nothing recorded in it, leaving 30 notebooks (58% of participants) for analysis. Just under two thirds (64%, n=32) of participants completed a follow up interview. Due to the unanticipated popularity of the project, as well as the iterative nature of analysis, saturation point was reached for the follow up conversations after these 32 participants, with the remaining participants invited to give feedback through a form designed to be returned with their notebooks if they had them (see Appendix Six). An additional six participants chose to do this. A quarter of participants (27%, n=14) did not participate beyond the initial conversation.

The method of conversation was piloted with four women recruited through professional and personal networks. It was during the first conversation, that a participant suggested the use of notebooks to record individual instances of men's intrusion after realising it was difficult to 'single them out anymore. It's just this white

noise of constant comments and staring' (PN1). Such a tool had been used in June Larkin's (1997) study, she reports however that '(d)espite the variations in their experiences, being harassed on the street was so routine that many hadn't bothered to include these incidents in their journals' (Larkin, 1997: 120). The second pilot participant, tested out using a notebook and suggested giving some guidelines in the notebook about what was to be recorded to help in 'finding a way to record those subtle moments that are disempowering' (PN2). This suggestion resonated with Larkin's finding and though it would in fact prefigure (some) of the stories that could be told, it may be the only route into mundane experiences and habituated responses. Using an adaptation of the everyday incident analysis tool in development by Kelly, Westmarland and Watts for their current study of the extent to which perpetrator programmes reduce violence and increase safety for women and children (see Kelly, Westmarland & Watts, 2014) individual participant notebooks were created to cover three categories that were understudied in the literature: 'space invaders' (unknown men intruding on space both physical and mental); 'the gaze' (both actual and anticipation of the gaze); and, in a phrase borrowed from Laniya (2005) 'verbal ejaculations' (including comments and noises). Each category asked specific questions designed to capture phenomenological detail through locating the experience temporally, asking participants for example, what she was thinking before, during and afterwards, or how free she felt before, during and afterwards (see Appendix Five for the notebook design).

In order to combat the force of the habitual, the research design aimed to first assist in participants becoming more aware of men's intrusion and their responses through the initial conversations, and then to invite participants to examine new experiences in light

of this heightened awareness. There are similarities here with what Cook and Fanow (1990) describe as the centrality of consciousness raising, both as: 'a specific methodological tool and a general orientation' (Cook and Fanow 1990: 72). The consciousness raising groups of the 1970's may have given way to other forms of feminist organising, though there is room for developing an argument signalling online forums as the new millennium's feminist consciousness raising groups. Despite this, the concept of creating knowledge which can be used to raise awareness about the particulars of women's lives remains a central concern to, and guiding influence for, feminist researchers. Similarly Reinharz (1992) argue that woman-to-woman conversations, where researchers listen with care and attention to participants, create an environment where women can develop meaning for their unique experience. As found during my MA research on the connections between existential-phenomenology and the guiding ethos of Rape Crisis Centres (Elvines, 2009), for particular questions, settings and research relationships, conversation as method may help gain access to subjugated knowledges (Foucault, 1980). The particularities for such access, and for conversation as method, rely on researcher and researched having a level of shared experience, and on the approach resonating with the epistemological basis of the research. For this project, the method of conversation proved beneficial in helping to combat the particular silencing of the phenomenon born of its invalidation and the operations of minimisation as a form of coping. It involved myself as a researcher bringing in my own experiences with men's intrusion in public space, as well as that of previous participants, in order to open spaces for discussing similarities and differences, and to demonstrate the breadth of practices and responses that were being studied.

Conversations were conducted in person in public spaces across London, Brighton, Reading and Cambridge, with eight conducted via Skype for women living beyond feasible travel boundaries. Conducting conversations in public space for a project focused on men's intrusion in public space gave rise to interesting spaces where occasionally the phenomenon under investigation was played out in the research context (similar to the online intrusion discussed previously). The initial conversation with Katie (INT10) was lost as the phone which I was using as a recorder was stolen from our table by an unknown man who leaned in the window of the café, said 'excuse me sweetheart' and then, when we both looked up, stole the phone and ran. In addition, both on route to and returning from meeting participants I experienced men's intrusion as did my participants. Where this had happened before meeting it helped in bring immediacy into the conversation. Where it happened afterwards for participants, many expressed pleasure in the follow-ups that they had the notebooks in which to record what had happened. For myself, it helped if occurring following the conversation to enable a 'testing out' of my own responses to and experience of intrusion, assisting in the iterative process of analysis (see later in this chapter). Each initial conversation opened with asking why the participant was interested in the project, and from this developed, using the voices of other women instead of a topic guide to encourage and prompt participants. During conversation, where dominant narratives were being drawn on, such as women minimising experiences through claims of being lucky that 'nothing really happened' (see Chapter Five), I was able to intersperse both my own experience and that of others to broaden out what could be spoken. This resulted in a difficulty in analysing frequencies (see later in this chapter) as not all participants spoke about the same intrusions, however it did work to combat habitual responses such as minimising or

forgetting (see Chapter Six), an effect that was bolstered through the use of participant notebooks. It also had the additional impact of helping to validate what is a socially minimised experience. This was seen in the responses of some participants during the follow up conversations, such as Cathy (INT28), who spoke in her initial conversation about being sexually abused by an unknown man as a child, and told me in her follow up that: ‘the comments you put in about the other women was really helpful in a way so I wasn’t traumatised by talking about it’.

The specific difficulties with the naming and defining of practices necessary for survey research having already been noted, attempts to come from women’s experiential language also call into question the limits of a traditional even semi-structured interview. Unlike an interview, all participants in conversation are involved in the active construction of meaning. Such a research method also builds on the work of Marjorie DeVault (1990), who moved beyond the traditional interview format to adopt an ‘interactive approach’ (Anderson & Jack, 1991). DeVault worked in collaboration with her respondents to ‘co-construct’ new words that accurately reflected their experiences, thoughts, and feelings. Such collaboration is seen in conversation where the dynamic of power shifts as participants and researcher exchange, develop and bounce ideas between one another, rather than in the one way exchange of conventional interviewing or even more participatory designs where, though participants interact, the structure and content remains defined by an outside source. This is not to suggest conversation removes the power dynamics inherent in the project of research, though there is a more fluid exchange and co-creation of knowledge. To deny that as a researcher I stand to gain an academic qualification from conducting this research, and the consequent

position this then places me in relation to its participants, is to undermine one of the central tenets of feminism, the exhumation and exploration of the workings and meanings of social power (Coy, 2006). The process of analysis and writing mean that I ultimately recreate this co-creation, a process described by Coy (2006: 422) as ‘my story of their stories’.

Conversation as method thus furthers the concept developed by Ann Oakley (2005) of conducting an interview *as if* it were a conversation, suggesting that for a feminist existential-phenomenological project there is a benefit in moving beyond Oakley’s concept to a joint exploration of research questions and Sally Merry’s ‘translation into vernaculars’, towards conducting research *as* a conversation. This is not to deny the usefulness of all quantitative and more traditional qualitative methods, both needed for researching the powerful. Nor is it to make the unethical suggestion that comments made within a conversation not initiated as a form of research should later be used as research data. Rather it highlights that for particular questions, settings and research relationships, conversation as method may gain the most robust data and generate the most useful knowledge. Conversation as a research method also echoes the theory of the situated self propounded by Simone de Beauvoir (see next chapter), in two distinct yet associated senses: meaning is created and consolidated through active exchange with another (and the world); and, like the self, this meaning is best understood not separated out in quotes or stories, but in the context of the whole.

ANALYSING THE ORDINARY

Analysis of the data gathered in this project, from both initial and follow up conversations as well as the research notebooks, is best described as based in an iterative, inductive approach, an ongoing process, not a discrete event. The iterative element of the research design refers to a cyclic rather than linear process of generating, testing, analysing and refining research findings throughout the duration of the project. The process of conducting the research conversations lasted just under one year, during which time I would be engaged alternatively in initial conversations with some participants, transcribing the words of previous conversations, and conducting follow up conversations to review the findings of the notebooks of others. Analysis and data collection were thus enmeshed, enabling the latter conversations to also act as testing grounds for particular ways I was approaching the data. I was able to bring ideas, themes and theories to participants and test their resonance. The iterative nature of analysis is also seen in the ways in which reflections on data gathered before the fieldwork, including the reviews of online blogs and reflection on comments left on the research site by both women and intrusive men, were reviewed, interpreted and reflected on throughout the course of the project. In this way the inductive nature of the research design itself is evident. As Berg (1995) claims, an absolute distinction between inductive and deductive designs is not possible; an inductive method will combine some initial hypotheses or beliefs about what might be important and, similarly, deductive methods use their findings to further inform research design. An inductive research design, however, favours emergent research processes, enabling the research to be shaped by participants and encouraging reflexive practice from the researcher.

With the permission of participants, the conversations were audio recorded and transcribed, with the transcripts returned to participants to check for accuracy and also to add or comment on their words so that what was represented for analysis was not only what was said but what they wanted to say. The transcripts were then reviewed alongside the notebooks, for frequencies of particular intrusions. As the research design aimed particularly in the initial conversation to increase the spaces for women to define experience in their own terms, the categories used for analysis came from the participants and not all forms of men's intrusive practices were covered in each conversation. Coming from the language of participants, 14 different types of men's intrusion were identified (see Appendix Four). Further analysis enabled these to be grouped together into the six categories explored in Chapter Five: ordinary interruptions; verbal intrusions; the gaze, including 'creepshots'; physical intrusions, including rape; flashing and public masturbation; and the experience of being followed. The notebooks were more structured than the conversations and limited participants to capturing particular categories of intrusion (see Appendix Five). They were used mostly as a memory tool, enabling women in the follow-ups to reflect on intrusion with a level of immediacy which many were unable to summon during the initial conversations. Women brought their notebooks to the follow up conversations and spoke with and through them, expanding on their own notes and often reflecting with surprise on the impact they had recorded of particular intrusions. They also gave their notebooks back to me, which enabled, during analysis, a reflection both on what had been said during the follow ups and what, if anything, had been recorded at the time but silenced on reflection. The frequencies from the notebooks, alongside the qualitative responses

given, were transformed into a spreadsheet and checked for themes, commonalities and differences. It was these differences, found both during the notebook stage and in the initial conversations, that led to the need for an analytic tool that would facilitate analysis of the connections and commonality between accounts, without collapsing the ways in which women experience men's violence differently based on social and personal histories. A tool, able to: 'elucidate patterns and uniformities in the women's responses, while striving to protect more unique experiences from disappearing in the analysis' (Jordan, 2005: 539). Given the sheer bizarreness of some men's intrusions, I also wanted to find a method of data representation whereby the breadth of the continuum of men's intrusion would be evident, a way of capturing the phenomenological detail of intrusion for my participants. The answer to both aspirations was met for this project through the creation of a poetic transcript, presented in full in Appendix One.

The principles of poetic transcription and creative representation (Glesne, 1997; Faulkner, 2010; Prendergast, 2007; Richardson, 1992; Reilly, 2011) provide particular opportunities for researchers keen to retain the phenomenological, the experiential and evocative nature of qualitative data. Creative representation also suggests innovative opportunities to combat the difficulty of translating gender-specific phenomenological harms, through enabling the apprehension of differing subjective experiences of shared social realities (West, 1987). Holding this in mind, I constructed a hybrid poem to explore such possibilities, using the final piece created as a dataset which was then analysed. Working through each transcript, every particular intrusive encounter that women recalled was extracted, and every time women gave a general comment about the way they responded. The notebooks, as participants were able to recall with clarity

particular responses to particular intrusions, were not included. This resulted in stanzas such as the one below.

I had one guy who mimicked a blowjob from the car window one time.
If you don't put make up on you can become quite invisible.
Someone did just literally stop and say "oi love you should be on Weightwatchers".
I don't really like being in crowded places just in case.
He got out his penis and he was trying to make me touch it.
It wears you down in the end.

The choice to use women's general responses over particular responses to individual instances was in part determined by participants themselves, many of whom were unable to remember specific reactions during the conversations. This choice however revealed patterns that may have been lost in other forms of analysis, in particular participants' habitual embodied responses to the possibility of intrusion. Women's words were not edited or altered – each sentence in the poem is directly taken from the research conversations. In order to capture men's stranger intrusion as a shared social reality for women, the list of both particular encounters and general responses was then randomised, and I constructed the poem through interlacing men's practices with women's responses, with only the final two sentences ordered by design. The resulting piece is a hybrid poem in 50 voices (Elsgray, 2014).²⁸ It is difficult, overwhelming, shocking, never-ending, repetitive, exhausting, but hopefully, ultimately, compelling. In this way I follow Sandra L. Faulkner's (2009: 3) suggestion that poetic representations offer a useful means of producing a 'shared experience between research, audience, and participant', in this case illuminating gender-specific phenomenological harms through

²⁸ The creative transcript has been published in a peer reviewed journal (*Qualitative Review*) under the name of Fiona Elsgray (see Elsgray, 2014).

mirroring in the reader's emotional response, aspects of the lived experience itself. Such a method is reminiscent of Beauvoir's use of fictive philosophy. For Beauvoir, there is a specific value in fiction or creative methods for relaying existential phenomenological ideas.

(I)t is capable of inducing imaginary experiences as complete, as disquieting as lived experiences. The reader interrogates, doubts, he takes sides and this hesitant elaboration of his thought is for him an enrichment that no doctrinal teaching could replace (Beauvoir, 1946: 107).

Analysis was conducted both with and through the poetic transcript, identifying themes across the 50 initial conversations as well as representing in itself a form of presenting my findings which preserved the phenomenological detail of women's experiences of men's intrusion.

CONCLUSION

The methodological framework for this project is grounded in the challenge of researching ordinary, lived experience, an embodied reality that, as claimed by both existential-phenomenologist and materialist feminist approaches, is the only access to reality we can ever truly achieve. The epistemological basis of this project holds that this embodied experience can provide forms of useful knowledge that may not be accessible through more objective means, a key concept in both feminist research and existential phenomenology. Following this, my own role as researcher making decisions throughout the research process of omission and inclusion is revealed. This chapter has outlined

those decisions, motivated particularly in the formative stages of the project, by the necessity of developing and adapting tools, including language, to enable disclosure of experiences commonly hidden due to their roots in the routine and mundane.

To begin it sketched the principles grounding materialist feminist research approaches and how the concerns of existential-phenomenology, being the lived embodied self, connect to these principles. It located the research as a transdisciplinary project, linking feminist VAWG research practice and existential-phenomenological theory, before focusing on how the project was developed through a consideration of its ethical implications, the learnings from the pilot survey, and a review of the online Hollaback! London forum. The survey, though ultimately discarded for the final research design, played a key role in identifying at a formative stage some of the difficulties in researching the ordinary, in particular the force of habit. It colluded in the invisibility of the very issue it set out to explore, being the daily, not overtly sexualised, intrusions and interruptions that women experience in public. Through this, it revealed the challenge of finding methodological tools that would encourage or enable illuminations of the everyday. In addition, the growing use of online forums for posting experiences of intrusion meant that reviewing an active site produced rich framing data on the experience, context and impacts of men's stranger intrusions, data that for the UK was not available in the literature.

Processes of recruitment for the project, including demographic information for the final research sample, showed that whilst care was taken to not identify the project as feminist so that women who may or may not identify themselves as feminist could be

drawn to participate, the final sample largely self-defined as feminist. Though not representative, this feminist sample has a potential positive in that participants might thus be more alert to the ordinary. Despite not explicitly locating the project as feminist, it was also demonstrated that all research for women by women risk potential disruption and personal impact, in the form of men's intrusion.

The methodological tools developed for the study including the participant notebooks and conversation as method, were then described. The findings from the pilot survey, online forums, together with the intrusion experienced through the research website, revealed the importance of developing tools which would enable the illumination of routine intrusions women experienced from unknown men in public spaces. The methodology designed in response to such a concern was a three-stage process involving: an initial conversation; a notebook stage; and a follow up conversation. This process aimed to contend with the force of the habitual as well as attempt to capture phenomenological detail, with the individual participant notebooks created to cover three categories that were understudied in the literature: intrusions on space; the gaze; and comments. The use of conversation as a research method, was employed to combat the particular silencing of both routine and non-routine forms of men's intrusion, as well as to avoid prefiguring or limiting the stories that could be told through the active co-production of situated knowledges by researcher and researched.

The chapter concluded with a discussion of how the data was analysed, locating this as an ongoing, iterative process rather than a discrete event. The need for an analytic tool that would facilitate analysis of the connections and commonality between accounts,

without collapsing differences, led to the development of a poetic transcript, built through the voices of all 50 participants. The transcript was created to evoke in the reader, similar emotions as those embedded in many intrusive encounters, preserving the phenomenological detail of the experience of men's intrusion. It is to understand more fully what is meant by this phenomenological detail, as well as to further flesh out the conceptual framework of this thesis, that the following chapter turns to a discussion of its theoretical foundations.

CHAPTER FOUR

Theoretical Foundations

INTRODUCTION

The conceptual framework of this thesis sits at the intersections of Simone de Beauvoir's gendered phenomenology of the situated self and theoretical and empirical work from feminist sociologists working on VAWG. There are four key concepts underpinning this framework. The first is 'living' (traditionally 'lived') experience and its importance for both materialist feminist or feminist standpoint epistemologies and existential-phenomenology. Living experience as the basis of our knowledge claims, signals the importance of examining the ordinary, concrete details of our existence. Both feminist standpoint and existential-phenomenological approaches support phenomenology

founder Edmund Husserl's assertion that we must 'go back to the things in themselves' (Husserl, 2001: 168), with feminist sociologists such as Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993) emphasising the importance of understanding how women and men 'do' everyday life for feminist theories of men's structural and personal power. This theoretical focus on the concreteness of human existence is found in the second concept grounding analysis for this thesis, Liz Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence. The continuum provides a phenomenological conceptualisation of VAWG where the experiential links between different episodes of men's violence are maintained, in contrast to the imposition of the discrete categories favoured by policy and legal framings.

The third foundation, the bedrock for this thesis, is a Beauvoirian conceptualisation of the self. Simone de Beauvoir's theory of the situated self offers a compelling philosophical paradigm through which to explore the impact of the continuum of sexual violence on women's sense of self. Mobilising Beauvoir's concept of the self as a situated freedom expressing the ambiguity of existence, enables a balancing of complexity, difference and commonality in a similar way to Kelly's continuum. Margaret A. Simons has written extensively on the problematic positioning Beauvoir herself made of her philosophical contribution, most often claiming her writing as simply exercises in Sartrean ontology (Simons, 1983; 1986; 1998; 1999; 2010). Simons argues alongside Beauvoirian scholars such as Michèle Le Doeuff (1989; 1997), Sonia Kruks (1987; 1990; 1992; 2005a, 2005b) and Toril Moi (1992; 1999; 2008) that on closer examination, and particularly in light of her posthumously published work, Beauvoir's insights are startlingly original and that her work deserves its own position in the philosophical canon. It is in her development of, and departures from, her colleagues

that Beauvoir has considerable potential for feminist research, theory and practice on issues of VAWG. Her notable departures here are from Sartre in her vision of the self as situated freedom and her gendered development of a Merleau-Pontian view of the self as an embodied body-subject, the ‘bodily-self’.

The final conceptual component is this gendered development of Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s theory of embodied subjectivity, extending Beauvoir’s work through Merleau-Ponty’s insights on the body image, the body schema and, particularly, the habit body. Beauvoir utilised Merleau-Ponty’s theory of the body in *The Second Sex*, finding key differences to his degendered body-subject. She did not explicitly address the development of a gendered habit body here, though she did comment on the relationship of embodied habit to lived ambiguity in *The Coming of Age* (Beauvoir, 1996). The concept of a habit body, however, has been picked up by feminists more recently (Coy, 2009; Parkins, 2000; Weiss, 1999), with Coy uniquely operationalising it within a VAWG framework.

These four concepts: living experience; the continuum of sexual violence; Simone de Beauvoir’s concept of situation; and Merleau-Ponty’s insights on the habit body, are developed and drawn on throughout this thesis. Living experience and the continuum of sexual violence are key locators for the design of the research methodology. The work of Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty on situation, embodiment, habit and freedom, provide the lens through which analysis was conducted. The following sections offer an introduction to each of these core concepts.

LIVING EXPERIENCE

As seen during the previous chapter, there is resonance and compatibility between existential-phenomenology's history of philosophical examination into the meanings and significance of living experience, and theory and research from a range of feminist perspectives (Garko, 1999). Both perspectives call for the need to shift both our theoretical and empirical focus from a world that exists objectively out there, to the specifics of individuals' concrete, living experience. Despite the theoretical resonance, exploration of the insights of existential-phenomenology in and through the experience of VAWG has only recently begun (Mui, 2005), with Susan J. Brison (2002: 26), declaring that rape is only beginning to be acknowledged as a 'properly philosophical subject'. Adopting a philosophical perspective has the potential to assist a feminist reframing of what becomes in a medical model a syndrome/disorder or through a legal framework as acceptable/unacceptable extensions of the same act (Elvines, 2009). Both legal and medical frameworks focus on a clear distinction between normal and abnormal behaviours, with behaviours classed as the latter, thus falling into the realm of legal sanctions and medical interventions. Feminist critiques focusing on violence as routine in women's lives, argue that: '(w)hat becomes lost... in this commonsensical separation between 'aberrant' and 'typical' male behaviour is a woman-defined understanding of what is threatening, of what women consider to be potentially violent' (Stanko, 1985: 10). For Kelly, this separation results in limited definitions of sexual violence, which in turn benefit men through distinguishing a small group of 'deviant' men from the 'normal' majority, with the consequence of creating 'a group of men who we can justify thinking and talking about as other' (Kelly, 1996: 1).

The concern is that narratives of medical and criminal frameworks have achieved ‘master status’ (Frank, 1995) for understanding VAWG. Such status directs attention away from the complexities of women’s living experiences of VAWG, experiences that may be lived as connected, and that often are not the subject of medical or legal redress. In a legal framework, the distinction between acceptable and aberrant practices is based on a standard of reasonableness, seen throughout the Sexual Offences Act (SOA, 2003).²⁹ Related to the discussion in Chapter Two, such a standard has been argued by feminist scholars as being invariably located from the position of a reasonable (white) man, and as such is unable to accommodate gender and race specific harms (Crenshaw, 1989; Harris, 1990; Heben, 1994; West, 1987). Similarly, feminist theorists have critiqued the trauma discourse of VAWG for the assumed neutral basis for measurement of what are or are not ‘normal’ responses and behaviours (Brown, 1995; Burstow, 1992; 2003; Herman, 1992; Kelly, 1988; 1996; Reavey & Warner, 2001; Smith, 1990). For feminist psychologist Laura S. Brown, this discourse is limiting.

The range of human experience becomes the range of what is normal and usual in the lives of men of the dominant class; White, young, able-bodied, educated, middle class. Trauma is thus what disrupts the lives of these particular men but no other (Brown, 1995: 101).

A philosophical perspective, particularly due to its resonance an existential-phenomenological perspective, may assist feminists wanting to explore the impacts of VAWG in terms of what the violence means for women’s everyday living experience, meanings that may sit outside of the available dominant frameworks. Notably, both

²⁹ See for example Sections (s78) defining whether activity is sexual; s1(1) defendant’s ‘reasonable belief’ in consent; s2(2) ‘reasonable steps’ in determining consent (SOA, 2003).

Brison (2002) and Constance Mui (2005) centre their examinations on the criminal end of the continuum, with Brison conducting a detailed analysis of the philosophical impact of rape and Mui applying a feminist-Sartrean approach to understanding rape trauma. An existential-phenomenological standpoint on sexual violence, however, suggests that it is not only the experience of more 'sledgehammer intrusions' (Stanko, 1985), those most commonly covered by legal regulation and media attention, that are worthy of philosophical analysis. Women's 'mundane encounters with gendered power' (Kelly, 2012: xvii), such as the experience of men's stranger intrusions in public space, comprise an important part of women's living experience of unequal gender orders (Connell, 2002). For Kelly, Burton and Regan (1994: 33) 'if our concern is to understand women's oppression we need to target our attention on the ways in it is structured and reproduced'. Often grouped under the heading of feminist standpoint epistemology (FSE), an interdisciplinary range of feminist scholars advocate taking women's living experience as the beginning of investigation (see Haraway, 1988; Harding, 1991; Hartsock, 1983; Collins, 2000; Smith, 1987; Weeks, 1998). Despite being charged with coming from an essentialist position on 'women's knowledge', that is from the notion of women as occupying a singular standpoint (see Mason, 2002), many standpoint theorists advocate for 'feminist standpoints (definitely plural, but related)' (Hartsock, 2006: 180). For Nancy Hartsock, the key is that feminist standpoints are the result of a conscious process of moving from unmediated experience to understanding experience as set in the historical context of social relations within which an individual is located (Hartsock, 2006). Returning to Hartsock's 1980's conceptualisation over a decade later, Kathi Weeks (1998) emphasises the role of collectively engaged, continual processes in achieving feminist standpoints.

A standpoint is derived from political practice, from a collective effort to revalue and reconstitute specific practices. Thus, a standpoint constitutes a subject, but one which does not rely on a transcendental or natural essence. A standpoint is a project, not an inheritance; it is achieved, not given (Weeks, 1998: 136).

Standpoints as collective engagements with political projects are therefore what ‘separates a standpoint from a survey of what individual women might report, and allows standpoints to become technical devices that can allow for the creation of better accounts of the world’ (Hartsock, 2006: 180). This idea of ‘better’ accounts has been critiqued by Lois McNay (2004), suggesting that such claims reassert rather than undo dichotomies of objectivity and subjectivity, through granting ‘experience’ the epistemological privilege previously given to objectivity.³⁰

Identifying similarities between feminist standpoint theory and the concept of embodied subjectivity found in existential-phenomenology, together with Beauvoir’s work on ambiguity, helps to respond to such a charge. This thesis will draw on the conceptualisation of the body made by Maurice Merleau-Ponty in his early phenomenology of the body-subject, *The Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 2002), with the recognition that his later ontology of the flesh developed in *The Visible and Invisible* (Merleau-Ponty, 1968) sought to further dissolve the dualisms that plagued existential-phenomenology.³¹ The primacy of perception for Merleau-Ponty is the view that as the body-subject, I am situated by a material body that forms my unique point of

³⁰ McNay’s argument here is similar to those of Heidegger (1990) and Grosz (1993; 1994) explored in the previous chapter.

³¹ For more on this see Beata Stawarska’s (2002) critical examination of intersubjectivity in Merleau-Ponty’s ontology.

view on the world. This is also found in Beauvoir's concept of the situated self, as well as her notion of the self as in a perpetual mode of 'becoming'. This connection is seen in the claims of Patricia Hill Collins that theory should be assessed against its relevance to concrete, lived reality (Collins, 2000). Collins echoes a perspective given by Beauvoir fifteen years earlier whilst being interviewed on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of *The Second Sex*, stating: 'we must derive our theory from practice, not the other way around' (Gerassi, 1976). For both approaches, feminist standpoint epistemology and a Beauvoirian exploration of situated subjectivity, the 'everyday becomes impetus for investigation' (Hesse-Biber, 2007: 146). Experiential realities are thus held as the source of knowledge claims, with an appeal to ambiguity (see later in this chapter) enabling the apprehension of the ways in which objective and subjective knowledges are experienced together in and through bodies. The ordinary is important, the routine a revelation, and our attention is directed to examining the everydayness and everynightness of our living experience (Smith, 1987).

THE CONTINUUM OF MEN'S INTRUSIVE PRACTICES

Everyday practices and the living experiences of women are at the heart of the concept of the continuum of sexual violence. One of the key discoveries in Kelly's *Surviving Sexual Violence* (1988) was the extent and range of the sexual violence participants that had experienced, which led to Kelly conceptualising experiences of sexual violence as located along a continuum. Kelly's theorisation marked a shift in thinking, from a focus on individual forms of VAWG as discrete categories, to the recognition of commonality and

connections between forms, impacts, responses and functions (Radford, Friedberg & Harne, 2000). To do this, Kelly drew on the dual meanings of the term ‘continuum’ to replicate the complexity of the relationships women have to experiences of sexual violence, both those they have experienced themselves and those that have been experienced by other women.

(T)he first meaning enables us to discuss sexual violence in a generic sense. The basic common character underlying the many different forms of violence is the *abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat and force men use to control women*. The second meaning enables us to document and name the range of abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat and force whilst acknowledging that there are no clearly defined and discrete analytic categories into which men’s behaviour can be placed (Kelly, 1988: 76. Emphasis in original).

Kelly’s concept here is not about hierarchy, with the key exception of violence that results in death she holds that: ‘the degree of impact cannot be simplistically inferred from the form a woman experiences or its place within the continuum’ (Kelly, 1988: 76). The continuum of sexual violence is instead about the living experience of sexual violence, and how it connects contextually to particular meanings for individual women. This ties the conceptualisation to one of the core tenets of existential-phenomenology, namely that phenomena have meaning in their being meaningful to some *one*. Subjective meaning is made through relation, relating instances of violence to each other, the wider social context in which we operate, and to the way in which we understand our possibilities and enact our projects, our indeterminate horizons of the past and the future (Weiss, 2010).

This thesis utilises Kelly’s (1988) continuum of sexual violence to talk about what is lived by women as an experiential continuum of men’s intrusive practices. The concept

of a continuum assists in moving outside of a crime framework whereby practices are separated and a hierarchy is created. Such a hierarchal framework risks losing how the quieter forms of intrusion, those experienced by women as a restriction in freedom, rely on the possibilities and realities of the louder, criminal forms, to have the particular impact they do. Building on the work of Kelly (1988) and others, critical masculinities theorists Malcolm Cowburn and Keith Pringle suggest that: 'patriarchal processes generate, and in turn are also generated by, men's oppressive practices in a series of social 'locations' which intimately intersect and interconnect with another - to the extent that any one of those 'locations' can only be fully appreciated when it is seen in the context of the others' (Cowburn & Pringle, 2000: 59). The importance of understanding men's intrusive practices in relation to each other then becomes a key part of any attempt to understand the way they operate and the place they occupy in women's lives.

Relationship, to others and the world, is also central to existential-phenomenological approaches to understanding the bodily-self. Reviewing Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, Simone de Beauvoir claimed the importance of relationship for living experience, stating that '(i)t is impossible to define an object apart from the subject by whom and for whom it is the object' (translated in Heinämaa, 2003a: 75). Such a conceptualisation of the interrelation and interdependency between subject and object provides interesting possibilities for feminist work on women's objectification, suggesting the importance of bringing the ways men enact their embodied subjectivity more clearly into the frame. It also highlights the difficulties in understanding the mechanisms of gendered power without investigating what gender relations reveal of women and men's

relationship to their bodily-self. In addition, one of the key research questions was to examine how experiences of men's stranger intrusion in public spaces were understood and experienced by women in relation to their personal histories of VAWG, and how this influences responses to individual instances of men's violence. The continuum can assist here in capturing the relation between different forms of VAWG, as well as a woman's own individual experiences of these different forms. As will be seen in Chapter Five, the concept of a continuum of men's intrusive practices exists not only between categories but, crucially, within them. In this way such a concept helps mirror the ways in which women make sense of experiences of men's violence, relating an individual experience to both what has come before, for us and others, and what may follow.

The continuum also facilitates an exploration of men's ordinary intrusive practices as a manifestation of men's power, and the ways in which they are lived by women as extensions of men's criminal intrusion such as sexual assault or rape (Kelly, 1988; Stanko, 1985). In building the concept of the continuum, Kelly coined the term 'commonplace intrusions' (see Chapter Two), bringing into language the daily intrusions women experience in public space, conceptualised in this thesis as 'ordinary interruptions'. Using the example of the seemingly innocent 'cheer up love', Kelly explored the meanings behind this remark: 'the expectation that women should be paying attention to and gratifying men, rather than preoccupied with their own thoughts and concerns' (1988: 106). This meaning links to that of other forms of sexual violence; the underlying attitude of men's entitlement to women's bodies and minds is the same, 'only the form, the intensity, differs' (Stanko, 1985: 71). Critics of Kelly have pointed to this approach as prioritising individual subjectivity (Price, 2005), resulting in difficulties in codifying

acts legally and developing a general analysis of women's subjugation. There is a tension here; indeed the difficulty in fitting the complexities of the ways in which VAWG is experienced into a legal framework has resulted in research and policy focus on those behaviours that can readily be identified as criminal such as sexual assault or intimate partner violence involving physical violence (Kelly, 2012a). Price, however, fails to recognise that it may not have been Kelly's intention to develop theory to inform a legal framework. Kelly's study, conducted almost thirty years ago, still raises interesting questions about what has been missed through the legal and policy frameworks that have dominated research on VAWG in the intervening years.

Revisiting the continuum over two decades later, Kelly (2012a) argues that the focus on criminal behaviour in the years since the concept was developed has meant that the gaps she initially uncovered have yet to be closed. Kelly claims researchers have lost interest in the fabric of women's lives and that '(t)he everyday, routine intimate intrusions which were so key to the continuum have dropped off many agendas' (Kelly, 2012a: xviii). Such a claim gives insight to Kelly's initial purpose in developing the concept of the continuum. Instead of aiming for a general analysis, *Surviving Sexual Violence* is located alongside Stanley and Wise (1983) in not making claims for one true social reality 'out there' to be uncovered, a position that connects such feminist sociological work to the existential-phenomenology of Simone de Beauvoir. Both offer conceptual tools for speaking about connections and commonality, without collapsing the ways in which women experience men's violence differently based on social and personal histories. For Beauvoir 'the very isolation to which women are condemned precludes each from seeing the generality of her situation' (Kruks, 1987: 118). Accepting both the diversity and

unity of women's experiences is central in attempts to inform and activate a movement for social change in that, as claimed by Rosi Braidotti (1993: 8) it 'seals a pact among women'. The pact here does not collapse differences, rather, if used correctly, it can become 'a foundation stone' allowing feminist standpoints to be articulated (Braidotti, 1993: 8). Beauvoir herself was aware of the ways in which feminist activism and research on VAWG could work to mobilise women across different situations and standpoints, pointing in her later years to its revolutionary potential. Interviewed in 1976 by Susan Brison, Beauvoir speaks of both the 'anti-rape' and the 'domestic violence' movements as potentially fulfilling the need of diverse feminisms' to 'find issues all women can be interested in and, on that basis, make them understand that their problems are experienced by all women, not only them, and give them a sense of solidarity' (Brison, 2003: 197).

THE SITUATED SELF

In order to maintain the complex and multiple ways in which the continuum of sexual violence impacts on the self as we live it, a conceptualisation of this self is required that can hold both the way we act on and the way we are acted on by the world. Such a view is needed to illuminate the shared aspects of women's experiences of men's stranger intrusions in order to make sense of and challenge it, as well as to explore how the social meanings of particular bodies open different avenues for and experiences of intrusion. This need is evident throughout feminist work on VAWG; a desire to resist removing women's agency in responding to men's violence and/or intrusion, without claiming that actions made within unequal conditions are expressions of absolute freedom. Simone de

Beauvoir's development of the self as a situated body-subject provides a framework for balancing this tension.

For Beauvoir, 'every concrete human being is always uniquely situated' (Beauvoir, 2011: 4), and it is her application and extension of this concept, together with the role of ambiguity, which shows such promise for theorists working on VAWG. Sonia Kruks outlines how Beauvoir mobilises the concepts together.

In her account of women as subjects "in situation," Beauvoir can both acknowledge the weight of social construction, including gender, in the formation of the self and yet refuse to reduce the self to an "effect." She can grant a degree of autonomy to the self – while also acknowledging the real constraints on autonomous subjectivity produced by oppressive situations (Kruks, 1992: 92).

In line with the numerous misrepresentations Beauvoir made of her own philosophical contributions,³² in the second volume of her autobiography she credited Jean-Paul Sartre with originating the idea of situation (Beauvoir, 1992), a misleading claim since both she and Sartre drew upon, and disagreed about, Heidegger's concept of being-in-situation.³³ In *Being and Time* (1996), Heidegger claimed *Dasein* is 'delivered over' to the world and that through this human existence has the inescapable characteristic of *geworfenheit* or 'thrownness'. We are thrown without knowledge or choice into a world that was there before us and will remain after us, and in this thrownness we find ourselves in the world always already in a particular situation, again not of our choosing. I was born as a white, able-bodied female in the early 1980s, in a small logging town on the North Island of New Zealand. None of these material conditions, their socio-historical meaning, or

³² See Simons (2010) for an outline of the ways in which Beauvoir derailed suggestions of her philosophical import.

³³ As highlighted by Simons (2010), Beauvoir's posthumously published war diaries and letters show Sartre and Beauvoir disagreeing on the concept of situation, which Beauvoir supported and Sartre rejected.

indeed my entry into the world itself, are expressions of my freedom, however my freedom depends on their existence. My situation is what makes my freedom possible as well as being the starting point from which I choose my projects. The influence of my situation on my choice of projects is seen in the way that situation acts to expand our possibilities in the world. A change to my embodiment or birthplace would have changed my possibilities, and could have changed my commitment to ending VAWG. Our situation does not constitute us, yet it does give us a perspective on the world through which the world becomes meaningful. Questions about how our situation can act not just as an expansion but also as the horizon for our projects are where Beauvoir significantly departs from her existential colleagues and where she usefully employs the notion of ambiguity as the basis of human existence. The concept of ambiguity fundamentally eludes definition, found in Merleau-Ponty's claim that 'if one could conceive ambiguity with total clarity, it would no longer be ambiguous' (Merleau-Ponty, 2007: 211). It is used throughout Beauvoir's writing, capturing this tension born of our freedom as situated and our existence as embodied. We are thus both freedom, that is a subject able to choose, act and make meaning of our life through the taking up of projects, and *facticity*, the term used to convey the material 'facts' of our existence, some of which become limiting factors for our freedom. Beauvoir's complication of Sartre's ontological freedom, discussed in detail below, offers a useful framework for addressing some of the questions about power and agency that trouble recent feminist thinking.

Situation and ambiguity

The uniqueness of Beauvoir's insights into the self can be revealed through a brief discussion of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu, theorists whose conceptual frameworks have been adopted and adapted by feminists wanting to explore the

historically located inscription of social processes on the female body (see Diamond & Quinby, 1988; Adkins & Skeggs, 2004). There are however ‘particular tensions around power, knowledge, identity and the body’ (Ramazanoglu, 1993: 2) between their frameworks and those of different feminisms. Foucauldian theory offers possibilities to feminists like Susan Bordo, keen to reconceptualise power as not being something possessed by one group over another but rather the combination of a ‘network of practices, institutions and technologies that sustain positions of dominance and subordination in a particular domain’ (Bordo, 1993: 93). Similarly, Foucault’s genealogy of the political economy of body in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979) could provide a useful tool through which to examine the operations of the continuum of sexual violence as a disciplinary practice.³⁴ Using Foucault in this way however, risks invisibilising the multiple ways women find different levels of access to agency in and through the current gender order (Connell, 2002). Nancy Hartsock claims that ‘Foucault’s is a world in which things move, rather than people, a world in which subjects become obliterated or, rather, recreated as passive objects, a world in which passivity or refusal represent the only possible choices’ (1989: 167). Such a world has clear parallels in the dichotomy between ‘victim feminism ... when a woman seeks power through an identity of powerlessness’ (Wolf, 1993: 135) and what has been termed the ‘power-feminism’ of feminists such as Naomi Wolf (1993), Kate Roiphe (1994), and Camille Paglia (1994), who suggest that a focus on VAWG in feminist theory undermines women’s sexual agency. This perspective locks us into an unhelpful binary where the complex, multiple and uneasy ways in which women live their agency and oppression in the current gender order is lost.

³⁴ It is important to note however that Foucault himself has been argued to be ‘blind to those disciplines that produce a modality of embodiment that is peculiarly feminine’ (Bartky, 1990: 65).

Increasingly critical of Foucault himself (Callewaert, 2006), Pierre Bourdieu developed the concept of *habitus* through building on the phenomenological insights of Husserl. Habitus represents ‘the embedding of social structures in bodies’ (Bourdieu, 1998: 40), describing how social conditions and contexts prescribe what we define as ‘reasonable’ actions, perceptions and thought processes within them. The concept has been productively employed by feminist researchers working on VAWG. Maddy Coy’s (2009) use of habitus enables an exploration of how women’s experiences of the local authority care system are inscribed on the body in a way conducive to selling sexual access to the body. Michele Ruyters (2012) employs habitus to conceptualise how some women’s experience of embodiment as vulnerability can be transformed through the pedagogic practice of self-defence training. There have been, however, questions raised as to the possibilities Bourdieu leaves for freedom and individual difference in the face of the totalising force of habitus (Butler, 1997; Jenkins, 1982; Young, 2005).³⁵ The connections between the conceptual thinking of Beauvoir and Bourdieu have been commented on by Beauvoirian scholar Toril Moi (1991), and more broadly, the links between existential-phenomenologists and Bourdieu, particularly Merleau-Ponty and Martin Heidegger, have also been made (Crossley, 2001; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1993; Young, 2005). Sociologist Michael Burawoy (2010) goes further, arguing that despite his vocal contempt for her work, Bourdieu appropriated much of Beauvoir’s conceptual thinking.³⁶

³⁵ For a response to the critique of determinism in Bourdieu’s *habitus* using the phenomenological insights of Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, see Crossley (2001).

³⁶ A chronological argument can be made that the bodily inscription of social structure was accounted for much earlier by Beauvoir’s ‘situation’ and her gendered application of the insights of a Merleau-Pontian embodiment which had embedded within it the constitutive role of habit (see later in this chapter).

What is seen in both Hartsock's critique of Foucault and Burawoy's critique of Bourdieu is the claim that, though valuable illuminations of the complexities of power, their theoretical frameworks risk collapsing ambiguity and rewriting what we think of as our freedom into solely an effect of social processes. As such, these frameworks struggle with the nuance needed to explore different women's living experience of agency within a gender order generated by and generating men's domination. What is needed is a theory of the embodied self and embodied practices that accounts for the different meanings given to, and created by, the individual through our living experience. A theory that can hold the ambiguity of the self as both a collection of social prescriptions and processes, and at the same time an agent with differing levels of access to freedom. The Beauvoirian concept of situation provides such a theoretical tool, enabling exploration of the ambiguous position of 'victim/survivor'³⁷ as an expression of both how women are both acted on by, and choose to act within, a patriarchal gender order. Beauvoir heralds such ambiguity as embedded in human existence and, importantly, as fundamental to women's situation as the inessential Other.

'(W)hat singularly defines the situation of woman is that being, like all humans, an autonomous freedom, she discovers and chooses herself in a world where men force her to assume herself as Other... Woman's drama lies in this conflict between the fundamental claim of every subject, which always posits itself as essential, and the demands of a situation that constitutes her as inessential (Beauvoir, 2011: 17).

For Beauvoir, the situation of women under unequal gender orders expresses the general ontological ambiguity of human beings more concretely than that of men. Beauvoir does not try to resolve the ambiguity, making us either a freely choosing subject or solely constructed through external forces. Instead, she believes existence is characterised by

³⁷ See Kelly, Burton and Regan (1996) for a detailed discussion of the victim/survivor dichotomy.

this conflict of being both, a continual struggle between our capacity for freedom and the alienating processes of socialisation.

Situation and freedom

Beauvoir's (2011) concept of 'situation' refers to the meanings derived from the total context of our living experience, not just the meanings determined by our *facticity*, being the material 'facts' of our embodiment and its values within a particular historically located context). Recognising the material details of our embodiment as the basis from which our freedom both exists and is limited, situation, for Beauvoir, is also the ways in which these details 'appear in light of the projects a person has.' (Young, 2005: 16). The term 'project' has a particular meaning within existential-phenomenology, a meaning Beauvoir drew on. Our existence as embodied being-in-the-world was seen by both Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre as an act of self-creation, the permanent realisation of our possibilities. We are nothing outside of the undertakings made in light of our broader chosen projects; our existence is 'nothing else but a series of enterprises' (Sartre, 1973: 57). This position is also found in one of Beauvoir's most famous, and most misinterpreted, statements from *The Second Sex*, that '(o)ne is not born, but rather becomes, woman' (Beauvoir, 2011: 293).³⁸ The two differ, however, in their understandings of the freedom underlying our projects. Beauvoir recognises the embodied self as both free and constrained, claiming that 'the idea of freedom is not incompatible with the existence of certain constraints' (Beauvoir, 2011: 57). Human 'being' is such that we have the ability to act on the world and make it our own through

³⁸ Toril Moi (2010) argues against this English translation, claiming that Borde and Malovany-Chevallier use 'woman' and 'the woman' interchangeably as if there were no difference. For Moi, '(t)his error makes Beauvoir sound as if she were committed to a theory of women's difference' (Moi, 2010: 5).

the taking up of projects we find meaningful. At the same time our situation is constituted by forces that are not of our making, forces that may act to limit the projects we choose and the meanings they have for us. Her use of ‘becoming’ is thus substantially different from that of Sartre who upheld an absolute ontological freedom whereby even under material constraints, we are always free to choose the meaning we give our situation (Sartre, 2007). Beauvoir had already begun to conceptualise freedom as situated and crucially interdependent in her early ethical essays *Pyrrhus and Cineas* (2004) and *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1976). In her early autobiography, *In the Prime of Life* (1962), she reveals that her break with Sartre’s ontological freedom was grounded in the living experience of gender inequality.

I maintained that, from the point of view of freedom, as Sartre defined it... not every situation is equal: what transcendence is possible for a woman locked up in a harem? Even such a cloistered existence could be lived in several different ways, Sartre said. I clung to my opinion for a long time and then made only a token submission. Basically I was right. But to have been able to defend my position, I would have had to abandon the terrain of individualist, thus idealist, morality, where we stood (Beauvoir, 1962: 346).

That Beauvoir remained relatively quiet on the ways in which her theory of freedom significantly broke with that of Sartre has had particular consequences for Beauvoir’s legacy.³⁹ Judith Butler has both notably developed and critiqued Beauvoir’s concept of the self in putting forward her performative theory of gender (Butler, 1985; 1986). For Butler, Beauvoir’s statement on becoming a woman is an assertion of ‘the non-

³⁹ Margaret A. Simons (2010) provides a detailed overview of the ways in which the posthumous publication of Sylvie Le Bon de Beauvoir’s edition of Beauvoir’s war diary (Beauvoir, 1990) and letters to both Sartre (Beauvoir, 1991) and Nelson Algren (Beauvoir, 1998), together with biographies from Kate Fullbrook and Edward Fullbrook (1993), and Toril Moi (2008), have started a move in Beauvoirian scholarship towards reclaiming the uniqueness of her philosophical contributions.

coincidence of natural and gendered identity' (Butler, 1985: 505). Following this, Butler was able to claim that 'Simone de Beauvoir's formulation distinguishes sex from gender and suggests that gender is an aspect of identity gradually acquired' (Butler, 1986: 35).

For Simone de Beauvoir, it seems, the verb "become" contains a consequential ambiguity. Gender is not only a cultural construction imposed upon identity, but in some sense gender is a process of constructing ourselves. To *become* a woman is a purposive and appropriate set of acts, the acquisition of a skill, a 'project' to use Sartrean terms, to assume a certain corporal style and significance. When 'become' is taken to mean 'purposefully assume or embody', it seems that Simone de Beauvoir is appealing to a voluntaristic account of gender (Butler, 1986: 36).

There is a subtle misstep here in collapsing together the Beauvoirian and Sartrean concepts of freedom which underwrite our ability to choose a project, understandable given the hushed tones with which Beauvoir herself spoke of her divergence and that Butler was writing here before the 'scholarly renaissance' (Simons, 2010: 910) that has taken place since Beauvoir's death in 1986. Beauvoir's nuanced theory of the freedom of the embodied self as situated, in fact marked a critical departure from Sartre in its assertion that not everyone has the same capacity to freely choose their project from a range of possibilities. Freedom, for Beauvoir, exists in situation, an ambiguous foundation of both expression and constraint. Basing theory in living experiences means a necessary acknowledgment of the impact of our situation in both limiting and expanding our possibilities and our freedom to choose amongst them. Butler's claim that 'Simone de Beauvoir's view of gender as an incessant project, a daily act of reconstitution and interpretation, draws upon Sartre's doctrine of pre-reflective choice' (Butler, 1985: 508), hides the ways in which Beauvoir's writing signalled a departure from, not an exercise in, a Sartrean vision of existential choice. Beauvoir does not assert freedom as an ontological category of being where all expressions of agency are equal.

Women have a situated freedom, constituted within socio-historical locations, ‘choices are made, but they arise within situations, which in part we structure but in part are structured outside us’ (Stavro, 2000: 136). Sonia Kruks (1992) highlights the ways in which Butler’s reading of Beauvoir loses this difference, ‘the point where Beauvoir breaks with Sartre in arguing that, for the oppressed, a “project” can cease to be possible’ (Kruks, 1992: 101, note 23).

Beauvoir is thus useful for current feminist theorising seeking to conceptualise the ambiguous balance of women’s agency, particularly though not solely sexual agency, as it is lived in an unequal gender order (see Coy & Garner, 2012; Gill, 2007; 2008). For Kathy Miriam (2005: 14), discussions of agency must hold forefront how the term is ‘defined as a capacity to negotiate with a situation that is itself taken for granted as inevitable’. It is in the context of extending Beauvoir’s theory of situated freedom that this thesis introduces the concept of a ‘situated agency’, as a response to Miriam (2005) and a direct development of ‘situation’ in its Beauvoirian sense. The terminology of ‘situated agency’ exists within welfare economics (see Peter, 2003), and is also employed by Barbara Herman (1991) in her discussion of Kantian ethics in the context of understanding the difference between agency and autonomy.

Autonomy is the condition of the will that makes agency possible... But *agency* is not completely described by identifying a will as rational. As human agents we are not distinct from our contingent ends, our culture, our history, or our actual (and possible) relations to others. Agency is situated (Herman, 1991: 795).

Seen in this way, autonomy is expressed through our situated agency, with acknowledgement of the limits of particular situations not therefore resulting in a denial

of autonomy. The concept of situated agency will be used here to explore women's agency under an unequal gender order, drawing on the ambiguity of human existence to avoid binaries of freedom or constraint, subject or object, actor or victim. Recognising agency as situated helps to heed the warning of Bina Agarwal (1997) that emphasising the restrictions on women's agency risks undermining the multitude of ways women act within these restrictions, alongside refusing to promote the individualist notion of all actions as equal regardless of structural inequalities experienced between actors. It also rises to the challenge posed by McNay (2004) of rethinking an idea of agency around a non-reductive notion of experience, where 'experience,' conceptualised through Beauvoir's situation, is an ambiguous blend of the structural and the material.

Similar to situated agency, Evan Stark sees the constraints imposed on women by controlling partners as limiting their opportunities to 'enact their life projects, not on their capacity to do so' (Stark, 2009: 1514). Stark claims that in reconceptualising domestic violence from an assault based model to one of experienced reality, 'no challenge was more formidable than conveying the extent of women's resiliency, resistance, capacity and courage in the face of coercive control without minimizing the comprehensiveness of the strategy' (Stark, 2009: 1514). His conceptualisation of coercive control as continuous, cumulative, persistent and invisible in plain sight, rather than focusing on episodic, incident based injury, has parallels to the operations of men's stranger intrusion. Such a claim connects to Beauvoir's 'situation', where situation refers to the total context in which and through which we give our life meaning through our choice of projects. For Stark, as for Beauvoir, freedom and agency are situated. A space is

thus opened for feminists wanting to talk about VAWG as a constraining context for women, without forfeiting women's autonomy and our acts of resistance and resilience.

Situation, sex and gender

There is a second misrepresentation in Butler's reading of Beauvoir, one that leads into a discussion of the living body. Sara Heinàmaa has argued that Butler's interpretation of Beauvoir holds a problematic starting position of *The Second Sex* as 'a thesis about the sex/gender relationship' (Heinàmaa, 1997: 20). Again, Beauvoir's declination to explicitly signal her breaks with her male colleagues, in particular but not only Sartre, has meant that many of the ways she has been taken up subsequently have lost the uniqueness of her insights. The Beauvoirian self is a situated and thus necessarily embodied self, a 'body-subject' or 'bodily-self' not a pure, disembodied consciousness. The sex/gender distinction that Judith Butler claims was one of the pivotal contributions of Beauvoir's *Second Sex*, though useful in challenging essentialist arguments for specific regimes of gender inequality, reiterates culture/nature and mind/body dichotomies, leaving the body outside history (Thomas, 2002). This Cartesian replication also supports the notion of a separate, disembodied 'self', an unhelpful theorisation for feminist theory on violence (see Coy, 2009; Mason, 2002) and one not supported by Beauvoir's theory of situation. Beauvoir maintained that the body is a situation and that the human being is an historical idea. As early as in the *Ethics of Ambiguity*, Beauvoir states her belief that 'the body itself is not a brute fact. It expresses our relationship to the world' (Beauvoir, 1976: 41). This demonstrates Beauvoir's philosophy that, as stated by Eva Gothlin, 'the biological nature of humans is never experienced apart from a second social nature; body as well as body consciousness, is thus always historically mediated' (Gothlin, 2001: 84).

Toril Moi (1999) makes a compelling argument for how the heuristic distinction between sex and gender, as popularly understood, conflicts with Beauvoir's view of the body-subject, a conflict that Butler acknowledges yet seems to over-ride in her presentation of Beauvoir's contributions (Butler, 1986). For Moi, separating sex from gender has the consequence of turning 'sex into an ahistorical and curiously disembodied entity divorced from concrete historical and social meanings' (1999: 30), a separation crucially in tension with Beauvoir's understanding of the ambiguity of human existence.⁴⁰ Lois McNay (2004) also uses the situatedness of being, the idea that 'abstract forces only reveal themselves in the lived reality of social relations' (175), to suggest gender is a lived social relation rather than structural location. McNay uses Bourdieu's social phenomenology rather than Beauvoir's situation to develop her argument, though she does signal to the ways in which Bourdieu's arguments resemble Beauvoir's. Additionally feminist standpoint theorist Nancy Hartsock argues for a move beyond the theoretical divide between sex and gender, claiming that the work of Judith Butler has contributed to the language allowing such a move by 'recognizing that bodies are both natural and cultural and neither, and that they are created in discursive and physical ways and intertwined to the point where they cannot be separated' (Hartsock, 2006: 182). This recognition, however, formed one of the fundamental components of Beauvoir's concept of the situated self, though it was lost in an interpretation, supported by Butler (1985), of 'born' and 'becoming' as representing a binary of biological sex against or apart from the social meanings of bodies.

⁴⁰ In an extended essay on Beauvoir appearing in her book 'What is a Woman?' (1999), Moi suggests that the very distinction of sex from gender arises from the limitations of the English language, demonstrating that the need for such a distinction is absent in many other languages, including the French of Beauvoir's original text.

In her more recent work, Sara Heinàmaa argues that the similarities between the Beauvoirian body-subject intertwined in the social and natural worlds and Butler's (1993) assertion that the materiality of sexed bodies itself is socially constituted, are lost due to Butler's conflation of Beauvoirian and Sartrean concepts of the self. Heinàmaa suggests that close study of the Beauvoirian self reveals it is actually 'closer to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's body-subject intertwined *with* the world' (Heinàmaa, 2001: 22). Butler recognises the significance of Beauvoir's Merleau-Pontian understanding of the body, however she does not unearth the uniqueness in Beauvoir's gendered application of his insights.

In Merleau-Ponty's reflections in *The Phenomenology of Perception* on "the body in its sexual being," he...claims that the body is "an historical idea" rather than a "natural species." Significantly, it is this claim that Simone de Beauvoir cites in *The Second Sex* when she sets the stage for her claim that "woman," and by extension, any gender, is an historical situation rather than a natural fact (Butler, 1988: 520).

What is lost in the claim of 'historical situation rather than natural fact' is the ambiguity Beauvoir believed to be so fundamental to human existence and so particularly expressed by women's situation. Combined with her theory of the self as situated, Beauvoir's welcoming of the ambiguity of existence can be used to dissolve the binary of sex and gender in line with Butler's own project, rather than establish it. For Beauvoir, there is no body-subject outside of our historical situation. She conceptualises the body as living, the self as a living bodily-self. In effect, there are no 'natural facts of the body' as this presupposes the possibility of the body existing outside it being lived, and the self existing beyond its being embodied, both claims Beauvoir would refute. Our situation

derives from the *total context* of our living experience, thus including the materiality of the body rather than being posited against it. This is where Butler's reading of Beauvoir subtly misrepresents the concept of situation.

If gender is a way of 'existing' one's body, and one's body is a "situation," a field of cultural possibilities both received and reinterpreted, then gender seems to be a thoroughly cultural affair. That one becomes one's gender seems now to imply more than the distinction between sex and gender. Not only is gender no longer dictated by anatomy, but anatomy does not seem to pose any necessary limits to the possibilities of gender (Butler, 1986: 45).

It is by reconceptualising Beauvoir's model of situation as being *solely* a field of cultural possibilities, rather than as the total context of these combined with our *facticity* and our projects, that enables the separation of sex and gender into unambiguous, independent categories. This separation then allows Butler to be able to assert that gender is 'thoroughly cultural'. It is not that Beauvoir claims our anatomy has meaning outside of our particular historical situation. . For Beauvoir, '(p)resence in the world vigorously implies the positing of a body that is both a thing of the world and a point of view on this world: but this body need not possess this or that particular structure' (Beauvoir, 2011: 24). At the same time, however, she holds that we cannot experience our bodies in any way outside of this situation In her discussion of what Beauvoir can offer to current feminist debates on the politics of privilege, Sonia Kruks (2005) highlights how we cannot shed our skins or our personal histories. Kruks suggests that Beauvoir sees social processes as being taken in through the body, becoming 'elements of a lived experience that is deeply embedded in one's selfhood' (Kruks, 2005: 187). The bodily-self thus becomes immeasurably important as it is what enables us to grasp the world and for the world to grasp us. An examination of what is meant by this living bodily-self

in Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty forms the final piece in the conceptual framework of this thesis.

OUR LIVING BODY

The second half of *The Second Sex* is devoted to women's lived experience, '*l'expérience vécue*', mistranslated until 2011 in the English edition as '*The Woman's Life Today*' (Beauvoir, 1989). As outlined above, the heuristic distinction between sex and gender, where the former refers to biological sex and the latter to the social meanings of sexual difference, is often misattributed to *The Second Sex*. Beauvoir's understanding of the body as a living, situated bodily-self, however, actually provides an alternative to the dualistic thinking of the sex/gender distinction (Moi, 1999; Kruks, 2000; Young, 2005).

To consider the body as a situation... is to consider both the fact of being a specific kind of body and the meaning that concrete body has for the situated individual. This is not the equivalent of either sex or gender. The same is true for "lived experience" which encompasses our experience of all kinds of situations (race, class, nationality etc.) and is a far more wide-ranging concept than the highly psychologizing concept of gender identity (Moi, 1999: 81).

Building on Moi (1999), Iris Marion Young (2005) explains in detail the particular possibilities the concept of the 'lived body' raises for feminist theorising today.

The idea of the lived body thus does the work the category "gender" has done, but better and more. It does this work better because the category of the lived body allows a description of the habitus and interactions of men with women, women with women, and men with men in ways that can attend to the plural possibilities of comportment, without necessary reduction to the normative heterosexual binary of "masculine" and "feminine." It does more because it helps avoid

a problem generated by use of ascriptive general categories such as “gender,” “race,” “nationality,” “sexual orientation,” to describe the constructed identities of individuals, namely the additive character that identities appear to have under this description (Young, 2005: 18).

Young has been criticised for not recognising Beauvoir’s prior gendered adaptation of Merleau-Ponty (Chisholm, 2008), however the conceptual framework of this thesis demonstrates that, like for Young, there is benefit in drawing on both Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty to provide a full account of women’s concrete experience of the continuum of sexual violence.

The ‘lived body’ has a particular meaning in existential-phenomenology, a meaning this thesis develops conceptually through the terminology of ‘our living body’ and ‘our bodily-self’. The terminology of ‘our’ is not used here to suggest a shared body, rather to represent the characteristic of *mineness*. As seen throughout this chapter, Beauvoir’s concept of the self as situated highlights the role of our body as that through which the world takes hold of us and we take hold of it. In the position adopted by Beauvoir, ‘that of Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty... the body is not a *thing*, it is a situation: it is our grasp on the world and the outline for our projects (Beauvoir, 2011: 46). Despite Beauvoir’s naming of Martin Heidegger here, Heidegger’s main philosophical treatise *Being and Time* (1996) did not give a thematic account of the body.⁴¹ This absence is particularly notable given that Edmund Husserl, whose phenomenological insights were expanded on by Heidegger, developed the concept of *Leib* (Husserl, 2001), translated

⁴¹ Responding to Sartre’s critique of the lack of attention paid to *Dasein* as embodied, Heidegger gave a series of lectures held between 1959-69 at the home of one of his close friends and colleagues, Medard Boss (see Heidegger, 2001). Kevin A. Aho (2005) suggests that the theory of embodiment Heidegger presented at these lectures bears striking similarities to that developed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (and I would also suggest Simone de Beauvoir who borrowed from Heidegger’s concept of ‘situation’), though Heidegger himself directed his response primarily at Sartre.

alternatively as the ‘lived’ or ‘living’ body. Writing in the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl signalled the difference between the body as instrument and the body as material as being one whereby the living body (*Lieb*) is *my* body, uniquely singled out among other bodies (*Körper*) for me as ‘the only one *in* which I immediately *have free rein (schalte und walte)*’ (Husserl, 1960: 97). This characteristic of ‘mineness’ that applies to our living experience of our body is highlighted by Gail Weiss (1999) in the introduction to her book exploring the Merleau-Pontian concept of the body image.

(T)he use of the definite article suggests that the body and the body image are themselves neutral phenomena, unaffected by the gender, race, age, and changing abilities of the body. Put simply there is not such thing as “the” body or even “the” body image. Instead, whenever we are referring to an individual’s body, that body is always responded to in a particularized fashion... these images of the body are not discrete but form a series of overlapping identities whereby one or more aspects of that body appear to be especially salient at any given point in time (Weiss, 1999: 1).

In order to capture this characteristic of the body, and to avoid the misrepresentation of the Beauvoirian self seen in the parting of the ‘sexed’ body from the ‘gendered’ self, this thesis uses the plural possessive pronoun ‘our’ in referring to our living body, mirroring the similar terminology in use around ‘our’self. Such an understanding was embedded in the work of both Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty through the notion that ‘the “lived body” is always “its personal body” and not that of another person because the “lived body” gives the person a particular perspective on the world’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 235). My purpose here is similar to that expressed by Rosi Braidotti in relation to the subject ‘woman’. ‘Our living body’ is used not to represent ‘a monolithic essence defined once and for all, but rather the site of multiple, complex, and potentially contradictory sets of experience defined by overlapping variables’ (Braidotti, 1993). It is ‘a’ body, but a body that is uniquely singled out for us among all others as our own. This resonates with

Beauvoir's careful deconstruction of the concept of 'woman' in the first book of *The Second Sex*, which she discards as a patriarchal myth, holding instead that we grow to become *a* woman (see Moi, 2010). It is in this sense that 'our' is used here, with the intention to capture through this the singularity of each body that is 'ours'. The terms 'living body' and 'living experience' are also used instead of the conventional 'lived', to further emphasise our active processes. Our living body, like our dying body, represents a process, not an event. Our living body is necessarily spatially and temporally located, experienced differently across age and in different spaces. Such use sits closer to replicating in English, Beauvoir's conception of our self as in a continual mode of becoming. This shift is argued by Sara Heinämaa (1999) to also represent more fully Husserl's original differentiation between the body as expression or instrument (the German, '*Leib*') and the body as physical presence or object (the German, '*Körper*'), built on by both Simone de Beauvoir and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Heinämaa signals the ways in which translations between German, French and English have moved Husserl's original concept of *Lieb* or living body, to that of lived body.

Merleau-Ponty's discussion of *corps vivant* or *corps vécu* (*Leib*) is often translated with the term 'lived body.' I do not follow this convention because my intention is to illuminate the methodological and conceptual connections among Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir. So I follow Carr's procedure and use the term 'living body' for both the German *Leib* and the French *corps vécu* (Heinämaa, 1999: 128).

The choice of terminology for this thesis varies slightly in intention from Heinämaa, though both are attempts to get closer to the meaning of the term within the existential-phenomenological tradition. To speak of the lived body has the implication of past tense. The role of our situated agency in creating, adapting and developing meaning is

lost. 'Living body' helps to represent a bodily-self always in situation, in flux. It is the body as we live it, a living that changes not only based on age, health, but also on social environmental factors, including the meeting of other embodied subjects. The ways in which men's stranger intrusion can thus affect our living body are opened up, without reducing our embodied selfhood to an effect. 'Living' linguistically moves from the past participle to a verb, a move for theory from essential *being* to experiential *doing*, and thus assists in maintaining the transformative vision of Beauvoir's thought.

The scope of the verb *to be* must be understood; bad faith means giving it a substantive value, when in fact it has the essence of the Hegelian dynamic: *to be* is to have become, to have been made as one manifests oneself. Yes, women in general *are* today inferior to men; that is, their situation provides them with fewer possibilities: the question is whether this state of affairs must be perpetuated (Beauvoir, 2011: 13).

For Beauvoir as for Sartre, there is no set human essence, 'woman is not a fixed reality but a becoming' (Beauvoir, 2011: 46). We define ourselves through our existence and thus are in principle unpredictable (for an exception to this see the discussion on habit in this chapter) as long as we are living; bringing forward our situated agency. Toril Moi highlights how for this perspective: '(d)earth is the only thing that deprives us of the possibility of change' (Moi, 1999: 76). 'Living' experience/body also has the possibility of recognising difference between, not one grand 'lived' experience shared by all.

Our bodily-self

In holding that the foundational situation of every self is that we are embodied, Beauvoir again departed from Sartre, aligning instead with Merleau-Ponty's conceptualisation of the embodied subject. This move towards the inseparable body-subject circumvents

what Butler (1985) has called Sartre's 'Cartesian ghosts', the remaining traces of dualism evident in Sartre's account of the body. For Beauvoir: 'it is not the body-object described by scientists that exists concretely but the body as lived by the subject' (Beauvoir, 2011: 50). Our living body is always at the same time a bodily-self, our body indivisible from our self 'living' it. This brings together self and body, entangled with and in each other conceptually in the same way in which they are lived. The intertwined nature of body and subject is a key tenant in the conceptualisation of the lived body developed by Merleau-Ponty, and extended by Beauvoir. Merleau-Ponty attempted to challenge the residual dualism in Husserl, where the Cartesian mind-body problem was replaced with another categorical distinction between 'immanence' and 'transcendence',⁴² through his development of the concept of the body-subject.⁴³ For Merleau-Ponty, the body is not only singled out in terms of being that which I have control over, the locus of my perceptions or 'mineness'. It is also the primordial horizon of our having perception at all, the original locus of our intentionality, and 'our general medium for having a world' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 146).

This position is also found in psychoanalysis,⁴⁴ with Freud's claim that '(t)he ego is first and foremost a bodily ego' (1962: 26), capturing what Kathleen Lennon (2010) refers to

⁴² The complexity of the categories of immanence and transcendence as used by both Beauvoir and Sartre is made clearer through Gail Weiss's claim that 'immanence is associated with '*living* one's body as a being-in-itself or a being-for-others' while transcendence refers to our '*existing* as a conscious being-for-itself' (Weiss, 1999: 45. Emphasis in original). It is important however, to counter the binary (a reworking of the concept of mind/body) that could be suggested results from this distinction. Beauvoir, using her theory of ambiguity, held the two together, claiming 'In truth, all human existence is transcendence and immanence at the same time; to go beyond itself, it must maintain itself; and while relating to others, it must confirm itself in itself' (Beauvoir, 2011: 455).

⁴³ For a discussion of the ways in which Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology represents a radical departure from the Husserlian project that inspired it, as well as Husserl's residual metaphysical dualism, see Carman (1999).

⁴⁴ An unsurprising resonance given Beauvoir's interest in psychotherapy and Merleau-Ponty's training in psychology.

as how we experience the material contours of the body as formative of the self. More recently, psychoanalyst Susie Orbach who has written extensively on the body (Orbach, 1978; 1993; 2003; 2009b), described how bringing together the bodily-self is foundational for work on women's embodiment.

Where does the self get located if the body is okay? Hopefully we would be getting close to a notion that we couldn't divide these categories up... I'm only discussing a body qua body because we need to discuss something that hasn't been looked at in this way. I don't really want to discuss it because I think it's mad. My speech production is both a physical, emotional, mental activity so there is no division between those two. So that's where I'm hoping we would get to, that we would have, we could be, corporeal beings. We would *be* embodied (Orbach, 2009a. Emphasis added).

Rosi Braidotti (1993) also reasserts the revolutionary possibilities of bringing back the 'bodily roots' of subjectivity and rejecting traditional views of the subject as universal or neutral, stating that this 'situated way of seeing the subject states that the most important location or situation is the rooting of the subject into the spatial frame of the body. The first and foremost of locations in reality is one's own embodiment' (Braidotti, 1993: 7). It is here that again Beauvoir's insights are particularly unique. If the situated self is always a bodily-self, then the body too is situated. Beauvoir, however, took this further, claiming that our material body forms a situation *itself*, opening up and closing down possibilities for our embodied self. Remembering the positive ambiguity infusing Beauvoir's writing, this claim is that the body is a limitation on our possibilities, 'without implying that those limitations have any specific meaning outside of our social situation' (Rodier, 2013: 39).

Increasingly it is argued that Beauvoir's discussion of the female body needs to be understood in the context of this theory of the body as situation (see Heinämaa, 2003a;

2003b; Moi, 1999; Ward, 1995). Beauvoir's seemingly condemning analysis of the female body in *The Second Sex* has historically been subject to feminist criticism for its negative descriptions of women's bodies (Hartsock, 1983) or been avoided in studies of the phenomenology of women's embodiment in favour of Merleau-Ponty (see for example Grosz, 1994; Young, 2005; Weiss, 1999). The criticism here is based on a claim that Beauvoir's analysis is essentialist and masculinist, falling into the trap of Cartesian dualism through employing the concepts of immanence and transcendence, and, as suggested by Judith Butler (1986), an exercise in Sartre's voluntarist conception of subjectivity. Indeed, the modern day English language reader of *The Second Sex* may find passages such as the following (taken from the original English language translation) sit uneasily, if read as Beauvoir talking about immutable 'facts' of the female body.

The young girl may succeed in accepting the fact of her desires, but usually they retain a cast of shame. Her whole body is a source of embarrassment. The mistrust that as a small child she felt in regard to her 'insides' helps to give to the menstrual crisis the dubious character that renders it odious to her. It is because of the psychic state induced by her menstrual slavery that it constitutes a heavy handicap... Because her body seems suspect to her, and because she views it with alarm, it seems to her to be sick: it is sick (Beauvoir, 1989: 332).

That the revised English translation by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier goes some of the way towards correcting the English language mistranslation can be seen in its version of the same section.

The girl can succeed in accepting her desires: but most often they retain a shameful nature. Her whole body is experienced as embarrassment. The defiance she felt as a child regarding her 'insides' contributes to giving the menstrual crisis the dubious nature that renders it loathsome. The psychic attitude evoked by menstrual servitude constitutes a heavy handicap... Because her body is suspect to her, she scrutinises it with anxiety and sees it as sick: it is sick (Beauvoir, 2011: 356).

It is evident in comparing the two passages above how subtle differences in translation, for example, 'her whole body *is a source of* embarrassment' (1989. Emphasis added) in comparison to 'her whole body *is experienced as* embarrassment' (2011. Emphasis added), have influenced historic understandings of Beauvoir by English language theorists. In the Parshley translation (Beauvoir, 1989) the body is the source, with the implication of an essence preceding or outside of our experience. Such a conceptualisation is at odds with Beauvoir's detailed theory of the body as situation. The recent English translation of *The Second Sex*, also includes an introduction to the second section that was absent from the original translation.

When I use the words 'woman' or 'feminine' I obviously refer to no archetype, to no immutable essence; 'in the present state of education and customs' must be understood to follow most of my affirmations. There is no question of expressing eternal truths here, but of describing the common ground from which all singular feminine existence stems (Beauvoir, 2011: 289).

This introduction makes clear Beauvoir's non-essentialist position, and its cutting from the original French text may have led to years of missteps in English language theorists usage of Beauvoir. If the self is thus entangled with the body, the way we live our body as instrument and expression gives us clues about how we understand and live our self. When focusing particularly on women's experiences of the continuum of men's intrusive practices, what becomes important is an illumination of how we perceive our bodies, the body image, how we live our bodies, the body schema and habit body, and what this then means for our bodily-self in relationship to the embodied selves of others and our world.

Body image and body schema

Beauvoir's gendered exploration of the female body-subject aligns closely with Merleau-Ponty's conceptualisation of embodiment. For both there is recognition that the body is our means of grasping the world and that which makes it possible for us to have a world at all. In Merleau-Ponty, as in Beauvoir, the body is always situated, in constant engagement with the world. In *The Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 2002), Merleau-Ponty offered a radical revisioning of our bodies, with two particular areas that will be drawn on during this thesis; the corporeal schema, including the body schema/image distinction, and the habit body.

The term 'body image' is popularly understood as the way we feel about our outward appearance, the 'inside view' (Cash, 2004) of our body or what, for Beauvoir, signifies part of the transition from childhood, that is the girl 'becoming aware of her body' (Beauvoir, 2011: 351). Our body image is the way we internally perceive our bodies, frequently delimited into positive and negative evaluations and usually understood as self-attitudes or perceptions based on our body's appearance and not its capacities. In the context of this study, body image refers to women's internal perceptions of their body as seen from the outside in public space, women's 'external perspective' (see Chapter Six). The current Home Office campaign to improve 'body confidence' being run in partnership with the Government Equalities Office (GEO), defines body image as a 'continuing conversation between the individual, their family and friends, and the wider society around them' (GEO, 2013: 2). This move away from understanding body image as existing at an individual level towards viewing it as a dynamic between individuals and between individuals and their social and cultural context, is a shift that

has been influenced by a gender and cultural studies perspective (Riley, 2013). A philosophical VAWG perspective suggests moving the discussion further towards understanding not only how men's intrusive practices impact on women's body image, but also through focusing on the relationship between the body image and the body schema, looking to how the embodied practices developed as a response to men's intrusion influence women's experience of the capacities their bodily-selves.

Merleau-Ponty used the terms 'body image', 'body schema' and 'corporeal schema' interchangeably (see Weiss, 1999), where modern day philosopher of mind Shaun Gallagher (1986) marks a distinction between the two, with the body image being the appearance of the body in the perceptual field and the body schema as the ways in which the body shapes the perceptual field. For Griffin (2012), this distinction is particularly useful in helping to broaden out discussion of our 'body confidence' from one focused on external appearance to a conceptualisation including the experience of our body's abilities.

Because body image is such a familiar term, discussion of the experience of a body often returns to social standards of beauty, whether one accepts herself, and the like. This account, though, draws attention away from the very real experience of inhabiting the world in various bodily forms, and the way one interacts with her environment on a physical or physiological (and likely subconscious) level... the body image/schema distinction helps to explain my experience in the world as both informed by physical states and bodily characteristics as well as what I think, feel, or perceive of those characteristics (Griffin, 2012: 378).

Using Beauvoir to balance the ambiguity of our body as a situation that is both experienced as a body image and as a body schema helps to avoid the separation into a dichotomy where at any one time we experience our bodily selves only as one or the

other. Instead, the difference between the two can be maintained whilst acknowledging that they are lived as interdependent, with our body image impacted on by our body schema and our body schema influenced by our body image. In addition, Gail Weiss (1999) suggests that the use of the definite article and a singular instance, ‘the body image’ or ‘the body schema’ is to falsely presume that we live our bodies as cohesive, coherent and uniform. Weiss argues that in experiential terms we have ‘a multiplicity of body images, body images that are co-present in any given individual, and which are themselves constructed through a series of corporeal exchanges that take place both within and outside of specific bodies’ (Weiss, 1999: 2). In this way, embodiments are conceptualised as contextual and temporal: a living relation. For both Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir then, our body schemas are not solely the way the mind maps the body, but also the ways in which we experience our living body as this contextual body, entangled with the world. Merleau-Ponty outlines the ways in which his use of body schema applies not solely to our mapping of the body, but the ways in which this mapping includes our environment, the ways in which our being is always a being-in-the-world. Again, this *in* is of a particular kind. Our body, for Merleau-Ponty, ‘appears to me as an attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task. And indeed its spatiality is not, like that of external objects or like that of ‘spatial sensations’, a *spatiality of position* but a *spatiality of situation* (Merleau-Ponty, 2007: 115. Emphasis in original). Feminist psychoanalyst, Susie Orbach, draws on this concept of our living body to claim that the body ‘is not a thing in and of itself, not even the integral or material basis of an individual’s life, but the body, much like the psyche, has relational and object relational elements to it. The body is only made in relationship’ (Orbach, 2003: 11). For Merleau-Ponty (2002), this relationship between the world, others and

the embodied self is expressed through the concept of a ‘bodily intentionality’ whereby the bodily senses form a pre-reflective ‘intentional arc’ projecting towards an anticipated world.⁴⁵

The body schema incorporates not just our immediate physical body, but also the ways in which this bodily intentionality enmeshes our body in the world, extended beyond the material confines of our skin. In the context of this thesis, the extended embodiment of the body schema is seen in the ways in which public space is moved through or used by women’s bodily-self, women’s ‘external awareness’ (see Chapter Six). For Griffin (2012) this external awareness and our external perspective together form our embodiment through ‘feedback loops’ (2012: 376). Conceptualising embodiment in this way helps to limit the remaining influence of Cartesian dualism, moving towards a theory of embodied cognition of the bodily-self. It also signals the importance of exploring how particular situations give rise to particular modalities of embodiment through habitual embodied practices; a perspective seen in Coy’s (2009) work in relation to the development of a habit body from childhood sexual abuse to selling sex.

The habit body

Our habits play a key role in any examination of living experience. In her review of the concept of ‘everyday life’, Rita Felski (2000) discusses the role of habit in crystallising our experience of dailiness.

⁴⁵ This notion that our embodiment is extended into the world through our bodily intentionality was developed in Merleau-Ponty’s later work into his theory of ‘Flesh’, where all bodies, whether celestial, human or animal, were viewed as belonging to the whole of ‘Being’ (or what Merleau-Ponty termed ‘Flesh’), governed by the principle of reflexivity (Merleau-Ponty, 2007; see also Stawarska, 2002 and Slatman, 2005 for discussions of Merleau-Ponty’s later philosophy).

Habit describes not simply an action but an attitude: habits are often carried out in a semi-automatic, distracted or involuntary manner. Certain forms of behaviour are inscribed upon the body, part of a deeply ingrained somatic memory. We drive to work, buy groceries, or type a routine letter in a semi-conscious, often dream-like state. Our bodies go through the motions while our minds are elsewhere. Particular habits may be intentionally cultivated or may build up imperceptibly over time. In either case, they often acquire a life of their own, shaping us as much as we shape them (Felski, 2000: 26).

Where habit connotes routine, repeated action, often performed without conscious awareness, Merleau-Ponty's 'habit body' concerns the capturing of a movement by the body and giving it meaning through its interaction with the world (Hamington, 2008). For Merleau-Ponty: '(i)t is not consciousness... but the body which "understands" in the cultivation of habit' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 167). Nick Crossley describes Merleau-Ponty's point here as being that '(t)o acquire a habit is to grasp and incorporate, within one's body schema, a tacit and practical "principle"' (Crossley, 2001: 106). Habit is thus not simply a mechanical response to external or internal stimulus but rather is a form of embodied and practical understanding, a bodily know-how which shapes the way we make sense of our environment. For Merleau-Ponty, our habituated embodied practices have their 'abode neither in thought nor in the objective body, but in the body as mediator of a world' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 167). Through habit the true nature of the body as expression and instrument, a living 'bodily-self' entangled in the world, is revealed.

Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus offers a route into talking about the ways in which cultural and social structures are embodied, what Lois McNay (1999: 99) terms 'the incorporation of the social into the corporeal', however the foundational, encompassing role Bourdieu attributes to the habitus in an individual's life hides the 'specificity of each

individual's bodily experiences' (Weiss, 1999: 233). A conceptualisation that recognises an agency situated by the particular social structures it is expressed within can be constructed by mobilising Merleau-Ponty's concept of the habit body through the insights of Beauvoir on the gendered body-subject.⁴⁶ Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's conceptualisation of the habit body, Bourdieu claimed that '(w)hat is learned by the body' is not something one 'has', like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one 'is' (Bourdieu, 1990: 73). Wendy Parkins (2000) builds on this suggestion, applying Merleau-Ponty's discussion of habit to a gendered analysis of the body. Parkins highlights how 'arising from our own history of personal acts in particular situations, habits develop which give us "stable dispositional tendencies"... resources for acting meaningfully in the world' (Parkins, 2000: 60). Absent from many discussions of women's embodiment, however, is concentrated empirical work focused on the relationship between men's intrusive practices and women's habitual embodied practices under unequal gender orders. A key exception is the work of Maddy Coy (2008; 2009) focusing on Merleau-Ponty's concept of a 'habit body', together with prostitution, (dis)embodiment and young women's experiences in local authority care. Coy explores in depth the ways in which previous experiences of men's sexually violent practices can be conceptualised as creating a template for how 'women act with their bodies and demarcate boundaries of ownership and use, which are absorbed into the embodied sense of self' (Coy, 2009: 66). Like Coy, Simone de Beauvoir also connected the development of gendered bodily habits in *The Second Sex* in relation to men's practices.

⁴⁶ Beauvoir did not detail the role or impact of habit on women's bodily-self in *The Second Sex*, though she did attend to it in the third volume of her autobiography, *The Coming of Age* (1996), where she claimed that embodied habits, rooted in the past yet open to alteration in the future, transform the binaries of freedom and determinism into lived ambiguities (for more see Cuffari, 2011).

If girl students run through the streets in happy groups as boys do, they attract attention; striding along, singing, talking and laughing loudly or eating an apple are provocations, and they will be insulted or followed or approached. Light-heartedness immediately becomes a lack of decorum. This self-control imposed on the woman becomes second nature for the 'well-bred girl' and kills spontaneity; lively exuberance is crushed (Beauvoir, 2011: 358).

In this formulation, men's intrusive practices create particular habitual bodily dispositions for women, habits both generated by and themselves generating ways of living the body. These pre-reflective habits then shape our conscious perceptions, including perceptions of our bodily-selves. This is not to replicate the determinism of Bourdieu, but rather, following Beauvoir, to remember our self, including our habituated embodied self, as always in the mode of 'becoming'. In this way although men's intrusive practices may impact on women's embodiments, there remains possibilities for transformation. Speaking in an interview on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir pointed towards such possibilities, claiming that '(i)f you can check your habits, make it so that it's "natural" to have counterhabits, that's a big step' (Gerassi, 1976). To do so, however, we need first become aware of what habitual modes of embodiment we are enacting, thus moving from the theoretical framework of this thesis onto the empirical findings of 50 women's experiences of unknown men's intrusion in public space.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical foundations of this thesis are based on the compatibility between existential-phenomenology's history of philosophical examination into 'lived experience'

and theory and research from feminists committed to ending VAWG. This chapter has outlined the four key components underlying the conceptual framework of this thesis: living experience; the continuum of sexual violence; Simone de Beauvoir's concept of situation; and Merleau-Ponty's work on embodiment, particularly on the habit body. Women's everyday encounters with gendered power are presented as a central part of women's living experience of unequal gender orders. For feminist standpoint epistemology and existential-phenomenology, embodied experience is the source of our knowledge and perception. Both perspectives promote the call to shift focus from a world that exists objectively out there, to the specifics of individuals' embodied, everyday experience in our attempts to understand men's structural and personal power.

Liz Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence supports this shift, offering a theoretical device to move from a focus on demarcated categories of VAWG to an exploration of commonality and connections. The concept of a continuum helps to provide a conceptual framework through which to build connections between men's mundane and acute practices of intrusion. It also enables a conceptual tool for speaking about the commonality of VAWG in women's lives, without losing the variation in how women experience men's violence based on social and personal histories. The continuum of sexual violence was posited as resonant with Simone de Beauvoir's concept of 'situation'. Beauvoir's 'situated self' provides a theory of embodied selfhood that also accounts for the different meanings given to the individual and generated by the individual through their socio-historical location; including the multiple and uneasy ways in which women live their agency and oppression in the current gender order. Exploring Beauvoir in this way revealed her belief that both freedom and agency are situated, introducing through

this the concept of ‘situated agency’ and opening up a theoretical space to talk about the realities of VAWG as a constraining context for women without denying what Jeffner (2000) has termed women’s ‘space for action’.

Beauvoir aligned her work on women’s embodiment with that of Merleau-Ponty and claimed that the body is not a thing but a situation itself, an outline of our possibilities and projects. Both Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty can be used to complicate discussions of women’s ‘body image’ through understanding this as interconnected with the body schema, that is the way that we map our body and its abilities, including where this embodiment extends into the world as a living relation through our bodily intentionality. The chapter concluded in looking to how Merleau-Pontian concept of the ‘habit body’ represents the ways our habitual embodied practices shapes conscious perceptions, including perceptions of our environment, our bodily appearance and our bodily capacity. This theoretical framework suggests the importance of examining the ordinary experiences of the continuum of men’s intrusive practices, how these experiences are captured and given meaning through women’s habitual modes of embodiment, and what this then reveals of women’s situated self. It is with these questions in mind that the next chapter enters the empirical findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Living Men's Intrusion

It is within the whole context of a situation that leaves her few outlets that these singularities take on their importance.

(Beauvoir, 2011: 357)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of 50 women's accounts of men's stranger intrusions in public space, given during the initial research conversations. These intrusions are categorised into: ordinary interruptions; verbal intrusions; the gaze, including 'creepshots'; physical intrusions, including rape; flashing and public masturbation; and

the experience of being followed.⁴⁷ Each practice will be examined, outlining the experiential alongside the quantitative findings. Before exploring incidence and frequency however, there is a need to acknowledge the challenge encountered in attempting to measure and report on men's intrusion through women's voices. An underlying, unresolved tension runs through this chapter; the desire to collate similarities alongside holding both the ambiguity of, and particularities between/within, different experiences of men's intrusive practices. Examining the experience of men's intrusion in detail unearthed the interdependency of individual intrusive practices, problematising their separation into clear and concise categories. This illustrates many of the issues raised by the second component of this thesis' theoretical framework, Liz Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence. Kelly's conceptualisation demonstrated how the splitting of men's intrusive practices into the distinct groupings, often necessary for analysis, can disrupt attempts to reflect the meanings such practices have in individual women's lives. It also connects to the work of another key theorist for this thesis, Merleau-Ponty, particularly his use of the concept of 'horizons' (developed from Husserl, 2001). As outlined by Sara Heinämaa (2010: 1) '(b)oth philosophers argue that all experiencing is horizontal, that is, all experiences refer, by internal links of sense, to other experiences'. Following this, the categories worked with in this chapter are to be understood as analytical concepts developed with an awareness that the behaviours characterising men's intrusive practices were lived by participants as cumulative not isolated, a finding discussed further towards the end of the chapter. In addition, throughout participant accounts the mechanisms of normalisation combine with definitional and experiential ambiguity around 'what counts', to render precise measurement difficult. The

⁴⁷ As will be discussed in Section Six, participants' feeling of being followed is measured during this study, irrespective of external validation.

‘experience of following’ exemplifies this where, unless the intrusion escalated, participants felt uncertain of whether their perception of being followed was accurate. Finally the impact of habituated responses, which will be covered in more detail in the next chapter, may mean that women’s successful resistance is lost in attempts to measure frequency.

It is thus with a recognition of the limits of quantitative methods in explicating the living experience of men’s stranger intrusion that this chapter begins a discussion of the findings of this project. It will include participants’ accounts of assessment and resistance, and outline how they connected different intrusive practices from unknown men in public space. Given the breadth of experiences within even a similarly defined category, women’s accounts provide the necessary definitional and experiential meaning to make sense of the connections, divisions and frequencies in and between categories. In light of this, where possible, there is a focus on participant voices to give the living detail of each category. The chapter culminates in examining the ways in which these intrusions were experienced by participants as connected, both with different forms of intrusion occurring within the same encounter and with different men practicing the same form of intrusion across different encounters. Such positioning is particularly pronounced in the ways in which being raped for the women in this project was a conscious feature in their field of possibilities, its absence a ‘fortunate lack’ rather than its experience being an unexpected addition. In this way, the chapter begins to explore the empirical findings through the theoretical framework of this thesis, charting a move from counting the continuum to living it.

ORDINARY INTERRUPTIONS

The category of ‘ordinary interruptions’ is used in this thesis to capture practices that are often dismissed as trivial, similar to the ‘daily hassles’ of psychological literature (Esacove, 1998). Carol Brooks Gardner (1990; 1995) uses Erving Goffman’s (1990) concept of ‘open persons’ to describe such a phenomenon, where particular characteristics are perceived as inviting a break from the ‘civil inattention’ (Goffman, 1990) typical of interactions between strangers in public space. Gardner develops Goffman’s examples of attributes such as having a dog or a baby in public space, or carrying something particularly unusual such as a large plant or a wardrobe, to argue that women as a group are perceived as open persons in public space. The experiences of participants in this project support Gardner’s claim; all reported experiencing ordinary interruptions from unknown men in public.

Table 5-1 Ordinary interruptions: Frequency (n=50)

Frequency	Number	%
Regularly (no number given)	25	50%
Occasionally (no number given)	9	18%
Three or more	6	12%
Twice	6	12%
Once	4	8%
Total	50	100%

The category itself is one of the broadest of the analytical concepts worked with here, including a range of practices such as wolf-whistles, catcalls and car beeping, alongside

comments such as uninvited greetings, usually attached to a diminutive such as ‘love’ or ‘beautiful’, or prolonged one-sided conversation.

A practice was categorised as an ordinary interruption if women described experiencing it as a mundane extension of current gender orders, Connell’s (2002) conceptualisation of the socially organised hierarchies of gender (see Chapter Two). The current unequal gender order affirms men’s power to act on and through women’s bodies (Coy & Garner, 2012). Ordinary interruptions were expressed by participants as being demonstrative of this, motivated by men’s need to make them aware that they have been seen and that their bodies can be acted on.

(Y)ou are more interrupted being a woman because people generally feel they can. There’s this weird general sense whereby what women do isn’t as important and can be interrupted, what women look like is much more important and everybody has a right to comment on it or have an opinion (Viola, INT42).

That such intrusion is experienced as ‘ordinary’ led to the difficulty in recording frequencies; just over two thirds of participants were unable to recall particular instances but stated they experienced ordinary intrusions either regularly or occasionally. This suggests that the phenomenological detail of such practices, their frequency and their impact, can be missed when research methodologies ask women only to *recall* rather than *record* particular intrusive experiences. June Larkin’s (1997) research is unique in the literature in its use of notebooks, though participants were not first asked to recount their histories of men’s intrusion. The findings of this study, where women were asked to do both, revealed a disjuncture between both projected frequency (with the notebooks finding less than anticipated episodes of intrusion), and

claims of impact (with the notebooks recording a greater impact for women of these mundane encounters than they remembered when relaying historic experiences in the initial conversations). This disjuncture will be further discussed in the following chapter, particularly in light of how it revealed the impact of men's intrusion on women's habitual modes of embodiment.

Where specific instances of ordinary interruptions were remembered in the initial conversations it was most often where the intrusion contained comments and extended over time, with a recurring context for this being when participants were alone on public transport. Across participants' accounts, men engaged in interrogations of women in such a context. For Laura, this extended over the course of a transatlantic flight.

(P)ublic transport is a great example where guys sit uncomfortably close to you on a bus and they'll just be really invading your personal space but you don't say anything because it might be busy and you're just trying to read your paper. The worst one actually was on a plane, this guy on a plane. Transatlantic flight so I was there for quite a while, completely stuck. And I was on the window and he was on the middle seat and there was this armrest there and he was leaning all over it and trying to talk to me and I was trying to be polite and friendly but then after a while I felt a bit like he was, because it went on for so long he was really just starting to get on my nerves and I just wanted to be left alone to watch my film or whatever, and he was constantly leaning over and being like "where are you going?" and "what are you doing?" and "is this a holiday?" and "have you got a boyfriend?" (Laura, INT51).

Lisa was faced with similar intrusive questioning during a bus journey home.

When there's other seats or when it's an empty bus, but they will come and sit next to me and we will have a very long extended conversation whether I want to or not... I was finishing an essay at school and was getting the bus back and this very drunk man got on and he was getting off at my stop so I had to wait and get off at the next stop because I didn't want him to, well where my

house was you could go the long way round or you could go down an alleyway which was behind some shops and I didn't want him to know that I was going to go down that dark and dingy alleyway. So I just got off at the next stop and went around... I think he was talking about how he's had a really good night and then he was like "oh do you have a boyfriend?" so I was like "yep I have a boyfriend." And then he kept pestering me about him, "where's your boyfriend? Where's your boyfriend tonight?" (Lisa, INT48).

The routine way in which Lisa speaks of changing her intended route home based on both the intrusion itself and what it signals in terms of the possibility of escalation, is also seen in Luella's description of an experience that almost replicates Lisa's.

I was going [across city] and the bus was basically empty there were about four people, so there were plenty of seats to sit at, and I was sitting right next to the window. And this man gets on and just heads for the seat right next to me... To be honest when I saw that he looked at me and headed to my seat I thought, "here we go." It's not even, I didn't feel scared because I was on the bus. I was so tired, it was late, I'd had a drink. I was just enjoying my night bus ride with some music in my ears and he started talking to me and I had my headphones in so I ignored him the first time. And then he said something else and I didn't want to act like a bitch because I don't want to provoke them in any way, so I took my headphone out and I can't even remember what he was saying, it was like, "where are you coming from?" or something like that, and I said to him I was out with some friends, and he asked what I did and I told him I was at university, and he asked "what year?" and I said "first year." So clearly the man understands that he's twice my age. And he kept trying to engage me in conversation... And I was thinking "where the hell is he going to get off? What bus stop is he getting off at?" Because I didn't want to squeeze past him either because I was scared he'd grab me or something like that (Luella, INT17).

Luella's account here shows the ways in which, similar to Lisa, ordinary interruptions were often experienced as connected to the potential for criminalised forms of men's intrusion. Lisa gets off a stop later than usual to combat the possibility of being followed, while Luella also checks that she will be getting off the bus after the intrusive man to avoid being 'grabbed'. For some participants this connection had been experienced within the encounter, with men practicing several forms of intrusion.

Delilah's account of an experience of escalation after a man moved next to her on public transport, describes this.

I was just sat on a train. Minding my own business again, and a guy came up to me and sat down and said "so what line of work are you in?" And I was like "excuse me?" And he said, "what do you do?" And I was like "I'd rather not talk to you if that's ok" and he said "oh whatever line of work you're in it's a waste of your time." And I'm like "what the hell? Who are you?" And he said something about me being destined to work in topless modelling... He was sitting a few chairs down and he slowly moved towards me and then he was sitting right next to me and that's when I was like ok this is very threatening, very late at night. It wasn't an empty train but there weren't very many people and I was going to get off at the last stop so I could be possibly the last one off the train. So I think my initial thing was I'm in trouble and secondly I thought "why me? Is it something I'm giving off?" So yeah it does go in that cycle... I think it was his stop eventually. Because he tried to get me to get off at his stop. He was going "oh c'mon, just let me take a few pictures" (Delilah, INT55).

Such escalation, from interrupting with intrusive questioning, to physically encroaching, as seen with both Delilah and Laura, was understood as an ever-present potential. As such, many participants responded to ordinary interruptions using an 'escalation calculation', building on a bodily knowledge of men's intrusion to evaluate their safest response, often from the limited options of ignore, engage, challenge or leave. There is thus an expression of agency here, seen in the differences between women's general responses to men's intrusion (see the poetic transcript in Appendix One), however the agency is located within the total context of our situation, a situation that encompasses our living body and the current gender order. The intrusive questioning of women about the existence of a male partner, seen in Lisa's account earlier, was common across narratives of interrogation, and it was these narratives that formed the majority of specific incidents of ordinary intrusion that participants recalled. Where they did speak of encounters in general terms it was commonly in reference to 'the noises, the tsst tsst

tsst' (Josina, INT45), which were recounted as simply part of occupying public space for participants.

The ordinariness of such intrusions, how they fade into the background becoming an aspect of unexamined, unremarkable everyday life, has specific importance when attempting to understand the impact of men's intrusive practices on women's embodiment. On the simplest level such encounters worked to remind participants that they were seeable and seen, and through this disrupted their ability to *be* embodied in public space. Hannah describes the result of this as a feeling of loss.

(A)lot of the time your commute is the only time you get to yourself. Whether you're wanting to read or listen to music or something, it's an infringement on that. You always feel a bit robbed (Hannah, INT26).

Anna, Jan, Claire and Sophie also spoke about how they experienced ordinary interruptions as breaking into their internal world, a recurring disruption not only of their time to their self but their time *in* their self.

When it first happens I feel really quite taken aback and it really throws you as well because you're, as everyone is when you're walking around, you're in your own world and got your own interior monologue going on and when somebody just says something... it really throws me (Anna, INT2).

You're in your little dream, thinking your own thoughts, quite happy, not hurting anybody, minding your own business, and they step into your world, unasked and unwanted. And that's, you could say that's not sexual, that's not harmful in any way, but there's a boundary there I think and they were treading over it (Jan, INT53).

For me it's just that thing about someone intruding, I'm a million miles away, I'm in my own thought, and someone snapping me straight back out... it's an absolute invasion of your getting on with your daily task. It's someone breaking into that and demanding your attention and it's just infuriating (Claire, INT35).

(I)t can be really distracting if you're thinking about something and it's just something there, suddenly, it's in your consciousness, there's a person a few metres away from you who, they want something from you. They either want to look at you or want to talk to you, they want to interrupt you in some way. And they almost want acknowledgment some of them, by you looking up or by you being like, "what?" (Sophie, INT22)

Following Beauvoir, participants are describing here the experience of the embodied self as a for-itself (Beauvoir's *en-soi*), and the impact of men's intrusion in forcing a return to the materiality of the body; a movement in Heideggerian terms from the body as lived to the body as corpse.⁴⁸ Women's internal world is disrupted and their awareness moved to their being embodied, at the same time as external contextual factors such as the fleetingness of the encounter, or the ambiguity of whom the noises were intended for, often undermined their ability to respond. In addition, calculating the possibility of escalation forced women to alternate between the self and the other, adjusting actions and responses in relation to those projected by and for the other. The inner world of one doing this was engaged in a tripartite process of experiencing the corporeality of the embodied self, alongside a diminishment of one's ability as a subject to make sense of the world, while at the same time attempting to anticipate the actions of the other. Such interiority was thus experienced as routinely interrupted regardless of an external interruption by men, suggesting some of the reasons behind the disjuncture between anticipated and recorded intrusions for participants.

⁴⁸ For more on this differentiation see Thoibisana, 2008.

VERBAL INTRUSIONS

The range within the category of verbal intrusions demonstrates some of the difficulty encountered in measuring different practices. There is a danger in collapsing the particularities of encounters under broader categories, particularly as participants spoke of different impacts across different types of comments. Recalling the previous chapter's discussion on our living body, it is acknowledged throughout this thesis that whilst grouping experiences together sheds light on women's shared situations, this is not to be mistaken for a totalised or universal situation of 'woman'. Rather, as claimed by Jackson (2001) key to understanding the differences between women is an understanding of both structural and social inequalities as manifested in everyday social practices. To balance the competing impulses then of bringing experiences together whilst maintaining their particularities, verbal intrusions were coded into three broad categories: sexualised comments; comments commanding happiness in women's demeanour; and insulting or explicitly threatening comments.

Ninety-six per cent of participants (n=48) reported experiencing at least one of these forms, with almost half (n=23) experiencing comments from two categories, and a quarter having experienced all three (n=12). Table 5.2 shows the frequencies of the particular forms of verbal intrusions.

Table 5-2 Verbal Intrusions: Frequency (n=50)

Type of Commentary	Sexualised		'Cheer up'		Insults/Threats	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Once	15	30%	7	14%	10	20%
Twice	7	14%	5	10%	5	10%
Three or more	3	6%	1	2%	1	2%
Regularly (no number given)	13	26%	13	26%	4	8%
Happens (no frequency given)	1	2%	4	8%	3	6%
Rarely	-	-	1	2%	-	-
Explicitly stated never happened	-	-	7	14%	3	6%
Total recording practice (n=50)	39	78%	31	62%	23	46%

‘You’ve got a really nice ass, I’d like to wrap my cock in it’⁴⁹: Sexualised commentary

The most common form of verbal intrusions practiced by unknown men in public was sexualised commentary, experienced by 78 per cent (n=39) of participants (see Table 5.2). The regularity of sexualised comments meant that many women could not recall specific instances, making frequency often an approximation. Unlike ordinary interruptions, however, an almost equivalent number of women were able to remember and explicitly recount one particular incident.

There was a wide range within this category, including sexualised evaluations on body parts such as the breasts, bottom or genitals, or graphic comments intimating sexual relations between the unknown man and the woman or, for identifiably lesbian women, between themselves and their partner. All were understood by participants as having an

⁴⁹ Lucy, INT40.

explicitly sexual motivation, an impetus described as experientially different from that of ordinary interruptions.

(P)eople saying things like “alright Blondie, alright sweetheart” doesn’t bother me as much as someone coming up to me and saying “nice stockings babe”, because there’s a totally different tone about it. However I don’t know if the men who are saying “alright gorgeous” are rapists or might assault me or are being sexually predatory, but contextually I don’t see those things as being as threatening as someone talking about my appearance in a different way (Alice, INT14).

This commentary thus operated in a similar way to that which will be seen in the discussion of the gaze, encouraging women to experience a constant, conscious awareness of the vulnerability of having a woman’s body. The sexualised element, however, introduced a more palpable fear based on what is experienced as the imminent potentiality (see later in this chapter) of men’s sexual violence.

The content of sexualised speech generally focused on the man’s penis, the woman’s breasts or invitations for sex. An unknown man followed Abbey and her female friends home one night.

He was clearly drunk and kept talking about his huge fucking cock and how we were really missing out that we weren’t going home with him and one of my friends was like “just fuck off” and he was like “no you don’t understand my cock is huge” (Abbey, INT7).

Hannah was also walking home with female friends when she was asked by a man standing outside of a pub with his male friends for directions to an underground station.

I said “oh yeah it’s down there and through there.” And he turned around to me and said “can you do me a favour?” which I thought was odd. I mean initially he hadn’t really been speaking to me,

he'd been speaking to my friend. Now in context this makes sense because the other two of my friends are quite big chested, and they were wearing, not revealing, but they tend to wear nice dresses and stuff like that. I had a big hoodie on, my chest completely covered, and he said "can you do me a favour?" and I said "what?" as we were walking away, and he said "can I cum on your tits?" (Hannah, INT26).

Both Bec and Kirsten were propositioned by unknown men in public, Bec in a public bar and Kirsten in an underground station.

I remember one night it was crowded, there were lots of staff, and some of them were guys, some were girls, I know them, they know me, and I felt so humiliated when this guy said, really loud so everybody heard, something like "can I fuck you?" or "I want to fuck you" something like that. Because I had leaned over to hear what he wanted because it was really loud and he said it really loudly and everybody heard it, and I think I felt so humiliated because he'd said that to me in front of my staff. It made me feel like a really small person that wasn't worth anything (Bec, INT15).

I was in [city] after my year abroad I'd just been travelling and I was queuing to buy a tube ticket and this man was standing right behind me and he started whispering into my ear "you're so sexy. I want to have sex with you" (Kirsten, INT8).

For Josina, being in public space with her girlfriend led to sexualised comments that did not intimate sexual activity between intrusive men/boys and herself, but between herself and her partner.

(Y)oung boys like 14, 15 year olds, coming up to us saying, "are you lesbians? Kiss then"... And then the one that really pissed me off, and me and my girlfriend had a different reaction to, was this guy who; we were waiting at a bus stop and he walked past us and went "oh my god, lesbians, wow" and got really close to us and was like "oh are you two lesbians?... You should be happy. Your girlfriend looks happy, why aren't you happy? You should kiss your girlfriend" (Josina, INT45).

The basis of men's intrusion in the heteronormativity of the current gender order is revealed through the ways in which invoking an absent male partner, as seen in Lisa's account earlier in this chapter, was understood by many participants as more useful in discouraging men's intrusion than the presence in Josina's experience of a real female partner. Across the accounts of Abbey, Kirsten, Bec, Hannah and Josina there is a commonality in that not only are these men feeling entitled to sexualise an unknown woman, 'but also to *announce it to her*' (Kotzin, 1993: 167. Emphasis in original). As highlighted in the literature review, the phenomenological experience here is more nuanced than the framework of 'objectification' suggests. For Bartky it is that 'I must be *made* to know that I am a 'nice piece of ass'; I must be made to see myself as they see me' (Bartky, 1990: 27). This forced awareness of our corporeality, what Bartky terms 'being-made-to-be-aware of one's own flesh' (ibid), is evident in Sophie's account of her friend's experience of sexualised commentary.

I wanted to tell you about my friend and she had enormous breasts, like H, F? Something huge, and she had a breast reduction on the NHS because of all the unwanted male attention that she used to get, and back pain, and I was talking to her about the fact that I was going to come and see you and I said "what was it like before?" and she said "people used to look at my boobs and be like 'look at the tits on that'". And she said "that's exactly how it used to make me feel, like a that, not a person. I'm a thing, I'm two walking boobs on legs" (Sophie, INT22).

Taryn spoke of similar experiences, where 'people would just refer to me like I was my breasts' (Taryn, INT47). Sexualised commentary thus operated in this way, forcing an awareness of women's corporeality in a way that was experienced as discounting their embodied selfhood.

‘You’d look so much better if you smiled’⁵⁰: Comments on women’s

demeanour

Over 60 per cent (n=31) of those receiving comments from unknown men in public had been told to cheer up or smile, with close to half (n=13) stating that they experienced this regularly (see Table 5.2). Unlike other forms of intrusion, commands to be demonstrably happy in public spaces comment on women’s interiority. In this way, they have a particularly revealing role in exploring the relationship between men’s intrusion and how women enact their embodiment. Where women are experiencing the body as their grasp on the world, commands for women to be happy are commands that this grasp be adjusted, that the body be lived as a thing distinct from, rather than a reflection of, their internal world. Many participants encountering this perceived that an evaluative external perspective revealed something of their embodied self, even where it was inconsistent with their internal awareness; the (men’s) view from outside is privileged.

(T)hey must think that’s a good line with me. I must always look miserable (Katielou, INT3).

I learnt that I have a miserable face apparently, from men saying to smile (Gail, INT31).

Initially I was a bit naïve and thought that maybe I did just look a bit miserable. Then I realised I probably was smiling (Carolyn, INT44).

I think my default face when I’m not thinking about anything, it’s just not very approachable I guess, I look annoyed or something. And so I’ve tried to walk around not looking quite so unhappy all the time which is not something that I am all the time, it just happens to be the way my muscles relax...so I walk a little different now and I do different things with my face when I realise I’m starting to look annoyed, yeah keeping the eyes wide and that sort of thing (Abbey, INT7).

⁵⁰ Taryn, INT47.

Abbey's account in particular demonstrates how this privileging leads to a conscious adaptation: a bodily-self consciousness. The regular experience of commentary on her demeanour has resulted in Abbey actively attempting to alter her embodiment to project the appearance of a set inner world, rather than living her corporeality as a fluid reflection of her inner world. The body is no longer 'expressing the conscious subject, but a vase, a receptacle made of inert matter and the plaything of mechanical caprices' (Beauvoir, 2011: 409). This works alongside the disruption and devaluing of women's internal world to undermine the experience of being an embodied subject, exemplified in Emma's account below, of being told to cheer up on the day she discovered she had miscarried.

There's no acknowledgement that you're a person that has other things happening rather than just existing for them to look at... I was just really angry, because I wasn't being treated like a person (Emma, INT54).

Without recourse to an appropriate response, participants spoke of the difficulty in reasserting their embodied selfhood. Experiencing their interiority as penetrated and the privileging of men's evaluation of their internal world as expressed through their body, resulted in several participants claiming calls to 'cheer up' are among the most crippling of men's intrusive practices.

Cheer up is just worse than almost everything else. Because if I'm, if I'm say standing at the junction and waiting for the green light or something and somebody decides that it's their right to come to me and tell me to smile, give me orders about how I should keep my expression... it's not the degrading feeling that you get from whistles and comments like "hey sexy" and everything like

that. It's more that, "how dare they? What? Who do you think you are that you can tell me that?" (Ginger, INT9).

"(O)h smile love", that's the worst actually. I hate that, I hate that. Because you don't even know what to say, it's not even, like when someone says "oh beautiful" you can say shut up. But when someone says "oh smile love" there isn't a response for that, there's nothing. You could say "shut up" but it doesn't really fit. So yeah that's probably the worst one (Jeannine, INT33).

I was on my way to work one day and passed some builders who said the "alright gorgeous, it's not that bad, smile." And I hate that, I almost hate that more because they think that they're being kind and paying you a compliment when actually it's just as bad really. Something negative, it's still having attention drawn to you, you haven't asked for it, you haven't even made eye contact, but still they're picking you out (Claire, INT35).

Exploring women's accounts through the theoretical framework of this thesis enables an understanding of how such a seemingly innocuous comment is experienced as 'the worst one'. Commands to 'cheer up' are comments on the rare moments where participants were embodied in public space, and a judgement that this embodiment was mistaken and needed adjustment.

'You've got a face like shit'⁵¹: Insults and threats

One of the unexpected findings from the initial conversations was the extent of insulting and/or threatening comments: experienced by almost half of participants (n=23). Of these, over half (n=13) had experienced this type of intrusion more than once, with over a quarter (n=6) explicitly recounting multiple incidents. The range and contexts of insulting or threatening comments is largely absent from the literature on 'street harassment', demonstrating how terminology combines with mainstream framings of the

⁵¹ Rosalyn, INT5.

phenomenon as complimentary or as sexual harassment to hide the extent of men's intrusion. Participants understood insults and threats to be practiced by men both on a retaliatory basis after women's refusal to participate in an intrusive encounter was expressed verbally or through the body, and also arbitrarily. Insults were directed at women's bodies as deficient in some way, most often in regards to their weight.

I've been called fat so many times, by (male) strangers (Taryn, INT47).

I was walking down past this pub and there were these middle aged men outside and they shouted out "stick insect" to me... I just remember it was a really nice sunny day and I was just walking along and it was a really weird thing to say but I remember the look on his face was horrible, like I was really unattractive (Anna, INT2).

I've had other incidents where people have been really insulting, like called me fat and stuff out of a car window... I think that sort of thing definitely – my self confidence, from people saying things like that, definitely has damaged it a bit. Just because when it's a stranger as well it feels like my body offends you that much that you need to tell me that I'm unattractive to you, why do you need to tell me that? (Lucy, INT40).

Women also spoke of appearance-related abusive comments that did not focus on weight but still pronounced an uninvited negative evaluation. Jane was insulted after a man approached her in public.

I was going to a bar with a friend and I had a guy ask me if I wanted to go with him and I said "no", and he said "well fuck you, you're ugly anyway" (Jane, INT32).

Anne, who along with Ginger spoke of experiencing regular comments from unknown men about her red hair, spoke about experiencing a range of abusive comments from unknown men.

Someone called me crab face. They pointed and went “crab face” and it didn’t make sense. That was the biggest thing about it. I think I spent a long time thinking about that one, trying to work out what it was. But the ones that do affect me I think the most emotionally are when people shout out comments about your appearance. Things like “oi ugly”... “Oi bitch”, I’ve been called that (Anne, INT36).

The range of insults used also illustrates the grounding of such practices in misogyny.

Where comments were not based on women’s bodies, they revolved around archetypal gendered insults such as bitch and slut, as well as, particularly in Charlie’s account, explicit negative reference to female genitalia.

He kept saying “[your] cunt stinks”, about me. He was saying “women, you’re disgusting”, really hateful, really nasty stuff... I just sat there and thought “ok, well you can’t answer, you just do what you always do and look away”, but [the tube] was so packed and nobody said anything (Charlie, INT38).

I had a guy call me a slut in Camden markets. He just walked straight past me and I was wearing, well I wasn’t showing a great deal of flesh, and this guy walked past me, this was recent about six months ago, and this guy walked past me and just said “slut.” Just like that (Alice, INT14).

I was sitting on the tube, there were like loads of people on the tube, men as well, and this sort of like 50, 60 year old Rasta guy gets on and he’s sort of like murmuring to himself, obviously off his face, and he basically sits opposite me and he starts just like shouting at me going “bitch, bitch”, calling me a bitch. I was kind of ignoring it and I can’t remember the exact sequence of events but basically I moved down to another carriage and he continued to shout abuse at me... he just kept calling me a bitch (Anna, INT2).

For Anna, as for Rosalyn’s similar experience below, physically removing the bodily-self was unsuccessful in combating abusive comments.

(H)e followed me down the tube, sat down opposite me again and carried on and at that point I was like “look leave me alone, I don’t want to talk to you, stop talking to me” and he did this whole like “oh, oh, oh” thing, like I was being a bitch. And then we stopped, we got to where we were going and he got off and he called me “a tranny and a minger” and walked off (Rosalyn, INT5).

Where physically removing the self does not work, many participants spoke about the strategic use of bodily alienation to experientially distance the body being abused.

Referred to in Charlie’s account above as ‘just do what you always do and look away’, this will be examined in depth in the following chapter as a habitualised modality of embodiment enacted by many women as a response to men’s stranger intrusions.

‘WE CAN SEE YOU’⁵²: THE GAZE

Almost all (94%) of participants mentioned experiencing being stared at as a form of men’s stranger intrusion in public space. Similar to ordinary interruptions, it was difficult for participants to recall individual episodes, with just nine able in the initial conversations to recount one or more particular instances (see Table 5.3).

⁵² Claire, INT35.

Table 5-3 The Gaze: Frequency (n=50)

Frequency	Number	%
Regularly (no number given)	23	46%
Occasionally (no number given)	13	26%
Once	4	8%
Three or more	3	6%
Twice	2	4%
Rarely (no number given)	2	4%
Not mentioned	2	4%
Not recorded ⁵³	1	2%
Total	50	100%

Participants described the experience of men's intrusive staring as one of a distinct bodily-self consciousness.

I feel like I'm on a catwalk as I walk by because they're all lined up and I'm walking by... I notice them from far away and I start to become really conscious of how I'm walking and what I'm wearing and how I'm looking as I'm approaching them and as I'm walking by. And try really hard not to look at any of them (Abbey, INT7).

I remember being very aware of my body, and how I was, well I guess I felt like I was performing, which was weird because I didn't want to perform, and that was really unpleasant (Alice, INT14).

(H)e was looking at me in a way that was just like, you are just a piece of meat and I'm loving the show (Bec, INT15).

⁵³ Where notes taken from the interview with Katie, INT10 (recording equipment stolen) did not include an example of the practice being categorised, this was noted as 'not recorded' in acknowledgement that Katie may have mentioned the experience in the initial interview.

They're looking at me. They're looking at parts of my body I don't want them to be looking at. And also I'm a person, I'm not a body. The thing I'm most proud of myself for isn't having legs or a body, that's a given, it's not all of me (Lucy, INT40).

What participants express here is a bodily-self consciousness, an awareness of their embodiment marked by the experience of *having* not *being* one's body (Carman, 1999). As described by Lucy, her body is not experienced wholly as an embodied subjectivity, but rather as a necessary part of herself – a part she 'has'.

Recalling Heidegger's analogy where *Dasein* is not *in* the world as water is *in* a glass (see Chapter Three), participant accounts of the experience of being stared at by unknown men suggest the dislocation of feeling as though one *is* in the world as water is in a glass, seen through a transparent barrier, observable from the outside. The analogy can also be applied to the relationship expressed between the self and the body, where the body comes to be lived as this glass, a container for the self rather than the very means of our being at all. The danger here is that we return to a Cartesian view of the mind and the body as separate entities, and are encouraged to experience our body as a thing: 'as shape and flesh that presents itself as the potential object of another subject's intentions and manipulations, rather than as a living manifestation of action and intention' (Young, 2005: 184). This experience of the 'thingness' of a woman's body, an experience further embedded through a multitude of products in the current gender order which focus on women's body image such as beauty magazines or the diet industry, sets up a relationship to our embodiment marked by control rather than care. For Sandra Bartky, this continued forced awareness of the materiality of one's body is humiliating, 'like

being made to apologise' (1990: 27). This feeling of shame is particularly explored in existential-phenomenological accounts of the gaze.

For Simone de Beauvoir 'nothing is more ambiguous than a look; it exists at a distance, and that distance makes it seem respectable: but insidiously it takes hold of the perceived image' (Beauvoir, 2011: 375). This ambiguity, and its insidiousness, is captured in the way that Ginger described the particular impact of the gaze.

(I)t makes me feel really, really helpless. Because if somebody does something actively you can do something about it. You know if somebody touches you, you can go "hey don't touch me", you can hit them, you can talk to them, and they can't pretend they didn't do it. But if somebody's looking at you, well imagine a guy's staring at you from across the seat, you could tell them "what are you looking at?" and his answer is "nothing." Unless he really wants to say something, a lot of times if he feels ashamed or if he doesn't feel comfortable he's going to say that I'm imagining it. And that's another one of those things, so I've become one of those people who imagine everybody's looking at them and it's my problem, because I'm the one who's imagining that everybody's paying attention to me and obviously there has to be something wrong with myself not with the people who are looking (Ginger, INT9).

The reasons behind Ginger's reluctance to challenge here recalls the comments made by intrusive men on this project's research site, where vocalising the experience of men's stranger intrusion was linked to female narcissism (see Chapter Three). It was Beauvoir's counterpart however, Jean-Paul Sartre, who most fully concentrated on the phenomenology of 'the Look', devoting an entire section to it in *Being and Nothingness* (2007). His insights are valuable here, particularly that the Sartrean 'Look' does not necessarily refer to the actual experience of being looked at; rather it refers to a consciousness of the *possibility* of the gaze. This possibility was manifest for participants

in contexts where unknown men, particularly in groups, were anticipated, such as Meg's description of passing a building site.

There's a big massive building work going on there at the moment and my brother's gym is there so I go and see him and every time I walk past you can just feel the eyes on you. It's a really long walk as well and you just think about it the whole way (Meg, INT16).

Events such as these remind us of the possibility that we can be looked at and in doing so engenders the same phenomenological response *as if we were* being looked at. As with ordinary interruptions, where participant's internal world in public space was regularly experienced as interrupted because of the potentiality of men's intrusion, public spaces also represented for many participants the imminent potentiality of the gaze of unknown men. Following Sartre, this possibility has the same philosophical import as being constantly watched.

I try to walk around if I want to, when I want to, and not have it in my head you should go home now, it's dark, watch your back, but you always do and it's something about always knowing who's around you and how you're behaving and being alert and a constant feeling of being observed (Claire, INT35).

(T)his idea of the gaze generally does stop me from doing things... it's a little bit like you're under observation, it's a bit big brotherly. You don't know why they're looking at you or what they're thinking. It's the unknown I guess (Viola, INT42).

The look then, whether actual or possible, disrupts our non-thetic self-consciousness,⁵⁴ the pre-reflective cogito where our awareness is wholly of our acts and not a

⁵⁴ Non-thetic self-consciousness for Sartre is when we lose ourselves in the world to the point where we are no longer conscious of the self in the world. It can be seen in the level of awareness we have, for example, in watching a movie. Rarely are we aware of ourselves watching the movie, rather our self-awareness is wholly taken over and we are *in* the world.

consciousness of the self *in* those acts. The gaze of the other forces us to become aware of our bodily-self, Sartre's claim that "I see myself because somebody sees me" (2007: 260). Importantly, in the case of men's stranger intrusion, this awareness of our embodiment is experienced through the body image not of the body as a field of intentionality. As Sartre acknowledges there is a particular vulnerability that comes with the acknowledgement of ourselves as a body that can be seen, and that can be hurt.

What I apprehend immediately when I hear the branches crackling behind me is not that *there is someone there*; it is that I am vulnerable, that I have a body which can be hurt, that I occupy a place and that I can not in any case escape from the space in which I am without defense – in short, that *I am seen* (Sartre, 2007: 282. Emphasis in original).

This vulnerability is heightened when combined with the tripartite diminishment of our embodied subjectivity discussed earlier. The impact of the gaze of the other is further complicated when moved out of a degendered discussion and into the concrete particulars of the current gender order and the meanings attributed to female embodiment. For Rosalyn, her experiences of bodily-self consciousness under the gaze resulted in a desire to diminish her woman's body, to become 'less conspicuous' as a woman and thus safer.

(T)here's another bit of me that also wishes, because having a skinny boyish figure means you can wear certain types of clothes and we're all supposed to want to be like that, but I think there's a bit of me that wishes that because, I guess because you feel like it's a kind of less conspicuous sexuality about that kind of body on a woman (Rosalyn, INT5).

For participants the apprehension 'that I have a body which can be hurt' (Sartre, 2007: 282) is gendered. It is the recognition that in the current gender order a woman's body is vulnerable to a particular form of hurt, referred to in the literature as a 'fear of rape'

but conceptualised here as the imminent potentiality of rape; a potential embedded in women's living experience of their embodiment.

In addition to the gaze, there is more recently a practice available to intrusive men that did not exist so readily in the time of Simone de Beauvoir or Sartre, and is an extension of the intrusive male gaze, the electronic eye of the photograph. The role of new technologies in expanding the continuum of men's intrusive practices has already been evidenced within this thesis in the account of the trolling experienced as part of online recruitment (see Chapter Four). The opportunities for men's intrusion given through the advent of new technologies, and their connection to other forms of VAWG, are beginning to be made (for example see FRA, 2014), supported by the growing body of evidence around 'cyberstalking' (Pittaro, 2007; Salter & Bryden, 2009; Southworth et al, 2007). The recent emergence of affordable smart phones has created new opportunities for men's stranger intrusion with five of the women participating in this project reporting experiencing an unknown man taking or attempting to take their photograph without their consent in public space. Popularly termed 'creepshots', such a practice is promoted through internet forums and social media accounts which encourage men to photograph unknown women in public space, without their consent, often focusing on sexualised body parts such as the breasts or the bottom.⁵⁵ Luella had multiple experiences of being photographed in public space by men without her permission.

⁵⁵ See, for example. American hosted site www.creepshots.com, the Reddit hub for 'Upskirt creepshots' <http://www.reddit.com/r/upskirt> and the Tumblr page <http://creepshots.tumblr.com> [all accessed 12th June, 2012]. There are also a number of Twitter profiles devoted to the practice including the following which were all live at the time of writing: @CreepBJ; @CreepFan; @timetocreep; @creep_town; @womensbehinds; @im_just_lookin; @tokyocreeper; @XRayCreepin; @PeepersCreepers; and @CreepShot which is an offshoot of the creepshot.com site.

I've had men trying to take pictures of me. One of those things happened really early when I was about 15, 16, I was just in a shop in my local high street, I was wearing a pair of shorts, ooo such a harlot, and I was just minding my own business, and this guy walked in, took a look, snapped like his phone, a picture on his phone and walked back out. And it happened in the space of like 5 seconds. And I was like "what!" I was just standing with my face to the wall looking at whatever was on there, and then I just turned my head, I saw him, he snapped a picture and then walked back out, he didn't run, he just walked back out really casual as if he'd just strolled in. I was so taken aback I was just like "did that actually happen?" I mean this is the middle of the day, there's a shopkeeper in the shop, I don't know. It just kind of stung because that was the first time that happened to me, and then the thought followed, "what on earth is he going to do with that?" I just don't want to think about it (Luella, INT17).

Creepshots make literal Simone de Beauvoir's claim that the look 'takes hold' of the perceived image, and this is the concern expressed by Luella above. The particular impact here is that the fleeting moment of the gaze becomes in itself an object, a permanent record of the man's intrusion. Though relatively small numbers of women reported the practice in this study, as the popularity and technical ability of smartphones grows, including the introduction of applications where a photo can be taken without the phone's screen showing that the camera is open,⁵⁶ this form of intrusion requires further research.

PHYSICAL INTRUSIONS

The attempt to remove the bodily-self, either physically or through enacting a mode of embodiment where the body is distanced from the self (experienced as a 'part' one has),

⁵⁶ There are many applications like this openly available and at very low cost. The QuickShot HD (\$3), is reviewed as being 'for you creep shot lovers out there. Pictures could be taken while leaving you the excuse that you don't have anything open should you get caught.' See <http://androidappscene.blogspot.co.uk/2012/11/the-ultimate-camera-app.html>, [accessed 4th July, 2013].

was also common in accounts of physical intrusions. The experience of a physical intrusion in public space is the experience of the corporeality of our bodily-self, the direct experience of the vulnerability of being embodied, in terms of not only being seen but also now being a body that can be touched. Just over three quarters of participants (76%) had experienced being groped or touched by unknown men in public space, almost a third had experienced men physically blocking their space for movement, and 10 per cent had experienced an unknown man rape or attempt to rape them (see Table 5.4).

A wide range of experiences were categorised as physical intrusions, highlighting the usefulness of the concept of a continuum of men's intrusive practices. Included here were intrusions that were named as rape,⁵⁷ sexual assault and/or physical assault, alongside behaviours where unknown men blocked their way or where women experienced being touched in a sexual way but, as with following, felt unable to check this experience against the external environment. In addition it may be that attempts to measure the frequency of physical intrusions loses women's successful resistance, discussed more the following chapter.

⁵⁷ By framing experiences as located on the continuum of men's practices, the separation of rape into completed and attempted is avoided, a separation that can operate to discount women's resistance and is often unhelpful given the similarity in impacts for those surviving either. The practice is analysed, not the outcome. For the purposes of examining men's stranger intrusions, rapes committed by men known to the participant are not included in here, though they are recorded later in this chapter.

Table 5-4 Physical Intrusions: Frequency (n=50)

Type of Physical Intrusion	Touched/Groped		Blocked Space		Rape (stranger only)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Once	19	38%	9	18%	5	10%
Twice	12	24%	4	8%	-	-
Three or more	3	6%	1	2%	-	-
Regularly (no number given)	2	4%	1	2%	-	-
Occasionally (no number given)	1	2%	-	-	-	-
Happens but no frequency given	1	2%	1	2%	-	-
Never happened (explicit)	1	2%	-	-	6	12%
Not mentioned	11	22%	33	66%	39	78%
Not recorded	-	-	1	2%	-	-
Total	50	100%	50	100%	50	100%
Total recording practice (n=50)	38	76%	16	32%	5	10%

Similar to the discussion of the gaze earlier in this chapter, men's physical intrusions were an experience for women of living the paradox of the bodily-self as both subject and object. Anne describes an experience on holiday as a teenager.

I went on holiday with my family when I was 18 again to Rome. And one day we got the bus to the Vatican and it was a really busy, crowded bus and there was this old man in front of me and everyone squeezed in, it was a bit like on the tube and then the bus turned the corner and this guy leaned into me, and you know you don't think anything when a bus is cornering, and after it had righted itself again he stayed leaning into me, was rubbing his crotch against me and he had an erection. I nervously smiled after it and then he smiled back and kept doing it more. This old Italian guy just rubbing himself on me on a bus (Anne, INT36).

As seen in Anne's account, in physically intruding men express their bodily intentionality at the same time as women experience the materiality of their bodily-self. Here, as with

the discussion of the gaze, the experience again is one of feeling as though one is in the world as water is in a glass. Anne continues her account to describe how she felt unable to act through her body at the time of intrusion.

(A)t first I didn't really realise what was going on, and then I did. And then it was like, "oh god what do I do? I don't know what to do?" And you get stuck because you're unsure how to deal with the situation. You don't know what's going to happen if you try to get out of it. Will this guy react badly or it just makes you feel really incapable of dealing with what's going on. It just makes you feel powerless, I don't know what to do, I don't know how to deal with this situation. Because it's not like it's something you can prepare for, and it shouldn't be. You shouldn't have to prepare for it. It shouldn't happen. But it happens in an ambiguous situation which is why they choose that (Anne, INT36).

Unable to physically move away from the intrusive man for fear of escalation, Anne's experience of her embodiment as a 'body-for-others' is compounded through ways in which early experiences of men's intrusion had taught her to doubt her experiential reality (see the following chapter). Such doubt combines with men using particular contexts to practice physical intrusions in ways participants found difficult to confirm, Anne's 'ambiguous situations'.

I was in a massive crowd of people because it's like a huge station so you're all like getting off the tube and in the station, and this guy came up behind me and grabbed me between my legs, like properly grabbed me and I was wearing a skirt and he was right behind me so I couldn't see him and I just felt this person grabbing and it was that thing again of shock, I can't believe someone just did that to me in this crowd of people. Like, how did that happen? And then I turned around and there was this guy behind me, quite short old guy who looked a bit weird. I wasn't even sure it was him because... how do you know? (Roselyn, INT5).

I've had lots of men press themselves into me, loads of times, on the tube. It's really difficult to tell though. If they get too close I tell them don't do that and they back off but you know some men are really clever, they do that as you're getting on and then they move away (New Mum, INT28).

There is a diminishment of Anne, Rosalyn and New Mum's ability to claim what is being done to them and by whom, something also seen in several accounts given by women of behaviours that are criminalised, though spoken about as ordinary or even forgotten. Here the particular use of conversation helped in unearthing experiences that may be lost in survey research or traditional interview guides. After initially saying she had not experienced any kind of physical intrusion, Delilah recalled being bitten on the lip and punched in the stomach by two separate men in clubs, as well as the following encounter in a supermarket.

Someone undid one of my top buttons once on this shirt that I was wearing, in a supermarket of all places. He literally just came up to me and I thought at first something must be on my top, I don't know why this stranger feels the need to do it but at the time you're thinking "ok that must be really embarrassing something's on my top". But he literally just came up to me and undid my top button (Delilah, INT55).

Emma also recounted having an unknown man, at 17, pin her down on public transport and attempt to take off her skirt, immediately after claiming she had 'never had anything really bad before'.

I had a guy sit down next to me, it was a sufficiently busy train carriage that that didn't ring alarm bells, and asked me the time which I gave him, and while I was looking away he leaned across me and pinned me back and tried to take off my skirt and we got to, I don't know which train station it was because I'd just got to [the city] but he tried to drag me off the train but I got away (Emma, INT54).

The linked processes of minimisation and normalisation are similarly seen in a physical intrusion related by Viola, where a man circled the block three times when she was walking and each time tried to, in Viola's words, 'grab my ass'.

I was really shaken up and in hindsight, I still regret not having called the police. Not because I think they would have done anything or could have done anything but I think for myself I would have felt more in control, or like I was doing something about it, rather than running home and hiding... I think they couldn't do anything anyway and nothing really happened either. He didn't even really touch me in the end and I think I would have felt very silly as well, talking to the police because it seemed like such a non-issue, though at the same time it did make me feel really panicky and quite unsafe (Viola, INT42).

This 'non-issue' in fact has significant impacts for female embodiment, giving living detail to Sandra Lee Bartky's claim that '(w)oman's space is not a field in which her bodily intentionality can be freely realized but an enclosure in which she feels positioned and by which she is confined' (Bartky, 1990: 66). Instead of the world experienced as a field within which to express one's own bodily intentionality, the movements of the body are constrained. An early experience with a physically intrusive man highlighted this for Jan.

I remember once in a cinema, I must have been 12 or 13 and I was sitting with a friend and a guy next to me started groping my knee. And I said to my friend, "this guy's touching me". And she said first of all "don't make a fuss". And I thought, "I can't". So we moved. But it was me making a fuss, not him being an asshole (Jan, INT53).

The operations of physical intrusions in restricting women's movements in public space are most literally seen in the practice of blocking women's space, a practice that also

raises what can be missed in framing experiences within narrow definitions of 'harassment'.

Late at night I was with two friends and these two guys stopped their car because they wanted my number. We were on the street and we were trying to cross the road and they wouldn't let me get around the car, they kept reversing if I tried to go behind and pushing forward, so effectively trapping me as I tried to cross the road because they wanted my number. And I pretended I didn't have a phone but then took their number down just to get them to go away. And they must have been quite (a lot) older because they were driving and I was 14 or 15 (Josina, INT45).

This was two guys in a car and we were walking on the pavement and they'd driven by, slowed down as they got close you know and yelled out the window. So we weren't interested at all so we thought ok we'll turn down a side street that wasn't allowed to have any cars on it. A one way street and they couldn't drive up it. So we're like we'll get away from them. But they circled around the block and met us on the other side and were there waiting for us when we got down to the end and that was very uncomfortable because that for me, that took some extra effort on their part to call out some more, you know, it was that forward planning, and that was the bit that scared me (Sophia, INT30).

This physical blocking of space combines with feminist theory on how men's practices can constrain women's 'space for action' (Jeffner, 2000) to create a modality of female embodiment in public space characterised by what Young (2005) termed 'inhibited intentionality'. Young showed how the modalities of feminine embodiment illustrate a split between mind (aim) and body (enactment), finding that '(i)n those motions which when properly performed require the coordination and directedness of the whole body upon some definite end, women frequently move in a contradictory way. Their bodies project the aim to be enacted, but at the same time stiffen against the performance of the task' (2005: 14). Women's bodily intentionality is thus inhibited by a persistent disbelief in their capacity, and undermined by an anxious focus upon the processes of

bodily movement. Exploring the impacts of intrusion for participants supports Young's finding, and suggests that this 'split' here (between self, body and world) operates as a distancing developed in response to, and in order to cope with, the continuum of men's intrusive practices.

FLASHING AND MASTURBATION

The experience of flashing, whereby an unknown man exposes their penis in public space, forms a significant part of participants' early encounters with the continuum of men's intrusive practices (see the next chapter). Almost half of participants (n=21) had experienced flashing at least once as given in Table 5.5.

Table 5-5 Flashing: Frequencies (n=50)

Frequency	Number	%
Once	14	28%
Never happened (explicit)	5	10%
Regularly (no number given)	3	6%
Twice	2	4%
Happens (no frequency given)	1	2%
Three or more	1	2%
Not mentioned	24	48%
Total	50	100%

The layered power dynamics of generation and gender played a key role for participant understandings, with many suggesting their age was the motivating factor for this type of

intrusion. Nine participants reported an encounter before the age of 18, for some in childhood.

(T)here was also another incident probably about a year after that when someone stopped the car and asked me for directions but they had no trousers on. They'd called me over to the car, wound the window down and said, "I need some directions." I asked him where to and he pointed [to his crotch]. So yeah [I] was about 8 or 9 (Claire, INT35).

We were quite young about 8, or 9. But it was so impactful so it was quite the story to remember. It was the middle of the day and some guy, very seriously in a trench coat, was following myself and a friend of mine from school halfway up that hill, in the forest, into a green space and then actually exposed himself (Cathrin, INT46).

Alice, who is in her early twenties, spoke of her numerous experiences of being flashed as related to her youthful appearance.

(T)he one thing that I've experienced the most in London is being flashed because I look really young I think and I've been flashed at least six or seven times, on the tube mostly... it's probably about once every year it happens to me (Alice, INT14).

For other women experiencing flashing before the age of 18, the particular impacts of the experience were often framed in terms of being the first time they had seen a penis (see next chapter).

Men's public masturbation directed at women, and particularly at girls, is also a significant part of the practice of flashing. Over half (58%) of participants who explicitly recalled experiences of flashing were masturbated at as part of the encounter. For some this was not preceded by an act where just the genitals themselves were exposed,

however as the definition used to categorise the behaviours was the deliberate exposure of the penis, all encounters with men masturbating at/over women were also acts of flashing. Masturbation emerged as a practice that particularly targeted girls, even though it did occur to some women over the age of 18, as June's experience at university shows.

(H)e was like "excuse me do you know where this place is?" and I was like "no, I don't." And he said "I've got a problem" and I thought that it might be maybe can I borrow your phone or something, and then he was like "I like to expose myself to beautiful women" and I looked down and he essentially had his cock out and basically ejaculated all over the lawn right in front of me (June, INT18).

When context was mentioned, the most common public spaces for men to practice both masturbation and exposure were open public spaces such as beaches or parks (n=10) or public transport (n=8), with four reports occurring on the street, two in a public swimming pool, and one in a supermarket on a Sunday morning.

I think the one that really upset me was when I was in Morrisons, on a Sunday morning, and I was just buying some ale or something and my normal weekly shop. And there was this guy and he was shuffling around, and I said to my partner, "is he doing what I think he's doing?" ... (H)e was proper looking at me. And I had a bit of a low cut top on, like not loads, just a normal top, and he was doing it again, and I was like (to my partner) "look mate, he's definitely having a wank, he's definitely doing it. In Morrisons" (Nisha, INT19).

Across accounts, participants expressed a range of emotional responses, from confusion to pity, humour when the practice was experienced with friends, and fear where the woman experienced the practice as suggestive of the possibility of further intrusion, as seen in Laura's account below.

(M)y friend turned around who was in front of me and said “look over there!” and so I looked and between the houses that were facing the beach there was this little alleyway and there was this guy who had been sat next to us on the beach, stood with his trousers around his ankles just jerking off. And we were just like, we were laughing, he was probably far enough away for us to be like this is weird but the thing was it was quite funny so we starting laughing, but then it got horrible because he was obviously a local and he’d obviously gone around some back route and had come around and so we were on our way back to the flat on the hill and he’d come round and was stood under the bridge doing the same thing so we were like, that’s creepy, that’s really weird, this isn’t funny anymore. So we carried on walking instead of going home and went and sat in a café and had another drink (Laura, INT51).

Sandra McNeil’s (1987) study of the impact of flashing found that women experienced the threat in the exposed penis as the threat of rape. The decision made by Laura and her friends at the point of experiencing this threat, then, was to remove the embodied self. Where this was not physically possible, women spoke of enacting a mode of embodiment whereby the body and world was held at a distance as seen in the accounts of Nisha, Jan and Theodora.

I had a man wank off over me on the tube... I felt like I couldn’t move, I felt like I didn’t know what to do. Do I get up? Do I move? Do I just sit here, do I pretend nothing’s happening? What do I do? There’s hardly anyone else on the carriage... I sat there for a bit and then we came into the station and I jumped off. And I was really worried he was going to follow me. I was really frightened, like really shaken (Nisha, INT19).

(I)t was only me and him in the carriage, young guy, and he got out his dick and wanked off in front of me. I got off at the next station because I thought this could be anything. I felt quite scared. I didn’t let him know that I’d seen him. I didn’t acknowledge it in any way but I thought that could be nasty, if he can do that what else will he do? (Jan, INT54).

I was on the tube again when I was quite young... he sat on the corner of the chair and again, legs akimbo, whipped it out, had a go... and I just thought, because there was no one else on the

carriage, I can't make eye contact with him because if I do he'll think I'm coming onto him. I can't make any contact with him whatsoever, I've just got to pretend that I can't see him. Just put the wall up (Theodora, INT50).

Theodora's 'wall' is her way of distancing the self from the body and the world. This refusal to acknowledge or to be *in* the world is a form of strategic alienation, enacted until one can physically remove their self. These three encounters also suggest particular contexts are chosen by men. Similar to the accounts of ordinary interruptions, there is a repeated context for men's intrusion of women travelling alone on public transport. This suggests that rather than resulting from coincidental circumstances or uncontrollable desire, men who choose to intrude onto and into women are in control of both their self and the setting.

FOLLOWING

As illustrated by Jan's experience of flashing above, the possibility of escalation between different intrusive practices plays a key role in how women strategised responses, perhaps most palpable in the category of 'following'. Ambiguity was expressed by participants in relation to following, with a separation made between externally verified experience, where the feeling of being followed was somehow confirmed, and experiential unverified following where the feeling of being followed was not confirmed externally. What this external verification looked like is detailed through the qualitative accounts given below. Table 5.6 shows that just over three quarters (n=39) of participants reported at least one experience of following.

Table 5-6 Following (externally verified and experiential): Frequencies

Frequency	Experiential Externally verified		Experiential unverified	
	Number	%	Number	%
Once	15	30%	7	14%
Twice	9	18%	1	2%
Three or more	3	6%	-	-
Regularly (no number given)	1	2%	4	8%
Happens (no frequency given)	1	2%	9	18%
Never happened (explicit)	9	18%	3	6%
Not mentioned	11	22%	25	50%
Not recorded	1	2%	1	2%
Total	50	100%	50	100%

Of these reports, most participants spoke of experiences that they had verified as a definite instance of following (n=29), and over half (n=24) reported experiences they were unable to verify.

I have felt like it, I don't know if I've ever actually been followed. But you only know if you have been if they approach you. I've had like that thing about someone walking too close behind you. I've had that and it's horrible. Because you feel like if I turn around they could just be walking behind me and then you feel like you're being paranoid and that you're getting worked up over nothing. Or you don't want to turn around in case they are following you. And it becomes about avoiding a bad situation, again. So I walk quicker or I phone someone (Anne, INT36).

As seen in Anne's account, the possibility of escalation was embedded in participant's sense making of following to the extent that for many if the practice did not escalate, despite their subjective experience, participants felt unable to verify that something had happened. Key here is how the possibility of escalation for many participants foregrounds the experiential connections between different practices on the continuum.

For both Alice and Abbey, reminiscent of McNeil's (1987) findings on flashing, experiencing the possibility of being followed is simultaneously an experience of the possibility of rape.

(A) guy followed me, now I say followed but he was just walking down the same alleyway as me... I remember looking over my shoulder, not at him but being deliberately aware of where he was and checking the mirrors that came up on the windows how far away he was from me, and somebody joined us at the other end, it was another guy and, God this actually went through my mind, the other guy came at the other end and I actually thought "fuck me this is a trap, fuck ok, no it's fine, be rational, it's probably nothing." He walked past me and I thought "phew," and then a woman came at the other end and I was like "thank God, everything's fine, you're not going to be raped" (Alice, INT14).

I got followed, briefly only for like a few blocks probably, just shouting things like "hey honey how you doing? Don't you want to talk to me? Are you having a good night? Don't you want to have some fun?" That kind of stuff and kind of, yeah, kind of terrifying actually... even though I knew that probably nothing was going to happen, because one of them was in broad daylight and the other two I was in a busy area with a lot of people so probably nothing would have happened but I was... I mean I guess, to put it incredibly bluntly scared of being assaulted. Although I've never come close to anything like that happening to me... it's the first thing I think of when something like that happens (Abbey, INT7).

For Abbey as for Alice, both nothing and something happened (Kelly & Radford, 1990). Nothing happened in respect to anticipated escalation, but their internal world experienced not only the possibility that they were being followed but also the possibility of sexual assault. Such an account is reminiscent of Beauvoir's claims that ambiguity grounds the human condition (Beauvoir, 1976), and that women embody this ambiguity more explicitly than men (Beauvoir, 2011). Moving away from an either/or framing, Beauvoir's theory of ambiguity allows for an exploration of both/and, where both these possibilities are lived in the body. Participants attempted to reconcile

this ambiguity through prioritising the external perspective on the bodily-self, a habituated bodily strategy (see Chapter Six). This is shown in Bea's detailed account below where her experience of being followed evoked an embodied response, regardless of the unknown man's intentions.

... (M)e and my sister were getting the night bus home one night and we think quite similarly, and I was convinced this guy was looking over at us and he was and then he happened to get off at the same bus stop as us and so we started walking, we hold hands and stand closer and that kind of stuff and I think I was more panicked than she was but she was like "yep ok let's walk faster", and he walked faster. I was convinced he was following us, so I said "let's just run, let's run home it'll take five minutes", so we started running and I was wearing these strange shoes and I slipped over in the middle of the road. And this happened like two years ago but I really hurt my hip, I slipped over, went into like the half splits, ripped this ligament, had to call my dad, and the guy just walked straight on past so he wasn't, maybe he was, maybe he wasn't, you'll never know (Bea, INT49).

The impact of regularly experiencing such uncertain situations, the claim of 'maybe he was, maybe he wasn't, you'll never know', contributes to the diminishment of Bea's subjectivity through her feeling unable to make meaning of the situation, something further shown in the ways in which the possibility of Bea's agency in disrupting the following is minimised in her account. This was found across the ways participants spoke about experiences of intrusion, devaluing their own embodied practices whilst deferring to men's actions in their sense making of an encounter. Throughout accounts of following was evidence of responses born of women's situated agency in preventing both intrusion and escalation.

This one time in Sheffield a couple of years ago, I was basically just walking home from a night out, it was about 5 o'clock in the morning, but people walk home there because it's a little village and it's safe most of the time. And this strange guy was walking up the street in front of me and then he slowed down and watched me walk on a bit and then started following me, so I just picked

up my phone and pretended I was ringing someone and I stopped, turned around and looked at him, on my phone, and he just walked down this side street (Shelley, INT29).

I might go a different way or I might drop back... one night I remember it was quite late I was walking home behind a guy but he seemed to be slowing down or something? And he also seemed to have a piece of wood in his hands which was slightly concerning to me, but anyway so it'd probably be the same regardless of what he was carrying but he seemed to be slowing down as if he wanted me to pass him, and this could be in my head, he might just be dawdling, but you know I wouldn't, I'll hold back or again play with my phone and pretend ring somebody, that kind of thing (Katielou, INT3).

Despite their active responses and the experiential reality for Bea, Shelley and Katielou of *being* followed, the ambiguity remains. It may be that their responses disrupted an intrusive encounter. The power to define what counts as an experience, however, was deferred by participants to men's practices and in particular whether or not they escalated because of women's actions. This creates a problem in attempts to measure the practice. If following does not escalate it risks being discounted in its ambiguity as 'nothing really happened' (see Kelly & Radford, 1990). If following escalates it risks being absorbed into the further intrusion, for example Bec (INT15) who was followed over different train lines by a man who eventually tried to rape her. In recounting the experience, Bec labels this an experience of attempted rape over, and sometimes to the exclusion of, it being an experience of following. For Lucy, Jeannine and Emma below, experiences of following led to further forms of intrusion, demonstrating the ways in which practices along the continuum bleed in and out of each other.

(M)e and my friend thought this guy was following us and we were really drunk and on my road and we thought "oh we'll sit down", because we were drunk, and we thought "oh we'll just sit and talk." And as he went past he just flashed. And we were like "whoa." This was like a year, or half a year ago (Lucy, INT40).

(H)e started following me down the street and I didn't hear him because I had my iPod in. He lived across the street from me and he came up behind me and grabbed both of my arms. And I screamed and threw my arms which I don't think he was expecting (Jeannine, INT33).

He decided to follow me through the train. He tried to pick me up and then was not really taking no for an answer, and it had kind of gotten physical by the time the guards had come across us. He was following me, clearly following me between train carriages... I don't know if he'd cornered me yet or was just about to but it clearly looked dodgy to the security, the train guards (Emma, INT54).

Categorisation is complicated here, due to the ways in which different intrusive practices are experienced within the same encounter. Across their accounts, women were most able to verify the practice of following and count it as a stand-alone practice where men's escalation was witnessed but not experienced because women physically removed themselves. Such witnessing came about as a direct effect of women's agency in responding.

I was walking home from school, no it was the evening, maybe I was walking to my friend's house, and very noticeably a van slowed down behind me and he peered out and looked me up and down and I just thought something bad was going to happen. So I saw where he was going to turn around and went and hid... I was only across the road from my house so I went and hid in the porch bit and he didn't see me under my house, and he drove back really slowly looking (Carolyn, INT44).

I was 14, on my way to ballet class at night and this man was following me, and he was really drunk and then I started to run and he came running after me. By that time I'd reached the ballet hall and I started knocking on the door because it was locked and my ballet teacher opened it from the inside and she let me in and then I started crying... I got really scared when that happened, I was panicking. I thought I was going to die (Kirsten, INT8).

I've been followed by a guy once but that's probably because I was with another girl at the time and we were kissing in the streets and this guy had seen us in the nightclub and he decided to follow us home. In the end we started running and he came banging on our front door, so we closed it. That was quite scary (Marly, INT43).

The role of fear in these accounts, together with how all three women respond to initially ambiguous practices through the potentiality of escalation, suggests a difficulty in marking a definitive separation between the *experience* of intrusion and its *practice*. This highlights some of the concerns raised during both the review of the literature and the methodology chapters about the complications in conducting survey research on men's stranger intrusion, complications that culminate in an understanding of the living experience of individual instances of men's intrusion as interconnected.

CONNECTING THE CONTINUUM

This project illuminated the connective mechanisms across the continuum of men's intrusive practices in two primary ways. The first, that different intrusive practices are experienced within the same encounter, has been discussed across the categories in the previous sections. To understand the second, that numerous forms of different practices from different men are experienced by the same woman, the analytical categories need to be pulled together. All 50 women in this study experienced at least four of the 19 different types of intrusive practices measured, with the majority recounting experiences of between seven and 10 different forms of intrusion (see Appendix Four).

As the sample was self-selecting, motivated by desire to talk about how men responded to them in public space, these findings cannot be generalised as applicable to a broader population of women. As outlined during Chapter Four, however, the Beauvoirian situated, embodied self enables discussion of the commonality between women's situations (and embodiments) without substituting a single universal situation for all women across all socio-historical contexts. Within the dataset itself, an interesting pattern emerges when comparing women who have experienced the breadth of different forms of intrusive behaviour, from both unknown and known men. Those who reported experiences of the forms of men's intrusion that are the most documented and legislated against, (e.g. rape and intimate partner violence), were also those who reported the greatest breadth of intrusive practices. Here it is important to pull together the intrusive practices of known and unknown men as, for participants in this study, intrusion from known men was a key context in their understandings of intrusion from unknown men. Of the twelve women who reported experiencing ten or more different types of intrusive practices from men (24% of total sample), half (n=6) had also experienced rape and/or attempted rape and close to half (n=5) had experienced intimate partner violence.

Four women reported experiencing the largest range in intrusive practices, between 11 and 14 different forms. All of these women had also experienced rape and/or attempted rape, with two also having additional experience of intimate partner violence. That this sub-sample contains an over-representation of victim/survivors of rape and intimate partner violence becomes apparent in reviewing the experiences of those women reporting less than ten different types of intrusive practices. Here, victim/survivors of

rape make up just over ten per cent (n=4) of the remaining thirty-eight women, while victim/survivors of intimate partner violence make up just five per cent (n=2).

Rape: The fortunate lack

The reasons for this over representation is connected to the ways in which participants drew on Kelly's (1988) concept of the continuum of sexual violence to situate their own experiences. Women who had not experienced rape or contact sexual abuse in childhood often expressed this through an appeal to notions of luck or fortune. Interesting here is that not being raped is seen as a *fortunate lack* rather than an unfortunate addition, alluding to women's understandings of rape as not just a possibility of their situation but more of an imminent potentiality.

I think I've been quite lucky and I don't think from me you'll get like a shock story, I don't have a big, I'm grateful for that don't get me wrong, there's no big story (Sophie, INT22).

I was very, very fortunate, I never had any horrific experiences, I had the I know it's a really awful thing to say, I had the usual ones like being groped on the tube and I do know in my mind it's awful that women feel like that's a normal experience. Like every girl I know has had it at some point, at least once (Theodora, INT50).

(F)ortunately I've never had a proper assault or anything (Meg, INT16).

Luckily I've never had anything really bad before, well I was talking to a friend about this and we were both saying it's actually really hard to know when it's a big deal, and when it's just the way of life and you should put up with it (Emma, INT54).

For Mariag, the absence of rape, as a fortunate lack, is tied up in the perceived inevitability of sexual assault, developed through the messages received as part of growing up (see Chapter Six).

You can have at that [young] age a really precarious feeling of when is it going to happen to me. Not harassment but actual assault. When is it going to happen because I can't control it, I can't tell who is going to do it (Mariag, INT52).

A similar feeling was seen in Katie's (INT10) account of how she experienced public space after being raped by an unknown man in Mongolia, in a park in the middle of the day after he had said hello to her. Katie's words were lost for this project as the phone on which we were recording was stolen during the conversation, however from my notes taken just after we met, Katie had expressed a feeling close to relief at having had 'the worst thing' happen. Believing that no one would be unlucky enough to be raped twice by a stranger in public, surviving the rape gave Katie a feeling of freedom in public space, that, following Mariag, at least now it *had* happened, the 'wait' was over and she felt back in control. This idea of regularity, the mundanity of experiencing sexual violence as a woman, was also apparent in the narratives of other participants who identified as having been raped; again signalling a recognition that such an act is experienced as an ever-present potentiality both for themselves and for other women they knew. In speaking about being raped by an acquaintance, Taryn contextualised her experience through her knowledge of rape as routine.

Obviously when I was young date rape wasn't something that people talked about and yet every girl I know got date raped (Taryn, INT47).

This understanding of the commonness of sexual violence in women's lives is also found in women's responses to practices along the continuum of men's intrusion.

I've spoken to some girls about it and they're like, "oh I don't really get it very much" and I'm like, "ok". And then they're like, "oh but there was this time, and that time and something else". And so there's something where you're just so used to it. It's just so part and parcel of being female. It's nothing special. It just happens all the time (Charlie, INT38).

I just kind of accepted it and it always makes you feel quite bad when guys shout at the street or tell you to cheer up but perhaps I'd just sort of, it's just part of life (Carolyn, INT44).

Bec describes her reaction on being confronted by the man mentioned in the section on following, who attempted to rape her having tracked her over three different underground lines after saying hello to her at a station.

I turned around and just ran as fast as I could, back down my street, back towards the main street and there was nobody there. I didn't know where I would go or anything but that was all I could think of to do, but he ran faster than me, and around in front of me and trapped me against the wall. So I screamed at him again to go away and he was just laughing and that's what freaked me out the most, because he knew, he and I both knew that there was nothing I could do. And then he pulled down his pants. And my reaction then was so funny because I just went (sigh) "really? Are you for real?" (Bec, INT15).

Bec's response can be read as almost resignation due to the almost monotonous nature of VAWG. This is similar to that evoked by Sophia to comfort a friend after they were both flashed at in Belgium. Sophia describes how she reconceptualised the encounter to move it away from sexual threat through focusing on its mundanity.

(S)he just got really upset and was like "oh no, I just feel so uncomfortable." And I just tried to explain to her, if you just see it for what it is, some guy thinking he is either severely bored or he doesn't have anything else to do today. You know, imagine if you were to decide one day, today

I'm going to like flash my tits at someone. And she's like "oh yeah actually that doesn't make much sense" and I'm like, "it doesn't." It's not funny, well it is funny but it's not scary. If you see it as what it is, a body part, then it removes that whole, it removes the sex from it, it removes the connotation, it removes the fear, it removes the intimidation (Sophia, INT30).

The division of men's intrusive practices into criminal and normal, with normal being nothing to worry about, is thus complicated in the ways in which criminal practices *are also* experienced by many women as normal. Such understanding raises interesting points for debates about the low number of women who report practices of criminal intrusion such as rape or flashing compared to those who experience them. This may not be solely to do with perceptions of the criminal justice system, or even the perniciousness of myths of victim precipitation (Walklate, 2013). It may be that part of what is happening is that reducing the criminal to the mundane is a way for women to cope with what feels like the inevitability of VAWG.

Counting the continuum

Participants who had experiences of rape and/or intimate partner violence recognised the connection between the continuum of intrusive practices as grounded in what Coy (2009) termed an 'experiential template of risk'. This troubles a popular discourse that suggests women experiencing criminal forms of intrusion/violence become involved in a 'cycle of abuse', whereby they seek out perpetrators and/or perpetrators are able to identify 'victims' through an embodied vulnerability. In a rare link in the literature between 'street harassment' and women's histories of sexual violence, Bowman (1993: 8) suggested that: 'women who have been victims of rape are especially vulnerable to the harms that street harassment inflicts'. The connection found in this study is more complicated than a cyclical model, and does not wholly support Bowman's claim of a

particular susceptibility to harm. Instead, the relationship between experience of criminalised forms of men's intrusion and those of mundane intrusions in public space may be embedded in perceptions of 'what counts'. Outlining Kelly's (1988) concept of the continuum in relation to the practices of 'street harassment', Barbara Fileborn (2013) describes the complicated process through which behaviours are experienced as harmful.

(W)hether these behaviours are experienced as harmful (and *how* harmful they are) may vary depending on a range of contextual, personal and other factors, such as previous victimisation experiences. Further, the harm caused by an incident of sexual violence is not static, but is rather fluid and subject to change over time. That is, for example, the harm of an incident may decline over time. Alternatively, an experience that was previously understood as unproblematic may be reinterpreted as constituting sexual harassment or street harassment, and subsequently experienced as a form of harm (Fileborn, 2013: 11).

Prior experience of the forms of sexual violence given particular legitimacy through law forms a key context through which participants made sense of each new encounter with intrusion. Women who openly acknowledged the links between their experiences with rape and other intrusive practices along the continuum anchored their understandings of the connections in a shared felt fear. This was not the fear of crime referred to in much of the literature on women, fear and public space (see Chapter Two), but an explicit fear of men. Across accounts, participants referred to intrusive men as 'them', 'they', demonstrating the ubiquity of experiencing intrusions in public space and the men practicing them. The operations of this connective fear is described by Viola, a victim/survivor of rape and childhood sexual abuse, as non-linear, impacted on not only by an individual's own experiences, but more widely by the experiences socially prescribed as within her field of possibilities.

It works together doesn't it? You have an experience and then you make sense of that in light of the wider messages given out. So you see it in a certain light and that might maybe make you more fearful when something else (happens), which then maybe makes you more likely to experience something in a certain way to make sense of it again (Viola, INT42).

This meaning and impact of men's stranger intrusion is reminiscent of the shift in thinking around intimate partner violence given by Evan Stark (2009), supporting a move away from an episodic approach towards a model of experienced 'living' reality marked as continuous and cumulative. Viola's suggestion that in attempting to make sense of men's intrusive practices, women both read new experiences through old experiences as well as revisit the meanings placed on intrusions occurring historically, is supported by many of the women in this project identifying as victim/survivors. Kirsten, a victim/survivor of both intimate partner violence and rape within that relationship, expands Viola's framing to include the impact of the present, speaking of how men's stranger intrusions were experienced whilst she was also coping with violence from her intimate partner, including rape.

It makes it more intense I think, it makes you feel more humiliated because you've got that boyfriend and then this happens on top of that it just makes you feel even worse (Kirsten, INT8).

Both Anna and Alice describe a change in the phenomenological meaning of intrusive practices along the continuum after their experiences of rape and sexual assault.

There's a voice that's like this could get really nasty now because once you've seen that side of it... if you ask what's changed from before then, from my early twenties to now, that's what's changed, I have a fear now that I didn't have before, because I didn't know how nasty they could get (Anna, INT2).

Before my assault if someone said “you look nice, that’s a nice skirt, you’ve got a nice body”, which I don’t necessarily find negative because a compliment is a compliment is a compliment and at the end of the day at the time I didn’t find any threat in that. But after that, those men start to mean something different, those comments start to mean something different and those comments start to mean something that I can’t control (Alice, INT14).

Here there is a difference to the feeling expressed by Katie at having been raped by a stranger in public space where, having had the ‘worst thing’ happen, other forms of men’s intrusion lost their impact. For Kirsten, raped by a partner, Anna, raped by a new acquaintance, and Alice who was sexually assaulted by a man working in a takeaway shop, the threat of stranger rape is heightened through experiencing criminal forms of intrusion from other known and unknown men. Bec recognised a similar transformation in the ways she experienced routine interruptions after an unknown man attempted to rape her.

‘(Before) I think it was more like annoyed. Like, oh can you just go away you’re annoying me, if they’re annoying me. Or I would just ignore them. Yeah. But now there’s fear. And then I get angry that I’m so scared... Angry at them. At them making me feel like I can’t feel the way I used to feel, just like free and confident and independent and safe (Bec, INT15).

Unlike Katie, who experienced an increase in feelings of safety in public space after her rape, Bec experienced extremely high levels of fear and anxiety for many months afterwards born of the fact that she avoided it *this time*. For Kirsten, Anna, Alice and Bec, the potentiality was still there and if anything, it felt even closer.

The reshaping of the phenomenological meaning of men’s intrusion after an experience of rape is similarly felt by Shelley after successfully fighting off an unknown man who grabbed her at night when she was walking home, repeatedly punching her in the face.

For Shelley, as seen in Viola's earlier claim that 'it works together', practices across the continuum are experienced in relation to each other. It is not solely that the attempted rape impacts on Shelley's sense-making of other intrusive practices, but also that these other practices impact on her process of understanding the attempted rape, something Shelley refers to as 'constant reminders'.

I think they're all linked, this is why it's harder to get over things because you just get constant reminders. So the first thing happens and then every time something else happens it just links it all back. It depends on the situation and what happens but you sort of get the same feeling of being threatened (Shelley, INT29).

Key then across the experiential continuum of men's intrusion is an understanding of female embodiment as a conduit connecting different practices of men's intrusion. In the 'street harassment' literature, though external and internal contextual factors are considered in several studies (Esacove, 1998; Fairchild, 2010; Katz, Hannon & Whitten, 1996), women's histories of men's violence and intrusion are unacknowledged. For women in this study who acknowledged for themselves a position of victim/survivor, experiences of criminal forms of intrusion formed a central internal contextual factor in perceptions of intrusion; a factor that works to both connect and confirm experiences of other forms of men's intrusive practices. For participants who did not speak of experiences of criminal forms of men's violence, there was still often a connection recounted where particular practices of intrusion are read through the possibility of escalation to other practices of men's violence, most often to rape. This connection forms a bodily disposition that can be usefully conceptualised using the existential-phenomenological concept of a fundamental 'attunement' towards the world. Similar to some of the difficulties outlined in the literature review, there are

problems in translating Heidegger's (1996) concept of 'attunement' as the German, *befindlichkeit*, includes both how one feels (*sich befinden*) and also the core of the word (*sich finden*) meaning to find oneself.⁵⁸ Attunement then, in its existential-phenomenological sense, is both the moods and feelings that 'tune' us into the world, and that through which our *thrownness* in the world, and the ability for things to come close to and affect us, is revealed. Heidegger conducts a detailed exploration of fear as a mode of attunement in *Being and Time* that, though outside the scope of this thesis, offers possibilities for a philosophical exploration of women's fear of rape and the fear of crime paradox, a framing that has yet to be used in the literature. The concept of attunement will be developed over the following chapter to explore participants' attitudes towards their embodiment, their 'being-in-the-world', and how this is revealed in relation to men's stranger intrusions.

CONCLUSION

Examining the findings of 50 women's accounts of six different categories of men's stranger intrusions – ordinary interruptions, verbal intrusions, the gaze, physical intrusions, flashing and following – demonstrates their interdependency and some of the difficulties in separating living experience into the categories often needed for analysis. This chapter has worked with these six categories as analytical concepts in order to explore not only the frequencies of, but also the connections between, different practices of men's intrusion. The category of ordinary interruptions was created to capture the

⁵⁸ For a deeper examination of the difficulties see King's (2001) guide to *Being and Time*, pp. 55-58.

intrusive practices participants located as simply an extension of the current gender order which supports men's right to act on and through the bodies of women (Coy & Garner, 2012). On the simplest level such encounters worked to remind participants of this, that they were seeable and seen, and that their bodies could be acted on and through. In this way, studying ordinary interruptions began to outline how participants' ability to *be* embodied in public space was disrupted by men's intrusion. This disruption was also found in how verbal intrusions, predominantly though not only sexualised commentary, forced a constant, conscious awareness of the vulnerability of female embodiment. Exploring the two other forms of verbal intrusions experienced by participants, calls to 'cheer up' and insults or threats, demonstrated the ways in which men's intrusion constrained participants movements. Instead of the world experienced as a field within which to express one's own bodily intentionality, with both the world and 'our living body' experienced as the expression of the intentionality of the male other.

Using Sartre's theory of 'the Look' (as being both the experience and a consciousness of the possibility of the gaze), an exploration of how participants experienced men's intrusive staring revealed how the possibility of men's intrusion was lived as a reality for women, even in the physical absence of an intrusive man. The apprehension given through this consciousness, 'that I have a body which can be hurt' (Sartre, 2007: 282) is gendered: it is the recognition of the imminent potentiality of rape, embedded in women's embodiment. This imminent potentiality was particularly experienced in relation to men's physical intrusions. Here it was discovered that where physically removing the self was: not possible; pre-emptively calculated to escalate the intrusion; or attempted but did not evoke an end to the intrusion, participants employed the strategic

use of bodily alienation, consciously separating the body being intruded upon from the self. Such a strategy was also seen in women's accounts of flashing and public masturbation. The category of following illuminated the ways in which the possibility of escalation was embedded in participant's sense-making of men's intrusive practices and helped foreground the experiential connections between different practices.

Across these conceptual categories, was the experience of a disrupted internal world, combined with the experience of one's own bodily-self as a material thing included in another's intentional space rather than an expression of our self. Such disruption was theorised as a tripartite process of experiencing the materiality of the bodily-self: living the corporeality of our embodiment alongside the uncertainty of one's ability to make sense of one's own experience, while at the same time attempting to anticipate the actions of the other. This occurred alongside a diminishment of our ability to define or make conclusive sense of a situation, with many men practicing intrusion in contexts that made verification difficult. Combined with this, participants spoke of using an escalation calculation to anticipate men's actions. This calculation was based on women's understandings of rape as inherent in the potentialities of their situation. That women responded to initially ambiguous practices through the ever-present potentiality of escalation, suggests a difficulty in marking a definitive separation between the *experience* of intrusion and the *practice* of intrusion.

Examining these experiences in detail, not as isolated episodes but rather in terms of the meanings participants placed on them, thus revealed that experiential importance lay not solely in the content of these intrusions but in the ways in which women took them into

and lived them through their bodies. Through men's intrusion, women lived the 'femaleness' of the body: learning this had specific meanings in terms of value and safety; particular limits in relation to Jeffner's (2000) 'space for action' or freedom; and a particular capacity in its use as a thing through which men can express their intentionality rather than as a field of our own bodily intentionality. Throughout the chapter, men's intrusive practices were found to be experienced in relation to each other, suggesting a move away from an episodic approach towards a model of continuous, cumulative, 'living' reality. The ways in which individual instances of intrusion were experienced as interconnected by participants was knowledge lived in the bodily-self. It is thus to explore how women enacted habitualised modes of embodiment in response to the continuum of men's intrusive practices that this thesis now turns.

CHAPTER SIX

Embodying Men's Intrusion

(I)t is not necessary to think a situation to exist it.

(Beauvoir, 2011: 294)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore habitual modalities of embodiment enacted by participants in public space in response to the living experience of intrusion. To begin, the chapter will examine women's first experiences of the continuum of men's intrusive practices, commonly framed by participants as being 'just part of growing up' as a woman, before moving onto an investigation of how women's accounts unearthed an ambiguous

embodiment with a habituated mode of alienation, affected by and affecting the experience of men's stranger intrusion.

Adolescence has a particular place for Simone de Beauvoir in the establishment of women's situation. Similarly, in this research, participants repeatedly reported that they were more likely to experience intrusion as a young woman, with many claiming like Taryn that, as 'I've gotten older it's obviously dropped off' (Taryn, INT47). Beauvoir begins her analysis of women's living experience in the second volume of *The Second Sex* by detailing the formative years of a woman's life, from childhood through sexual initiation and adulthood. The impacts of experiencing the continuum of men's intrusive practices are acknowledged during these sections,⁵⁹ though Beauvoir spends little time unpicking men's practices in relation to women's situation. Such an absence is particularly notable given Beauvoir's recognition of men's role in casting woman as the inessential Other (Beauvoir, 2011), and also in her explicit recognition of the impact of the experience of men's intrusion on women's emerging sense of a bodily-self. Like Beauvoir, June Larkin, Carla Rice and Vanessa Russell (1996) also located the pervasiveness of men's intrusion in public as an integral part of 'normal' female development. Larkin suggests in a later paper that harassing words and gestures 'are slowly absorbed into girls developing sense of self and become an essential part of who they see themselves to be' (1997: 121). This can be seen in many of the responses from participants in this study, such as Jeannine who uses the mechanisms of normalisation as an explanation for why, almost twenty years later, she can remember her first encounter with intrusion at thirteen.

⁵⁹ See for example Chapter 2, *The Girl*: 'If they wander the streets, they are stared at, accosted. I know some girls, far from shy, who get no enjoyment strolling through Paris alone because, incessantly bothered, they are incessantly on their guard: all their pleasure is ruined (Beauvoir, 2011: 358).

I think that's why I probably remember the first time so well because it was like this horrible thing that happened to me and I have something to say about it but from then on, slowly over time, it's become more and more normal, just part of life, your daily routine as my mum said to me. She knew. Yeah, shitty, you're a female, this is going to happen (Jeannine, INT33).

This chapter will help fill a gap in understanding the consequences of men's intrusive practices for women's developing sense of a bodily-self through drawing on Beauvoirian theory of 'situation' to explore the experiences of participants both before and during their adolescence. When operationalised alongside Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty's (2002) insights of habituated embodiments, the 'habit body', enable a conceptualisation of the living experience of men's intrusion that holds the uneasy balance of the impacts of intrusion for women's embodiment alongside space for our situated freedom and agency. Exploring participants' habitual bodily practices in public space revealed two interlinked yet individually powerful mechanisms that intersected to encourage a particular modality of embodiment. The first, external awareness, relates to what Coy (2009) terms experiential templates of risk. Here, conceptions of risk combine with a female fear (Gordon & Riger, 1989) of stranger perpetrated sexual violence, to encourage a habitual attitude towards the world - Heidegger's (1996) concept of 'attunement' outlined in the previous chapter – marked by vigilance; manifesting in the maintenance of an external awareness when occupying public space. The second mechanism, external perspective, differs from external awareness in being not a consciousness of the environment but rather a consciousness of one's own embodiment. 'Perspective' here is used in the sense of being 'a particular attitude towards or way of regarding something' ("Perspective", 2001), thus where external awareness can be seen as an attunement towards the world, external perspective is an attunement towards our embodiment. This works alongside,

but is distinct from, Foucault's (1979) concept of 'panoptic surveillance', which has been usefully employed by feminists to theorise an internalisation for women of the gaze of men (Bartky, 1990; Bordo, 1989). External perspective does not refer only to a consciousness of how one's bodily self is perceived by (male) others, though it can include this. It represents, rather, a bodily attitude; a mood that 'tunes' us into our being-in-the-world. The operations of these two mechanisms, external awareness and external perspective, will be explored in this final findings chapter through women's accounts of their first experiences of men's stranger intrusions and the ways in which their responses can be theorised through a gendered adaptation of Merleau-Ponty's (2002) 'habit body'.

'IT'S ALL PART OF GROWING UP'⁶⁰

In her study of women's embodiment as a gendered habitus, Ruyters (2012) suggests that women begin learning about what she terms their 'vulnerable embodiment' in adolescence when they receive warnings about the need for precautionary behaviors, and are exposed to adult fears about potential dangers. Analysing participant accounts in this study suggests that what is going on in women's adolescence is more than this; that the living experience of the female bodily-self is not only one of external warnings but also internal experiential knowledge of female embodiment as a site of unsafety. For participants, it was not the adult fears about potential danger that were embedded so much as the normalisation, minimisation and outright dismissal adults made of participants' own fears based on early experiences of men's intrusion. Four-fifths of

⁶⁰ Jacqueline, INT25.

women (80%, n=40) explicitly recalled experiencing men's stranger intrusion in public space before the age of eighteen, with the majority of these able to clearly remember the entire context of these encounters. As seen in the discussion of flashing in the previous chapter, for many these early experiences had particular impact in that, as stated by Theodora (INT50) 'quite a lot of the time it's the first time you've ever seen a penis or the first time you've ever been groped'. Sophie, Josina and Mariag, all in the context of teenage or pre-teen experiences of men's public masturbation, describe such impact.

When I was about I must have been about 12, I went swimming with another female friend and we went into a big cubicle changing room and I remember this guy just got talking to us through the cubicle next door and before I knew it he'd stuck something under, there was a gap under the bottom of the cubicle, so basically this guy had stuck his penis through the bottom of the cubicle and was wanking. And we didn't know what it was but I remember thinking "what is that?" So that was my first experience of a penis which is probably not the most healthy experience a person could have (Sophie, INT22).

I get less attention now than when I was 13, 14. When I was much, much younger that's when I was flashed. It hasn't happened for year... in a park with a friend aged 11, that's when I remember it happening for the first time. A guy was wanking in the bushes, me and my friend were picking off blackberries. But we didn't know what masturbation was. I mean maybe I knew but I didn't know that's what he was doing, I just thought he was taking a piss for a really long time (Josina, INT45).

What would usually happen is [the flasher's penis] would be covered and he'd appear innocuous but then at one point you might look over... because obviously he's doing it to catch your eye, so then either he'd move whatever was over it, the coat or whatever. Your first reaction, I often think of it as a visual reaction, it's like "what's that?" Or, "that wasn't there before, what is that? Oh! It's your dick". Also if you're that age you might not have seen any, I know for example a lot of kids see porn now, but we didn't see any porn, maybe once as a teenager, never seen my dad's, probably never actually seen one, so the first couple of times you see one you're like, "what is that!" (Mariag, INT52).

The living experience for participants of these intrusive men marked a particular point in women's development where the social meanings of sexual difference became embodied. Beauvoir describes the ways in which: '(f)or girls and boys, the body is first the radiation of a subjectivity, the instrument that brings about the comprehension of the world: they apprehend the universe through their eyes and hands, and not through their sexual parts' (Beauvoir, 2011: 293). The experience of men's stranger intrusions for participants in this research marked a point whereby the body moved from being experienced as the radiation of a subjectivity, wholly ours and wholly us, to the experience of *having* a body; Beauvoir's (2011: 50) 'body-object'.

This is evident in Jeannine's account of being whistled at as a 13 year old on her paper route: 'it's the first time I think you realise I'm not a guy, and men have one up on you' (Jeannine, INT33). For Jeannine, it is not just that she experiences her embodiment as a body-object through men's intrusion, but that it is experienced as a *female* body-object. Here, women's situation in unequal gender orders begins to enter into the living experience of our embodiment, an ambiguous entanglement that is difficult to capture through the dualism of biological sex and social gender. Identifying men's intrusion as grounded in her 'femaleness', Jeannine, like many other participants, turned to the women around her to check her understandings.

I can very clearly remember the first time that a guy said something to me on the street, very clearly. I had a paper route and I was about 13 or 14 and this man was catcalling me from down the street and I completely, it's so vivid in my mind what happened. And I remember going home, talking to my mom, being very upset about it and she was like, "this is life" (Jeannine, INT33).

The message she received was common across women's accounts: that of men's intrusion as ordinary. Bea recalls a similar response from her mother, 'I remember as a kid men whistling at me and stuff and my mum just laughed it off and said "stupid man"' (Bea, INT49). Both mothers here are referring here to the mundanity of men's intrusion in women's lives. Such reactions, however, play key role in what is for Beauvoir 'how woman is taught to assume her condition, how she experiences this, what universe she finds herself enclosed in, and what escape mechanisms are permitted her' (Beauvoir, 2011: 289). The lesson here is that part of the situation of a woman's body is that this body can be acted on by men – that men's intrusion is embedded in women's embodiment. Similar messages are seen in accounts from Jacqueline and Carolyn, the latter given in her follow up conversation through reflecting on what made her first experience of men's intrusion in public stand out so powerfully for her.

(W)hen I was 15, I was walking up to my boyfriend's house and this man exposed himself to me, quite close as well, and I didn't really know what he was doing. And the police weren't called because, well I'm not sure why they weren't called, my mum said "it's all part of growing up" (Jacqueline, INT25).

My first experience of street harassment was traumatic, I remember thinking that I must be a 'woman' now and then must have subconsciously adapted my behaviour. It was also around the same time that my mum gave me a pink rape alarm. Suddenly the outside world didn't seem so safe. It is just awful when you think about it that you can get pink rape alarms marketed at young women, and I don't blame my mum for buying me it she was just trying to make sure I was safe. But that just shows the extent to which feeling unsafe in public has been normalised and passes from one generation to the next (Carolyn, INT44, FU).

This generational knowledge, passed down from women to girls (or from men to boys) is conceptualised by Maria Garner (2014) as a gendered 'heritage', resonant with

Beauvoir's claim that women are 'heirs to a weighty past' (Beauvoir, 2011: 289). For both Jacqueline and Carolyn, this inherited, gendered way of being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1996) includes the continuum of men's intrusive practices as ordinary and women's embodiment as its source. Even in accounts of intrusion before adolescence, participants spoke of learning that men's intrusion is part of the living experience of being a woman, either explicitly from adult women who told them to ignore or implicitly from the lack of response. A powerful example of this comes from Cathy recalling being sexually abused as a nine-year-old girl on a public bus by an unknown man. Travelling on a long bus journey, Cathy and her thirteen-year-old brother both wanted window seats.

(S)o what we did was sat at the back of the bus and pretty soon after we set off this man came on the bus and sat next to me. And he molested me on the bus on the back seat. And my feeling about it is that for me now I'm almost not even sure if it happened or what happened but the fear was so huge and afterwards when we got there it wasn't like "oh we got there", it was "my brother didn't help me and everyone on the bus didn't help me, they just ignored it." So there was a lot of confusion... on the bus they didn't even turn around. At one point I began to weep and nothing happened... I had this feeling it was like "why isn't anybody helping me?" I was really in distress and nothing happened. And so that's why I think sometimes it's like did anything happen, I just don't know (Cathy, INT28).

Cathy's response to the lack of anyone reacting, even as an adult, is to doubt whether the encounter happened at all. This invalidation of women's reality is seen across accounts, both early experiences and those in adulthood, leaving women with a sense that they are unable to confirm their own sense of encounters as abusive. New Mum experiences the same kind of uncertainty when recalling her experience of being raped as a teenager.

And you have to say to yourself, I have to say to myself, did I make this up? Was it that I had sex and then regretted it but then actually no I said no, I said stop. You know I did do that, I did do that (New Mum, INT23).

These early lessons have particular importance given the finding in Chapter Five that some practices of intrusion were not experienced solely as episodic for participants, but that over time these became experienced in relation to each other, a model of continuous, cumulative, living reality. Here the connections between episodes of intrusion operate on another layer: not only are they experienced in relation to each other, they are also lived as irrevocably enmeshed in the body. In this way, the episodic *becomes* embodied. Such a framing is embedded in Beauvoir's concept of 'situation'; the total context grounding our freedom and agency, and that through which, and in which, we understand the world and ourselves. In the words of Beauvoir what is happening is that the meaning given to these practices 'settles into her body, it becomes the most concrete reality' (Beauvoir, 2011: 352). This is part of the meaning behind Beauvoir's claim that the body forms a situation itself. To understand the impacts of this on how women enacted their embodied selfhood it helps to examine further participants' early experiences of intrusion both before and during their adolescence.

'It happens before you even know what it is'⁶¹: Childhood Intrusion

Just over a third (36%, n=18) of participants recalled an experience of intrusion at twelve or younger, with four of these recounting experiences of intrusion from known males, both adults and, mostly, from amongst their male primary school peers. In *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir describes what she terms the 'puberty crisis', a key point in the development of our living body.

⁶¹ Bea, INT49.

The crisis begins much earlier for girls than for boys and it brings about far greater changes. The little girl approaches it with worry and displeasure. As her breasts and body hair develop, a feeling is born that sometimes changes into pride, but begins as shame... Of course, from birth to puberty the little girl grew up, but she never felt growth; day after day, her body was present like an exact finished thing; now she is 'developing': the very word horrifies her... in the blossoming of her breasts the little girl feels the ambiguity of the word 'living' (Beauvoir, 2011: 331).

Here Beauvoir is not making a biological or essentialist argument; rather it is the *situation* in its Beauvoirian sense of both the socio-historical and the material that evokes this crisis. Many participants in their earliest accounts of men's intrusion expressed the ambiguity that Beauvoir finds tied to the developing female body (where her embodiment begins to be experienced as both the vehicle for her freedom and the source of her oppression) as a feeling of bewilderment.

I was in primary school, we had a fancy dress party and typical me everything was a last minute rush and we couldn't find a costume and I hadn't told anyone about it so it was the old bin bag liner kind of thing. So bin bag liner went to the 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 and I must have been seven. And someone wound the window down and went "wahay!" And I remember thinking, "what's that? Like what is that? I don't understand what that is?" (Claire, INT35).

I can remember from 12 or even earlier, at primary school, I remember people in vans shouting stuff out. And obviously you don't understand it at that age and you put different meanings on it as you grow up (Bea, INT49).

The confusion found in the accounts of Claire and Bea is reminiscent of women's experiences of experiencing men's public masturbation before having seen a penis. These early intrusions occurred before women had developed experiential knowledge of men's intrusive practices as connected. Recalling the discussion on the situated self in Chapter

Four, Heidegger's concept of *geworfenheit* or 'thrownness', where we are thrown without knowledge or choice into a world where we are already in a particular situation, is useful here. Thrown into a situation where our living body, which initially was experienced as ourselves acting through, is now experienced from the outside as acted on and through by men, our embodiment begins to be experienced as a site of tension, anxiety. For Beauvoir, our body starts to escape us.

The little girl feels that her body is escaping her, that it is no longer the clear expression of her individuality; it becomes foreign to her; and at the same moment, she is grasped by others as a thing: on the street, eyes follow her, her body is subject to comments; she would like to become invisible; she is afraid of becoming flesh and afraid to show her flesh (Beauvoir, 2011: 332).

The process of 'becoming flesh' is the process of coming to experience one's female embodiment; a process whereby our living body begins to mark both the source and limit to our freedom. Clare drew connections between her early experiences of men's intrusion, and those of attempting to perform femininity.

Well I was trying to think for today, I was trying to think when it started, when I was growing up as a teenager... thinking when I was almost 12 I went to a party and I put some high heeled shoes on and some ankle socks on, I never felt comfortable. And I distinctly remember trying to walk, it would have started about 10, 11, 12, trying to walk as a female. And going from tomboy to trying to walk as a female, and putting higher shoes on, putting my mother's winkle pickers... thinking "how do you walk like a lady how do you walk around wearing a skirt?" So first of all I think it started me feeling, having gone from a tomboy, to then suddenly feeling the physical restriction of feminine clothes (Clare, INT21).

Palpable here is the way in which Clare's experience of her body is one of it becoming 'not her', forming instead a particular situation, marked by restriction and discomfort. In linking this purposive becoming to her early experiences of men's intrusion, Clare

highlights the ambiguity embedded – but often overlooked – in Beauvoir’s famous statement of the category ‘woman’ as a state of becoming, not a moment at birth. Clare is not speaking here of a voluntarist account of gender, though she is describing a deliberate choice in taking up and ‘claiming’ the femaleness of her body through bodily practices of femininity. This choice, for Clare, is also grounded in her body as a situation. As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, Clare’s agency here can be seen as arising out of a situation where her body has been experienced as the source of men’s intrusion. Feeling bodily restrictions and discomfort, or, more so, actively taking up practices resulting in this, helps Clare enact a mode of embodiment where the body is experienced as distanced from the self – a thing to be restricted, adjusted, controlled. No longer is the self exposed through its vulnerable embodiment, rather the embodied self is protected through adopting a mode of alienation towards the unsafe body.

‘I didn’t feel like I tried at all and I still got it’:⁶² Adolescent Intrusion

Almost two thirds (62%, n=31) of participants described experiences of intrusion during adolescence. Some participants reconciled the confusion common in pre-teen accounts during this period, through employing a dominant narrative of men’s intrusion as complimentary, as described by Becky and Mariag.

Definitely going to school, and I find that even more disconcerting now in hindsight, that I used to go to a school where you had to walk a bit through town to get to the sports grounds, and cars used to beep at us all the time and we were obviously at school, we were in uniform... I think probably when you’re 11 or 12 you’re not sure what to make of it and you probably think it’s a compliment (Becky, INT39).

⁶² Abbey, INT7.

(T)he thing is when you go to your mum or Aunties or mates and they say to you, and those people say “oh it’s flattering love, it’s a good thing”. And you think, depends who you are, but you might be a bit conflicted then, because you think “it didn’t feel that way but apparently that’s what it means” (Mariag, INT52).

This reconciliation, even where it conflicted with women’s experiential reality, allowed for a feeling of reclamation in respect to an agency situated in their female embodiment. Marly and Mia described how they experienced an embodied capacity through evoking a reaction from men based on their appearance.

I think I was 17 at the time, 16 or 17 and I went with my friend who is equally as tall as me, we’re both 180, and was some wearing short skirts or something like that and we just got whistled at constantly and I think at that time it was the first time I’d found it happening to me and it was great, amazing, like “oh my god”, came to [city] one day and got someone totally flirting with me on the beach and I was like “wow, amazing”, and I felt really positive about it then... Just being the first time it happened. An awakening of being reacted to as a sexual being (Marly, INT43).

(I)t was this time of being 15 or 16 and being underage in pubs... and you would be wearing the skimpiest dress and really enjoying being, probably looking awful but at the time thinking you looked sexy, and all these slightly loser-ish guys who were 36 in the pub, and you would think it was really cool. And I actually really liked that and I think personally it’s really good for girls to go through that, to test your boundaries of being an object. Ok I don’t agree with this whole idea of it being a power but testing that whole relational thing, and figuring it out and getting something between the leers and inappropriate comments and guys hitting on you and trying to figure it out (Mia, INT20).

The embodiment enacted here is one whereby the capacity of the bodily-self is lived through the body image and an agency is experienced in taking up one’s own body as an object. This agency is not expressed by the body as being the self *in* action, acting on others and the world, but rather through an embodiment where the body is distanced from the self, lived as a body-object to be acted on. The body image becomes that

through which women live the abilities of their bodily-self, a modality of embodiment marked by *using* one's body instead of *being* one's body (see Budgeon, 2003; Carman, 1999).

Such a framing connects to Beauvoir's descriptions of how women learn to resign themselves to the position of inessential Other.

(W)ith some resistance, the girl consents to her femininity... she discovers the power in it; vanity is soon mixed with the shame that her flesh inspires. That hand that moves her, that glance that excites her, they are an appeal, an invitation; her body seems endowed with magic virtues; it is a treasure, a weapon; she is proud of it (Beauvoir, 2011: 360).

It is the key phrase 'with some resistance' that underlies the difficulties in claiming such agency as the expression of an ontological freedom. There is an agency here but it is a situated agency, expressed within the whole context of a situation. This situation is marked by tension – diminishing women's subjectivity alongside experiencing female embodiment as the source of men's intrusion. A dilemma exists then, between living one's embodiment as a body-subject, where that body (and thus the self) is a site of discomfort and unsafety, and enacting a mode of embodiment whereby the body is taken up as a body-object. For participants such as Marly and Mia, a sense of self was asserted through adopting this latter modality of embodiment – performing the practices of femininity and understanding men's intrusion as a result of this. Such a framework, however, can be disrupted through continued contradiction between the narrative of men's intrusion as complimentary and particular experiences of intrusion, as Abbey and Rosie describe.

I was wearing like some ratty old jeans and a t-shirt with like a rubber duck on it or something like that. It was just like the most ridiculous outfit, it was too big for me, it didn't fit me right, and I was walking on this bridge and a guy honked at me, and I just thought that was the weirdest thing because I was hot and I was sweaty and I was alone and I was wearing just nothing, like nothing exciting at all and I just couldn't understand why he thought I looked attractive at that point, because that's what I assumed it was, it was "you look hot today", that sort of thing... that was the first point at which I just didn't get why I got it at that point. Because I assumed that I had to look good in order to get it basically, I didn't feel like I tried at all and I still got it (Abbey, INT7).

I used to like it as well... it actually is quite a boost to confidence, because I suppose when you're 16 and you're going to college, you know you dress, you want to dress as nicely as possible because you're showing off your fashion... after sixth form I stopped caring so much about dressing really fashionably or whatever and trying to like look nice all the time but the beeping of the vans still happened so it was like, "ok now they don't think that I'm attractive, they are just beeping at me" (Rosie, INT12).

Meg was also confused when she experienced men's intrusion without believing her external appearance 'deserved' it.

I think I was about 12 or 13, and you know when you're 12 or 13 you're not looking your best, you're making your presentation mistakes, and my friends and I were in this little seaside town, just been to the beach, weren't actually in bikinis or anything I think, trying to remember what we were wearing, I think it was Easter so it wouldn't have been hot. I think we were in like jeans and hoodies or whatever... And we were walking down here and a car with a guy in it just kind of came onto the pavement and he said something to us, I can't remember what it was, we were all like, "oh my God! What is he doing?" And we carried on walking and he started reversing... And it was just really creepy because we were like, "why did you come up on the pavement? What were you doing? Why did you reverse?" (Meg, INT16).

The ensuing disorientation, where men's intrusion is experienced as complimentary but not connected to a positive self-evaluation, is also found where intrusion had been experienced as frightening but is framed by others as apparently ordinary. Uncovering

such contradictions occurred for many participants during adolescence. Bec was 16 years old when a taxi driver asked her to exchange sex for her cab fare.

He started asking me things like “do you have a boyfriend? Have you ever had sex?” And I was like [high pitch laughing] “oh”. And then he said “I’d like to do things to you, don’t worry you won’t have to pay for the cab ride and I’ll give you a little bit of money and you wouldn’t have to do anything” (Bec, INT15).

Bec managed to force him to stop the car and leave her on the side of the road, after which she flagged down another cab and made her way home. She did not tell her parents ‘because I did feel, oh maybe I had done something wrong’, but on talking to a neighbour, Bec reported the intrusion to the police.

But when I went to report it the police were just, oh I remember I said to the policeman, “maybe you could help me, in the future if something like this happens to me Mr. Police officer what should I do?” And he went, “I don’t know, hit him over the head with your shoe?” And I said “I was wearing rubber shoes.” And he said, “oh well I don’t know then.” Like, wow. I feel like a valued member of our community right now. How helpful. It was just like, “oh well you’re a woman, I don’t really give a crap” (Bec, INT15).

Having made sense of the intrusion as her fault, Bec receives validation that it is criminal, only to have the police reframe it as ordinary.

This confusion between what is ordinary, what is complimentary and what is dangerous was further complicated for many participants in adolescence through experiencing the escalation of men’s intrusion. Returning to Marly, this escalation started to jostle against her previous feelings of an embodied agency through her body ‘causing’ men to intrude.

But then I started school and I started going out more with friends and then I was in University for a year, so that was between 17, 18 up to 21 I think. And in that time I changed radically how I felt about that kind of attention because I had things that I remembered, I had someone wanking on the underground... And things like I was at a party and I left by myself and I had to walk through tunnels that I didn't know very well and this guy came up behind me and said "oh my god you're so beautiful, is it okay if I walk behind you and touch myself?" (Marly, INT43).

Here, enacting an embodiment which distances the body from the self is reified in the discovery that this alienated body – 'ours' but not 'us' – is now not even our own to act on. This is also seen in Hannah's account of the first intrusion she can remember. Walking home from work as a teenager, Hannah had a car with two twenty-year-old men pull alongside her and ask for directions. The man in the passenger seat told her she was pretty.

And then he said, what was it he said next? I can't remember exactly but ultimately he said, "give us a blowjob." And then made a lewd gesture. His friend who was driving the car obviously didn't realise that he was going to say this because he got a bit uncomfortable and wanted to drive off. And I just went, again, just, "no." And he went, "why not?" And I just said, "I don't even know you" and his friend at that point obviously just thought, "that's it, I'm driving off" and just started driving off, but that was probably the first time that I'd ever had anything like that said to me... [I was] shocked. I had absolutely no idea why anyone would say that to somebody. And like I say because it was my first experience of that I just couldn't believe that someone had just said it to me. So I guess it was mostly shock but also humiliation because even though nobody would have heard that conversation it was just humiliating to be singled out like that... I just didn't understand their motives. I didn't understand why they would want to say something like that to someone like me, just walking home (Hannah, INT26).

Hannah's account, and her confusion, supports Beauvoir's claims of the female body as a site of ambiguity. This man's initial statement of Hannah being 'pretty' is understood as arising from how she has acted on her body, something within her control and an expression of her freedom. Following this, his rapid escalation to asking for oral sex leads

to a feeling of humiliation through the contradictory discovery for Hannah that she is not in control of when, how and *how much* men will act on her body. Her female embodiment is experienced as both the source of her freedom and the source of its constraint.

‘I didn’t walk home that way again’:⁶³ Developing a habit body

In an attempt to reclaim a sense of control over the alienated body, women spoke of beginning, during their adolescence, to develop strategies for being-in-the-world that would limit men’s intrusion. Key here is that for most participants this was not marked by embodied practices that expanded out into the world but rather through restriction. In describing their early experiences, most participants acknowledged a conscious adaption of behaviour, movement and bodily posture, recalling women’s attempts to alter their expression to counter calls to cheer up (see Chapter Five). Delilah’s first experience illustrates the ways in which intrusions combine, moving from a verbal intrusion through to following, and how ‘nothing really happened’ hides the ways in which the unremarkable ‘something’ that did happen was a change to the way women experienced the freedom and capacity of their bodily-self. Delilah was followed off a bus at sixteen on her way home from an exercise class, altering her route so as to ensure she wasn’t being followed home and eventually stopping outside a busy hospital and telling the man that if he didn’t leave she would scream. For Delilah this experience resulted in limiting her freedom.

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

⁶³ Carolyn, INT44.

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 (Delilah, INT55).

Similarly for both Sophia and Carolyn, the first experiences of men's stranger intrusion that they could remember resulted in explicit adaptations of their behaviour – adaptations that, like Delilah, decreased their 'space for action' (Jeffner, 2000) through restricting their freedom of movement.

When I was about 11 or 12 we had a high school that was quite nearby so I was allowed to walk home from school, it was probably about a 15 minute walk, but on the way there'd be construction crews I had to pass. And almost every single day without fail I'd get a wolf-whistle, I'd get a comment, I'd get a "oi" or something, they were trying to interact with me, and I was a 13 year old girl. I was uncomfortable and I just tried to follow my route. But then it started changing and I started realising that ok right if I pass by that group of men they call me so I have to cross the street now and I have to walk on the other side of the street (Sophia, INT30).

I remember the first time it happened to me when I was walking home from school. I was wearing a skirt and I didn't normally wear a skirt and some guy just wound down his window and started shouting at me. And I think he poked his tongue out... I just felt really demeaned. And like I didn't want to wear my skirt again... it certainly made me aware of what I was wearing out. And actually I didn't walk home that, I walked home the main road that day because I wanted to get something from the petrol station, I didn't walk home that way again. I walked home through the park instead, not on the road because I didn't want to get that. It made me change my walk home from school, that's how much it affected me (Carolyn, INT44).

For all three women here, these adaptations were spoken about in a similar way to Lisa's account in the previous chapter, of changing her route home; as expected and as necessary. The level of strategising and planning that women undertake in responding to, avoiding and/or coping with men's violence, such as the imposition of limits, has been conceptualised by Liz Kelly as 'safety work' (Kelly, 2012b). 'Safety work' is seen as similar to the 'emotional labour' described by Arlie Hochschild (1983), whereby the

work of managing one's emotions is embedded in one's profession, with the ability to regulate one's emotions habitually becoming itself a form of economic capital. Such work, repeated over time, becomes habitual and through this a form of hidden labour, absorbed into the body. This is the meaning behind Merleau-Ponty's claim that habitual bodily practices express 'our power of dilating our being-in-the-world' (2002: 166): bringing together self, body and world in that inextricable entanglement described by Heidegger (1996), through forming a pre-reflective intentional arc projected towards an anticipated world (see Chapter Four). These habitualised embodiments developed in response to men's intrusion, however, were marked by Young's (2005) 'inhibited intentionality' and a strategic alienation from, rather than enmeshment in, body and world. Experiences of men's intrusion both before and during adolescence led to a mode of habitual embodiment whereby women's projected intentional arc included within it the possibility of intrusion. Some participants were able to explicitly connect this projection, and the bodily practices enacted to prevent its realisation, to particular encounters with intrusive men lived as just part of growing up. Theodora's experience of having a man sit next to her and masturbate whilst she was on a bus affects the way she occupies public space over a decade later.

I was sitting on the bus, on the inside seat which is something I quickly learnt never to do if I can find another seat available... I don't do it anymore. Oh no, I would never now get onto a bus and sit by the window. I do that really annoying thing which everyone hates where I sit on the edge even though there's a seat right there and then if someone comes to sit next to me I'll stand up and let them sit in, even in particular if it's a guy. Actually not even in particular if it's a guy. If it's someone who's bigger than me I'll let them go inside because then I figure at least I can get away (Theodora, INT50).

Similarly, Cathy's pre-pubescent experience with an abusive man on a public bus (discussed earlier) resulted in an embodied anxiety leading to her avoiding public transport until early adulthood.

I was terrified getting on the bus so what I did was if I'd see a lady on her own, I'd wait for the bus to start moving and I'd get a place but as soon as it started moving and I saw someone appropriate to sit next to I'd go sit next to them, so the bus was moving and then this old biddy would be like what the hell are you doing? So I felt guilty about that, bothering a person who wouldn't have minded a seat on their own, and then it was just years and years and years of on public transport being terrified (Cathy, INT28).

Merleau-Ponty's claim that 'it is the body which "catches" (*kapiert*) and "comprehends" movement' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 165) suggests that part of what is revealed in exploring women's bodily practices in public spaces is an embodied knowledge of men's intrusion. Using this notion, it is possible to explore in detail how women described the impact of men's intrusive practices as resulting in particular embodiments in public space. As seen in the accounts of Theodora and Cathy, early experiences of men's intrusion inform an adaptation of the ways women are embodied in public space. No longer is the body lived through as an authentic expression of the self (our living body), nor is the world an open field for our intentions (our being-in-the-world); rather an embodiment is enacted where both body and world are held at a distance – habitually acted on, restricted and adjusted in order to keep the embodied self safe.

HABITUALISED EMBODIMENTS

Many of the conscious strategies employed by participants to avoid or prevent men's intrusion spoken about during the initial research conversations were similar to those previously noted in the literature (see Gardner, 1995; Madriz, 1997). The methodological framework of this project, however, gave insight into not only the conscious bodily strategies women developed to regulate, police or avoid men's intrusion, but also an understanding – through the notebooks – of their hidden habitual bodily responses, conceptualised in this thesis through Merleau-Ponty's (2002) 'habit body' (see Chapter Four). For Merleau-Ponty, drawing on his conceptualisation of the bodily-self: '(c)onsciousness is in the first place not a matter of "I think" but of "I can"' (2002: 159). For Merleau-Ponty, this 'I can' is grounded in a bodily knowledge not always accessible to conscious awareness and yet one revealed through an exploration of our habits. Holding that our living body is: 'not an object for an "I think", it is a grouping of lived-through meanings which moves towards its equilibrium' (2002: 177), exploring the habit bodies of women in public space helps reveal some of the pre-reflective ways they experienced their being-in-the-world. The notebooks asked participants to not only be aware of the times and spaces where men did intrude but also to record their experiences of anticipation – moments where intrusion was expected even when it was not borne out. Over half (58%) of participants completed and returned a notebook and over two thirds (64%) participated in a follow up conversation, with the majority of these based on exploring the contents of the notebook. The notebooks revealed two important points of disjuncture with what participants had claimed in the initial conversations: disparity in projected impact and,

most surprisingly, disparity in projected frequency, with most initially believing intrusion happened more often but with more limited impacts than emerged.

‘It’s never really made me augment the way I live:’⁶⁴ Projected impact

For some participants, the very act of reflecting on the way men respond to them in public in the initial conversations raised awareness of how many of the embodied practices they employed in public space operated pre-reflectively. Hannah reflected on the ways in which her experience of being propositioned from the car at 16 was absorbed into the ways she lived her embodiment in public space. In describing the impacts of the experience, Hannah suggested that it was difficult to directly connect impacts to episodes: ‘(I)t’s like you’ve tried to rationalise it in your head, you’ve gone through the process and then it’s just filed away in your brain somewhere. Only for you to discover years later that it happened’ (Hannah, INT26). The ways in which the incorporation of men’s intrusion into women’s embodiment operated both on a conscious and unconscious level was described by Viola.

I guess the difficult bit about it is that it’s so ingrained in everything you do that a lot of the time you aren’t really aware that you’re doing it. So there might be times when you’re very aware because you have to go somewhere that’s a bit unsafe or do something that you’re a bit uncomfortable with in public space but then on a day to day basis you do it as well without even thinking (Viola, INT43).

Both Hannah and Viola are articulating here how many participants incorporated bodily strategies to resist, avoid or manage men’s intrusion into their very being-in-the-world with the result that the work they were doing became hidden, embodied to the point of naturalisation. This becomes particularly evident in an account given by Claire where,

⁶⁴ Alice, INT14

within the space of the initial conversation, she realised how an episode of a men's stranger intrusion had worked to alter her behaviour in such a way that the episode itself had been buried and the change in her behaviour was subsequently framed in terms of her spontaneous choice. After talking about how she used to walk through a London park at three in the morning after a night out, something she would no longer do, Claire claimed nothing had happened to make her change her behaviour.

I really don't know what it was that changed, there was no incident or anything like that. I think it was just slowly thinking I need to change my behaviours, I don't remember a determining factor where it was like "right that's it now" or anything that happened to a friend or anything like that. I think it's just, I don't know (Claire, INT35).

Later in the conversation however, Claire remembered that in fact there was a particular incident that altered her behaviour, that her embodied agency was situated within a context of men's intrusion.

Actually thinking about it after saying nothing happened actually something did happen where I was walking through the [London park] at about 10.30 and it was dark and I was aware that someone was walking kind of at the same pace but slightly behind me. And there was a road crossing so I stopped and he stopped and he asked me what time it was and I said "I don't know, I haven't got the time" because I was aware that if I looked down he could have done something, so I just said "no, no I don't have the time sorry". And then just as I was about to set off again and the road was clear he kept asking, "excuse me, excuse me, excuse me" and I thought, "no I'm not having this, because he's already asked me the one question, there can't be anything more pressing than this" and I just kept going. And I think just as he started to follow me a car came and it meant that he couldn't follow me so I went even quicker down the road. And there was something in that that made me think this is really silly, there's no one around and it's pitch black and it's so badly lit that I can't keep walking through here. So I'd stick to the main road (Claire, INT35).

Merleau-Ponty's (2002) conceptualisation of the habit body, combined with the findings presented already about early encounters with men's intrusion, helps to explicate this mechanism of forgetting as a form of self-defence. For Merleau-Ponty, habitual practices are greater than the sum of their parts. An analogy of his framework is suggested by Nick Crossley (2001): when we learn as a child to withdraw our hands from a hot object we do not thereby learn to retract our hands from hot objects; we learn not to touch hot objects in the first place. What is acquired through habituation is not solely a direct mechanical response to a particular practical situation, as seen in Merleau-Ponty's example of a typist who 'incorporates the key-board space into his bodily space' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 167), but also an embodied principle of responding to similar situations. For Merleau-Ponty: 'the subject does not weld together individual movements and individual stimuli but acquires the power to respond with a certain type of solution to situations of a certain general form' (2002: 165). This is the meaning behind Gail Weiss' (2010) claim that habit enables us to inhabit our world: enabling the unfamiliar to be transformed into the familiar so that we can orientate ourselves quickly within experientially similar contexts. Habit is thus not simply about the fact that we employ routine behaviours in our daily lives; it represents how the bodily-self takes up and takes on meanings – how we make 'the' world, 'our' world. Exploring habit in this way helps to understand the processes behind how episodes of men's intrusion become embodied: the general principle of 'walking through a park at night is unsafe' is taken in as a form of bodily knowledge, a way of living female embodiment. The ways in which, in this sense, habit operated as a form of self-protection was identified by Cathrin, who raised a concern that participating in the notebook process may undo the ways in which forgetting operates as a form of coping.

(M)y worry about partaking in the study was that I would become more conscious of [*men's stranger intrusion*] and it would affect me. Because these coping mechanisms, conscious or unconscious, they're working so I don't get angry anymore or, not much. I don't want to say not at all but I don't get as angry as I used to, where it would just stick with me and really hurt and I just don't want to feel like that now (Cathrin, INT46).

There is a tension here, however, in that there are both benefits (identified by Cathrin) and limitations (identified by Claire) in the burying of particular episodes that forms a key part of the process of habituation. The benefits are that through habituating a particular mode of embodiment in response to the possibility of men's intrusion, experiences of intrusion no longer have the impact they did during adolescence. By including the possibility of men's intrusion into a projected intentional arc, we thus include it into our being-in-the-world. The disorientation and confusion seen in women's early encounters, resulting from our *geworfenheit* or 'thrownness' (Heidegger, 1996), is mostly evaded. It is only different or unexpected forms of intrusion (or of intrusive men) that are experienced as having an impact, with the rest lived as ordinary and expected. The limitations of embodying intrusion, conversely, are seen in how it can construct women's 'safety work' as an act of choice, minimising or hiding the impact of men's practices. Reviewing Claire's account, it is evident how the ways in which the embodied principle acquired through habituation (a principle that restricts her freedom of movement), is reconfigured as being in fact an expression *of* her freedom – in this case Claire's freely made decision, developed over time, to slowly change her behaviours. This reframing is most acutely seen in an account given by Jacqueline in her notebook. Two men who work in Jacqueline's building repeatedly stared at and commented on her when she used the downstairs café. Jacqueline was married to an abusive man who had

strangled her to the point where she was hospitalised for several months. It is in relation to her ex-husband's violence that Jacqueline experiences the intrusion from the two unknown men, claiming '(i)t would take more than this to take away my hard won freedom – so now I choose to eat in my office' (Jacqueline, INT25). Jacqueline's freedom here, as Claire's agency above, is situated by the continuum of men's intrusive practices. Jacqueline is not free to eat in her work café without being observed, but as this is less constraining than living with a dangerous man – limiting her 'space for action' (Jeffner, 2000) but not her entire 'life space' (Lundgren, 1998) – this limitation is experienced as an expression of freedom in that it is self-imposed. That the continuum of men's intrusion is a context situating freedom and agency, however, is hidden through the process of habituation.

'The other forty-nine':⁶⁵ Projected frequency

Another key finding in terms of habituation was the disparity in projected frequency noted earlier. For almost 90 per cent (n=26) of the woman participating in the notebook process, the experience of men's intrusion during the period of recording was significantly less than anticipated. In her follow up, Charlie (INT38) spoke about how she found the notebook process 'initially difficult as oddly it seemed the incidences of street harassment seemed much fewer than usual'. This was also reported by Lisa (INT48): '(i)n typical fashion, nothing happened to me after I was given the book'. Experiencing a similar disjuncture between projected and experienced instances of intrusion during the notebook process, Sophia linked the disparity to the impact of her earlier encounters with men's intrusion.

⁶⁵ Gail, INT31

(A)ctually, when I focus on it, unpleasant and unwanted attention came a lot less often than I first made it out to be. I'm not really sure exactly why either, but I think what might have had an impact is that I started getting uninvited attention when I was so young that it has had a lasting impression and instilled a 'weariness' in me. I dwell on any experience I have had, making it feel like it happens all the time when in actual fact it was a handful of specific moments which led to this discomfort. When I think about it, this experience has made me more aware that actually, overall, I don't get half as much unwanted attention as I thought (Sophia, INT30, FU).

Alice spoke in the initial conversation about how she 'can't leave the house without feeling constantly like I'm being bombarded by all these men'. Revisiting this sentiment after completing her notebook, Alice also noted a distinct change.

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, the threat is always there (Alice, INT14, FU).

Gail (INT31) reported after participating in the notebook stage: 'that the frequency may not be once a week, it's nearer one in every fifty journeys for me. But that's enough to change my attitude, perception and behaviour on the other forty-nine'. This illustrates the power of the embodied principle, demonstrating that what is learnt through habituation is not simply a mechanical response to stimulus. Claire, who had mentioned in her initial conversation that her experience of being in public space was weighed down by 'something about always knowing who's around you and how you're behaving and being alert and a constant feeling of being observed', had a similar revelation after participating in the notebook process.

I thought in a way this is just going to make me really aware of everything and I'm going to end up filling a notebook with stuff and then I carried on with my business and didn't really pick up on

much stuff... I think it's the feeling. I don't think you're constantly observed but I think it's the feeling that you are. There's that awareness in how you position yourself. There's definitely a feeling there that someone could be watching me (Claire, INT35, FU).

Abbey, after stating in our initial conversation that she would 'notice at least one or two people staring everyday', also found this was not something borne out when she had her research notebook to record intrusions.

I think it was interesting that I don't get as many comments or as much staring as I thought I was getting because 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 everyday because I'm always preparing myself for it to happen (Abbey, INT7, FU).

Alice, Gail, Claire and Abbey link the disparity they experienced in projected frequency with the continuum of men's intrusive practices as a context situating their freedom and action. What is evident is the anticipation; that the possibility of men's intrusion is itself a living reality, even in the physical absence of an intrusive man. Where Merleau-Ponty's (2002) 'habit body' enables us to project into an anticipated world, a fissure was found here between anticipation of men's intrusion and its actualisation. As in the earlier discussion of the impact of the gaze (see Chapter Five) Sartre's ontology of the body can also be useful here, particularly in how, as outlined by Dermot Moran, for Sartre: 'I experience how the other sees me, even in the physical absence of the other' (2011: 14). Sartre's insights can be developed further for this project through using Merleau-Ponty's notion of the process of habituation based on acquiring a general principle. It may be, returning to Claire's account given earlier, that the principle she embodied was not (or was not only) that 'walking through a park at night is unsafe' or that 'unknown men will

intrude'. These learnings combine with what was taken in as part of growing up, namely that; such intrusion is ordinary, her body is the source, and the ways she enacts her embodiment can be used as a barrier. This takes a particular toll on the experience of being *in* the bodily-self as the continual work of anticipating the responses of an unknown other results in a perpetually disrupted interior world, similar to that seen in the discussion of calls to 'cheer up' in Chapter Five. In addition to this, participants described two ways in which externality in public space was privileged, firstly in holding an external awareness (of environment and others) and secondly in maintaining an external perspective (on the bodily-self).

'You have to do just the right amount of panicking':⁶⁶ External awareness

During the initial conversations, the conscious level of 'safety work' women conducted in public spaces was immediately apparent, with many participants easily able to give lists of strategies adopted in public space in response to the possibility and actuality of men's intrusive practices. One of the most commonly repeated strategies was focused on scanning public space and identifying points of safety, as seen in the accounts of Lucy and Ginger.

I usually try to sit next to women, at least nearby women unless it's the middle of the day and I feel confident to not but say late at night and the carriage is empty and there's somebody sitting on one end of it, I'll make sure I'll sit at the other end, otherwise they might think there's any reason to talk to me. A lot of times it's unnecessary because they're probably just as tired as I am. But just to be on the safe side, I'll make sure that I'm not on the same one. Other times I've actually waited for the person to get on the train. And then at the last minute I actually haven't gotten on the train myself, because I thought that they were paying too much attention to me and it's safer if I just skip this train. I have actually changed trains in the middle, when I'm on the train and I know

⁶⁶ KatieLou, INT3

somebody's there who I would rather not be in the same carriage with, I get off in the station and I change for the next one that's coming. Even if it makes me late for something (Ginger, INT9).

I try not to look at people, like I look at them to see where they are and who they are but not look at them in the eye. I look straight ahead I think. And a lot of the time if I'm walking late at night I carry my keys between my hand so I can stab... 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 either, 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'll pretend to talk on the phone, if no one's awake or it's really late... I would prefer to sit next to a woman than sit next to a man. And I'll stand up if there's no where to sit on my own a lot of the time. I don't really go on the top deck of the bus at night if I'm on my own, I stay downstairs. 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 and can't follow me (Lucy, INT40).

What emerged here was the ways in which both women's strategies of resistance and strategies of coping called on them to maintain an external awareness in public spaces. This awareness was not only of unknown men, but also of points of safety such as other women, or points of unsafety such as particular contexts on public transport (on the top deck of a bus in the evening for example). These reference points are not set; they differ between women and can change for the same woman at different points, based on experiential histories. Clare spoke about the change she experienced after she was almost mugged by a girl gang.

(F)or a while after that when I walked down the road I'd be running away from women and I'd be looking for the men. And that was the bizarrest sensation ever. I'd be walking back from my flat and it'd be at night and I'd see some women and I'd see a man and I'd think oh the man's just over there. So the point of safety had changed which was the bizarrest thing ever (Clare, INT21).

While what represented safety for Ginger, Lucy and Clare differed, yet all were scanning their external environment to find these points. Evident across these accounts is the way in which when avoiding or minimising the possibility of men's stranger intrusion conflicted with women's freedom, priority is given to the former. For Ginger, she would prefer to be late than be in the same carriage as a man she has identified as possibly intrusive. For Lucy, she would hang back after disembarking from a bus rather than begin immediately to head to her destination. This constant scanning and adapting own movements in response to anticipated and experienced intrusion is seen in the account of Jane, a committed runner, who constructed a map of anticipated intrusion.

I figured it out, my route around London I planned through experience very carefully, like from coming back to going out I'd change it, there was this one road that coming back was always busy with deliveries because it was about 7.30, always go through the square because that's full of bankers and they're not going to say something. I used to go past [a nightclub] but then I learnt don't do that, that's bad, but if you go past Barbican and the NHS building it's ok. But then I had to change that because construction got up that street so that got bad. I had every street on my run planned out to avoid it as much as possible. I knew which roads. Now I just get on a treadmill and watch television. No more following. No more grabbing (Jane, INT32).

For Jane, paying to run indoors became preferable to the imminent potentiality of men's intrusion in public spaces. The context of such a decision is characterised by Schepple and Bart (1983) as a geography of fear and limitation, where in order to lessen the former, we may need to raise the latter. Again, as seen in the earlier accounts of Claire and Jacqueline, men's intrusion is seen as a key context situating women's freedom and agency.

Measuring the ways in which (or indeed if) a habituated external awareness in public spaces works to decrease the amount of intrusion women experience is difficult. Such

embodiment will rarely be experienced as ‘capable’ in terms of acting as a barrier to men’s intrusion as the vast majority of ‘safety work’ is pre-emptive. Sue Wise and Liz Stanley (1987) highlight this, claiming that: ‘the amount that sexual harassment is thwarted is a social invisibility – we can’t see that women have skilfully and successfully assessed and dealt with a complicated social situation because success here is an “absence” of a predicted outcome’ (Wise & Stanley, 1987: 171). This ‘absence’, however, may be made visible in studies that show men are more likely to be victims of crime in public space, the ‘crime paradox’ (see Chapter Two). The paradox can be explored through the issue of what is counted; suggesting that such studies count ‘crimes’ men are more likely to experience in public space (such as physical fights), but fail to tap into experiences such as those considered here. There may be, however, an additional reading that affirms the power of women’s modes of embodiment to act on (male) others. If participants such as Jane, Clare, Lucy and Ginger have their awareness focused externally, identifying (on what is sometimes a pre-reflective level) points of safety at the same time as limiting their movements in spaces they identify as unsafe, then it may not be that men are more targeted to be victims of crime in public space. It may be that women are skilfully navigating public spaces, disrupting opportunities for victimisation by assessing the environment and individual men whilst attempting to predict their intentions and practices. This process was conceptualised by Katielou as the impossible task of evaluating the ‘right amount of panic’.

I’m used to being, well, we’re used to being, I suppose it’s conflicting messages isn’t it, it’s take care of yourself and you’re being a silly woman... you have to do just the right amount of panicking don’t you (Katielou, INT3).

In attempting to gauge what ‘the right amount of panic’ was in a given situation, participants relied on the interplay between their awareness of the external environment and on their pre-constructed templates of risk to conduct an escalation calculation. The operations of this calculation were mostly hidden, conducted often without conscious awareness and grounded in the possibility of intrusion, with women trying to pre-empt and thus prevent unknown men’s behaviours. It was revealed, however, quite powerfully, when the projected escalation of a particular man (or group of men) was not borne out by their actions.

I left a club late at night and I was just going to go home and find a taxi and I was sitting down and this guy was like “are you alright?” And I said “yeah I’m fine.” But thinking “why are you asking me that? That’s a bit dodgy, I’ll carry on walking.” And then this other guy just came out of the shadows of a doorway and just grabbed me, was just holding onto me and I was like “what are you doing?” I just didn’t know what to do and was trying to be really indignant and going “let go of me now” because I really didn’t know how to react. But at that point I wasn’t on edge I don’t think so I feel like I should have been more ready, should have had my keys. And then I felt bad because he wouldn’t let go of me, this really tall guy and the other guy who’d asked me if I was alright came running down the road and yelled “let go of her now”, so he let go of me and I ran away. But then I felt really bad because initially I’d thought the first guy was evil but he was actually just checking if I was ok (Lucy, INT40).

I was much younger, maybe 17, 18 and living back home in Germany I was again just walking home, I wasn’t far from where I lived, and this was in the evening, maybe 10 or 11 o’clock at night and this car slowed down behind me and followed me for a little bit and then overtook me and stopped, and this guy got out so again I started shouting at him, “what do you want? Get back in your car!” And he just looked at me, really taken aback, and just pointed at the cigarette machine next to where I was standing, like I’m just trying to get some fags. Which is obviously super embarrassing (Viola, INT42).

The accounts of both Lucy and Viola show the impossibility of ‘the right amount of panic’; a Catch-22 where ‘(y)ou don’t really know till something happens and then if

nothing happens then it's automatically too much panic' (Katielou, INT3). This combines with what was seen earlier in this chapter where, during the process of growing up, participants had learnt to doubt their own sense making of men's intrusion. The result is that the times where participants did successfully manage intrusive situations are discounted. This was evident in how, contrary to suggestions in the literature, many participants in this study mentioned feeling relatively safe most of the time in public spaces, such as Theodora.

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. I mean I tend to, yeah, as a general rule I feel quite safe... I've never felt like I couldn't walk home alone if I've needed to or wanted to (Theodora, INT50).

Such descriptions appear as the unproblematic reflections of an embodied agent, however, Theodora then goes on to describe the range of restrictions she has taken into her habit body to create and maintain this feeling of safety.

(S)top, 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 can, 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 (Theodora, INT50).

It is here that the limits of the dominant narratives available to speak of men's intrusion in public spaces, being a binary of either pleasurable compliment (sexual) or frightening threat (harassment) hide the impacts on women's freedom. The most common outcome, as seen in Theodora's account above, was to habituate a limited freedom but reconfigure

this as an expression of agency through forgetting its founding situation; the continuum of men's intrusive practices.

'Don't be in your body, watch your body':⁶⁷ External perspective

Throughout the research process, participants spoke about not only being aware of who is looking, but of how you look to them; an external perspective on the bodily-self and the adoption of specific bodily traits to limit or prevent intrusion. Beauvoir outlined a similar process during women's adolescence, which she termed 'erotic transcendence'.

She becomes an object; and she grasps herself as object; she is surprised to discover this new aspect of her being: it seems to her that she has been doubled; instead of coinciding exactly with her self, here she is existing *outside* of her self (Beauvoir, 2011: 360. Emphasis in original).

Key here is this notion of being doubled, representing an ambiguous embodiment. The awareness of our bodily-self is not located internally, in an experience of the body as capacity and expression, but externally in the body image. The body is not lived *as* the self, instead the self is experienced as distinct from and yet tied to the body; a body that both is and is not herself. Here female embodiment is experienced as split and contradictory. The body is our living body still 'ours' in terms of being singled out, but it is not lived as the original locus of our intentionality – it is not lived as 'us'. In addition, given what has been seen previously in this chapter, this ambiguity itself is doubled in that, through men's intrusion, women learn their female embodiment is not only the source of their freedom, but also the source of its constraint.

⁶⁷ Bea, INT49

The impacts of this awareness of the body from outside, a bodily-self consciousness, was already seen in the discussion of the gaze in Chapter Five. Exploring the role of the external perspective in the habitualised embodiments of participants expands the finding that public space represented for many women an experiential, though not always external, feeling of the gaze, in that women anticipated more intrusion than men actualised. It is not only the potentiality (and actuality) of the male gaze, but also the enactment of a modality of embodiment holding an external perspective towards the body that created Claire's initial feeling of constant observation.

The most common way that an external perspective was revealed in women's accounts was through identifying a division between safe and unsafe clothing. Sophie, Bea and Delilah described in detail the ways in which for them, appearance could be strategic.

I used to wear, when I was about 17, 18, I used to go to clubs and wear short skirts and high heels and loads of make-up and all that stuff. And then I came to university in London when I was 18 and without being conscious I think over that year my dress sense really changed, and I started like going out with all the freshers and that in my normal short skirts or whatever but I used to really hate the feeling of getting on the tube in a short skirt and the attention I would get whilst in those sort of clothes. And slowly and slowly, and I'm talking about 7 years ago now? I just stopped dressing like that, but instead of finding an alternative way of dressing that I was kind of comfortable with, I basically have been hiding myself for the last 6, 7 years, basically ever since I came to London. And I'm not, having come to that realisation, I'm not very happy about it (Sophie, INT22).

(I)t's mainly for me just that having to think about what you wear when you go out, that definitely, definitely changes. Like leopard print, definitely. Every time I wear it. It's weird. It definitely makes a big impact. I think maybe some people aren't aware of the impact it has on the choices they make every day but I think I am aware of it. Like if I'm going to get the night bus, it sounds so extreme, but I won't go out wearing a dress, I'll wear jeans just because it's safer and in the back of your mind you're probably thinking at least I can run away if I don't wear a skirt and high heels. It's ridiculous. But even, I walk to school at about 1 o'clock every day and there's

usually a few stragglers on the streets, people who aren't in work, and even at midday when it's not a particularly dangerous environment, I'm thinking, don't wear a low cut top, wear a scarf just in case you need to wrap it around,. And it sounds so extreme but it's not something that's at the forefront of your mind, but it's always there (Bea, INT49).

I dress with scarves and things to just cover, take the focus away from (my breasts)... also I now stay away from the colour red ever since I wore red one day and everyone just kept commenting, oh you with the tight red dress. And I just thought it's not necessarily tight, it's knee length, it's got shoulders, it's not a provocative dress, but because it was *red* red and you should be a wallflower basically. So I steer clear of red which is such a shame because I love it, so I wear hot pink or burgundy, things that are similar to red but I always think a bit, ooo, think twice about wearing red. Yeah. I never really think that much about it but it does affect the way you carry yourself (Delilah, INT55).

For each woman here, a safety discourse combined with how the body was lived. An experiential template of risk thus moved from being a mapping of the external environment to a mapping of the body as seen from outside. This reveals how part of the general principle learnt through habituation is that women's body is itself a 'risk', what for Susie Orbach is 'the kind of foreboding women have always carried in relation to their bodies' (Orbach, 1978: 12). The ways in which participants framed the process of identifying, through early encounters, men's intrusion as grounded in their 'femaleness', is evident in the ways in which this external perspective often saw markers of femininity as unsafe. For Sophie, Bea and Delilah above, this meant adjusting their clothing to ensure nothing would reveal too much of their breasts or their legs. For Louise and Gail, this resulted in an embodied practice of safety based on hiding the 'woman' signifier of their long hair.

I have a hat for when I get cold but I'll tuck my hair into my hat because I know long blonde hair tends to attract attention. If it's raining I'll get my umbrella and have it as a stick just in case I get

threatened. Sometimes I take a key and I have the sharp part in between my fingers just in case someone attacks me (Louise, INT41).

I'd tie my hair up for some reason, I'd think if I tied my hair up and scowled I just wouldn't look like anyone someone would want to talk to... I'd just try to look like I didn't want anyone to talk to me. I think it's quite easy to disappear (Gail, INT31).

Gail's additional strategy of what Goffman (1990) describes as 'impression management' or what Esther Madriz (1997) termed 'hardening the target', conceptualised by many participants employing this strategy as 'bitch face, where I look unapproachable' (Luella, INT17), reveals the contradictory modalities discussed by Young (2005) in terms of women's' embodiments. For Young (2005) this is based in how women are frequently put in the position of experiencing their bodily-self as both object and subject, with the mechanisms of objectification recognising our subjectivity at the same time as diminishing it. There are more contradictions revealed here, however, in that – similar to the impossible task of deciphering 'the right amount of panic' – women spoke of the difficulty in adjusting their embodiment in such a way as to meet often opposing means for the same end; to deflect men's intrusion. Participants thus attempted to balance: the need to look tough or unapproachable with the desire to not be told to cheer up; the necessity to be polite enough to not escalate an encounter but not so friendly as to be seen as encouraging the interaction; wanting to be evaluated as attractive enough to avoid insults on their appearance by men in public but not so attractive as to become a target; and wanting to disappear or be invisible at the same time as wanting to be seen and experiencing discomfort in wanting this. These strategies were encapsulated by Claire (INT35) as 'don't get an A star get a B'. Recalling Beauvoir's ambiguity, the positions of subject and object are experienced by women as parallel and simultaneous,

leading to an embodiment marked by contradiction, tension and unease. The contradictions of femininity become apparent, a balancing act lived through our embodiment.

(Y)ou're being attractive but not too attractive. Risqué but not too risqué. Wear a skirt but preferably one you can run in. Don't go down that alleyway, don't put your headphones in. I wouldn't dare walk down the street with headphones on. So yeah I think you're constantly being vigilant. And I also think you're kind of looking to see who's looking at you. Without necessarily, intellectually wanting to do that. And there really is a tension between the two (Clare, INT21).

The external perspective is thus a modality of embodiment where the body is lived as both self and not self (Young, 2005). Maintaining an external perspective on the bodily-self in public space leads to an increased awareness of the body image and an experience of discomfort and unsafety in the materiality of the body.

I become really aware of my body I think, and I feel like, I feel bigger and more conspicuous... it's vulnerability in feeling consciousness and conspicuousness about my body, that's what I feel like. And that's what I mean about feeling like big... I feel like legs and hips, I feel like that part of me I feel much more conspicuous about (Rosalyn, INT5).

It is, it's that feeling of self-consciousness. You should be allowed to sit on a train at half seven in the morning and just be like, "ahhhhhh", and not have to be thinking about anything that you don't want to. The problem is that the gaze can disturb your, it can penetrate you. As can a comment, all of this stuff can, but the gaze penetrates in a way that, it's really hard to express (Sophie, INT22).

You're being judged. You're an object. You just become massively aware of yourself and think oh God this is so uncomfortable. And it's just relief if you get past them and they don't say anything (Shelley, INT29).

This bodily-self consciousness, Rosalyn's feeling of being 'hips and legs', Sophie's feeling of being penetrated, encourages a fleeing from the bodily-self. As seen in the earlier discussion of the gaze, and explicitly understood by Rosalyn above, there is a particular vulnerability that comes with the acknowledgement of ourselves as a body that can be seen, and that can be hurt. In gendering this vulnerability, Beauvoir suggests that 'her whole body is experienced as embarrassment' (Beauvoir, 2011: 356). Given that men's intrusion has encouraged a relationship to the body marked by tension and discomfort: 'her body is suspect to her, she scrutinises it with anxiety' (*ibid*). There is thus an undercurrent of shame in the ways in which women spoke about the experience of living the materiality of their body, particularly in relation to its 'femaleness'. In order to manage vulnerability, anxiety and suspicion, many women adopted a mode of bodily alienation as strategy, holding their body at a distance and enabling a form of embodiment that kept their self safe.

'I'd never really thought of my body as me':⁶⁸ Bodily alienation

Using Beauvoir to conceptualise this mode of bodily alienation facilitates a framing to explore the role of ambiguity in both women's embodiments and situated agency. The modalities of embodiment women enact are situated in, and through, men's intrusion. Men's intrusion stimulates bodily alienation: necessitating an external perspective on the embodied self, alongside maintaining an external awareness of others and the environment, at the same time as experiencing the uncertainty of one's ability to make sense of one's own experience. Here, however, women may actively choose to take up an alienated mode to their bodies, a mode of embodiment that over time becomes habituated, in order to maintain a sense of self as solid and safe. The strategy of bodily

⁶⁸ Sophie, INT22

alienation *is* an active coping mechanism, however it arises out of the particularities of a situation in which the routineness of men's intrusion has encouraged an ambiguous embodiment.

In this conceptualisation of bodily alienation as a form of coping borne out of women's situation, the differences between Beauvoir and Sartre are evident – highlighting again how Beauvoir's conceptualisation of the situated body-subject offers unique, and often untapped, insight for modern feminist questions. Mobilising Beauvoirian theory in this way in fact enables a critique of how Sartre posited women's bodily alienation as a conduct of bad faith. In *Being and Nothingness* (2007) Sartre gives two famous examples of bad faith: an example for men's bad faith using a young man 'playing at' being a waiter and, interestingly, an example for women given in relation to the practices of men. Sartre watches a young woman on a first date attempting to avoid a man's advances: he holds her hands in his and the woman leaves her hand there, 'neither consenting nor resisting' (Sartre, 2007: 79), without noticing. Sartre views this as the woman's attempt to flee from her freedom, alienating her body and through this delaying the moment when she must choose either to acknowledge and reject his advances, or accept them. Using the theoretical framework of this thesis as the point of departure, what in Sartre is an act of bad faith is reconceptualised as an expression of her situated freedom. Sartre may be describing a moment experienced by the young woman as intrusive. Caught by the need to not escalate the man's behaviour by either encouraging or challenging his behaviour (what is seen by Sartre as consenting or resisting), and unable to physically remove the bodily-self, the young woman protects herself by enacting a mode of embodiment whereby she lives 'herself as *not being* her own body' (ibid). This act of 'bad faith'

becomes a type of resistance, seen in Beauvoir's claim that under patriarchy the woman 'is too divided internally to enter into combat with the world; she confines herself to escaping reality or to contesting it symbolically' (Beauvoir, 2011: 376). The poetic transcript (see Appendix One) demonstrates the frequency with which participants' strategic response to men's intrusion was to distance the self from the body and the world. The extract below demonstrates how this type of response fell mainly into three interlinked categories: you're not here; I'm not here; and/or this is not happening – a process Viola (INT49) termed creating 'the world you want to be in'.

This guy had stuck his penis through the bottom of the cubicle and was wanking.
I try not to look at people.
He took a photo of my cleavage.
I pretend to phone someone, or I look in my bag.
Just a guy standing in the bushes exposing himself and wanking.
I'll always look to see when the last bus is.
One of them past me by the door and said ooo lovely.
I avoid eye contact.
I block it out.

This guy came up behind me and grabbed me between my legs,
like properly grabbed me.
He was trying to rape me.
And this guy just took his pants off.
I tend not to respond.

The ways participants spoke about resolving the paradox of living the bodily-self as subject and object then, in a context of men's intrusion, was through habitualising a particular relationship to their body, where the body is held at a distance. There is a subtle difference here from notions of dissociation and disembodiment. Dissociation, linked to a psychological framework, suggests a detachment from the body and/or the

self and/or the environment. The accounts of participants here, however, show connection to all three – women are aware of the environment (including the intrusive man), aware of their embodied self in that environment, and making particular decisions situated by this awareness. Disembodiment is a closer, though slightly different concept, whereby the self is not experienced as embodied – this again has ties to a psychological framework where the neural and sensory mechanisms underlying the internal representations of the body, termed by Merleau-Ponty (2002) as the ‘body schema’, can be disrupted, leading to an experience of the self as outside of the body. Such a response to sexual violence is seen in Jan Jordan’s (2008) account of the resistance strategies of the women raped in Auckland by Malcolm Rewa. The mental processes described by some of the women surviving Rewa’s attacks provided a means of withholding something of themselves where ‘(h)e may have control of their bodies, however, he could not control their mind, their spirit’ (Jordan, 2008: 549). Jordan links this to some of the process found with women in prostitution (Jordan, 1991, McLeod, 1982), connecting to Maddy Coy’s (2009) work with young women in prostitution. Using Merleau-Ponty’s (2002) ‘habit body’ alongside Bourdieu’s (1998) concept of habitus, Coy (2009) reports a consequence of (dis)embodiment in women’s narratives of living in local authority care as well as in selling sex.

Developing Coy’s (2009) findings in contexts of ordinary intrusions, the accounts of participants suggest a departure from the concept of disembodiment, where the self is experienced as outside of the body, towards the concept of bodily alienation; the experience of the body as not the self, it is a thing, an object. Beauvoir’s account of bodily alienation holds the ambiguity of our living body: experienced as an obscure alien

thing, separate to the self in some way (Arp, 1995), at the same time as experienced *as* the self. The experience of men's intrusion is both the recognition of our subjectivity (there is, after all, no point 'objectifying' a box or a suitcase: an object can not be made aware of its 'thingness') at the same time as a depletion of it – Tuerkheimer's 'curious paradox of being both object and subject' (1997: 186). Applying a Beauvoirian framework to the operations of alienation allows for the ambiguity and contradictions of women's living experience under unequal gender orders (Connell, 2002): the experience of the body as both the self and not the self. As a concept, it can also extend to women's relationship with their environment in a way disembodiment and dissociation cannot. As seen in Viola's (INT49) claim that: 'you need to find a version of the world you can be in'; alienation as strategy can extend to the environment, with women blocking out intrusion or pretending it isn't happening: rupturing the bodily-self's entanglement in the world and returning to that feeling of being water in a glass. Habitually enacting a mode of embodiment whereby the body and world is alienated has a self-protective element in that individual experiences no longer have the force they did in girlhood. As seen earlier in this chapter, girlhood was when women first experienced the transition from the body as the self to experiencing it as a separate, and vulnerable, object, or the world as uncertain and out of one's control. The findings of this study suggest that such processes are evoked by women everyday and everynight (Smith, 1987), developing out of experiences with ordinary, routine intrusion as part of growing up, and habituated into a mode of embodiment marked by alienation. Here, however, this transition is claimed for ourselves, alienating the body and the environment through an act of will, and through this helping to reassert the sense of embodied selfhood diminished through men's intrusion. This is where the ways in which Beauvoir conceptualises sex and gender

as together, rather than the idea of a biological body existing outside of its social meaning. The understanding of our embodied self as always in the mode of ‘becoming’ (as seen in Chapter Four) opens up the possibilities for bringing the body back, restoring an embodiment lived as the bodily-self.

‘I feel a bit more at peace with it all’:⁶⁹ Possibilities for restoration

Exploring women’s habit body demonstrates how the distinction of sexual difference into gender, being the mind, and sex, as purely the body, is founded on a misstep. The living experience of embodied selfhood is both corporeal and epistemological, both in our bodies and in our way of knowing the world. This experience of our living body, like that of our dying body, represents a process, not an event, and crucially a process can be disrupted. Here we find the possibilities for transforming the bodily consequences for women of men’s intrusion through first the conscious awareness of habituated modes of living the body, and then the understanding that, if desired, such modes can be changed through the conscious adoption of different habits. Merleau-Ponty maintains the temporality of the embodied self and thus of our habits. As a grouping of lived-through meanings, the bodily-self as an ‘I can’ has the power of continuously modifying and renewing itself. The acquisition of habit demonstrates our power of absorbing new meanings, showing we have ‘assimilated a fresh core of significance’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 169) and that we are exercising our body’s abilities to continually discover more possibilities for meaning, expression, and exploration of our world. In adapting the concept of a gendered habitus to women’s embodiment, Ruyters (2012) too argues that women can practice a new script for bodily comportment through conscious intervention on our bodily habits. Such possibilities were only begun for this project,

⁶⁹ Sophie, INT22.

focusing on the first stage of raising awareness, however this was carried through in the actions of both Cathy and Sophie. For Cathy, the process of identifying in conversation with another the embodied consequences for her of an early experience of men's intrusion led to an evaluation of her habitual mode of alienation in public spaces and the conscious decision to not only change this, but to make public the intrusion behind it.

A few weeks after we met and I was on the S-Bann and this guy got on and he was standing there, looking at me, looking around and this other woman got on and sat next to him and she was patient with him. And I just, I was not in a happy mood that day and I saw him looking at me so I just looked back, not like don't mess with me but very neutral and he went to the woman "you're nice, you're nice you are. But not her, look at her, she's not nice. She's not nice." And I just went, "you know what? I got molested at 9 years old, I got on a bus and everyone in this carriage they think it doesn't happen but it happens all the fucking time." I just went ballistic and he was like (draws in breath) "sorry I didn't know." And everyone was like, "oh!" And I was really shook up, I was really upset but I thought I'm not going to move, I'm going to hold my ground. I'd just basically said look at me, I was molested. I'm embarrassed now, I was so embarrassed but I just thought this has to be done. I've done something right. I've just made it public... it was an exorcism. But it wouldn't have happened if we hadn't of had our talk (Cathy, INT28, FU).

Sophie, who reported earlier in this chapter that she was unhappy with how she used her external appearance as a defence against men's intrusion, learned during the notebook process that how she was living her body was based on her habitual maintenance of external awareness, rather than solely on men's practices.

It's only happened one or two times the whole time and I've come to the realisation that actually people aren't looking at me I'm looking at them. And that's been a massive thing because I was convinced everyone was staring at me... and realising that has been really liberating it's like, right, I'm going to wear that top that I want to wear. And it's not like it's been a massive change, you can see I'm still in my black and baggy jeans combo, but at home in [city] I've definitely been rocking out some outfits that I've had and never worn. I bought this amazing dress when I was in Ghana. It's bright blue, tie-dyed, halterneck and it's just so cool and I would never wear it and now I wear

it and I feel great in it, and there's other outfits too. I just feel ownership of my body and I feel a bit more at peace with it all having done this... I feel excited (Sophie, INT22, FU).

It is here that this project marks an entry point for future work on recognising our habitual ways of being in the world and seeking to adopt different modes of embodiment and relationships to the bodily-self whereby we can *be* embodied. The possibilities of this, alongside recommendations for further work, will be further explored in the concluding chapter.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has detailed how men's intrusion impacted on women's experience of their embodied selfhood through examining participants first experiences of the continuum, framed as being 'just part of growing up', alongside exploring the habituated, often pre-reflective modes of embodiment women described as adopting in public spaces. Men's intrusive practices changed women's emerging sense of a bodily-self both before and during their adolescence. Examining these experiences, not as isolated episodes but rather in terms of the meanings participants placed on them in relation to other experiences of intrusion, revealed that experiential importance lay not solely in the content of these intrusions but in the ways in which women took them into and lived them through their embodiment. An ambiguous embodiment was revealed: with female embodiment experienced as both a source and constraint of woman's freedom. This modality of embodiment is reminiscent of Young's (2005) 'inhibited intentionality', where she found that girls experience a thrown ball as coming *at* them whereas boys will

reach out to *take* the ball. It also corresponds to Eva Lundgren's (1998) concept of 'life space', whereby the motivations of men who are violent towards their partners are theorised as based in part in the desire to set limits on aspects of women's life space. Here, however, the limits were found to not be set by particular men, but by women – most often in adolescence – in response to a situation where men's intrusion is understood as routine and compulsory. Following this, notions of *being* embodied for women became inextricably connected to tension and discomfort. In an attempt to resolve this conflict, participants spoke about adopting an early relationship to the body where a sense of subjectivity is experienced through alienating the body and taking it up as an object to be acted on: a modality of embodiment marked by *using* one's body instead of *being* one's body.

The second section explored in depth how the experience of men's intrusion came to be incorporated into a form of bodily knowledge. It suggested that the strategies of coping with, avoiding and resisting the continuum of men's practices in public space are lived as forms of 'bodily know-how' leading to habituated patterns of embodiment that, repeated over time, become normalised. Two core patterns were revealed here; a habitual mode of maintaining external awareness of the environment and others, and a habitual external perspective on the embodied self, viewing the body from outside. The level of hidden labour in the bodies of participants was revealed by those women participating in the notebook stage of the research process, where many discovered a disjuncture between projected and actualised experiences of men's intrusion. This finding suggested that the possibility of men's intrusion is lived as an embodied reality for women. The body lived in this way becomes a site of unsafety, with participants

enacting their ambiguous embodiment through distancing the body as a form of self-protection. As argued by Fiona Wilson: '(w)hile harassment is always about power it is also about defiance. Women have learned self-protective behaviour and this should be recognized as a positive expression of their strength and resistance' (2000: 1092). Self-protective in this context includes the measures taken to protect the concept of oneself as a free subject rather than solely the protection of the physical body often meant by the terms self-protection and self-defence. The habit body adopted in public space as a response to the continuum of men's intrusive practices then combines with the phenomenological impacts of those practices themselves (external awareness and external perspective), in a modality of embodiment for women marked by alienation.

This chapter has found that the possibilities for changing this relationship to one's bodily-self, for those who want to reclaim an experience of the body as the self and the world as our own, lie in the possibilities of developing habits of reclamation. Habituated practices have both positive and negative aspects, providing us with a sense of familiarity alongside reinforcing bodily practices that may no longer be useful or necessary (Weiss, 2010). Beauvoir's theory of the situated self in a constant mode of becoming, provides an opening for exploring how our relationship to our bodily-self can be consciously restored. The findings of this project have demonstrated that habitual modes of living the body generate particular practices, however it is also true that repeating practices over time, generates new habits and creates possibilities for restoring an embodiment where the body and world is acted *through*. It is here, in a review of the findings of this project together with its implications for future feminist research and activism, that this thesis will now conclude.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

I have made it my abode, that this past, though not a fate, has at least a specific weight and is not a set of events over there, at a distance from me, but the atmosphere of my present. The rationalist's dilemma: either the free act is possible, or it is not—either the event originates in me or is imposed on me from outside, does not apply to our relations with the world and with our past. Our freedom does not destroy our situation, but gears itself to it: as long as we are alive, our situation is open (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 514).

INTRODUCTION

This thesis has presented analysis of 50 women's accounts of men's stranger intrusions in public space. The research had four central aims: to develop a reciprocal practice of translating philosophy into the vernacular of women's experiences and interpreting women's experiences of VAWG back into and through a philosophical language; to

explore the importance for feminist research on VAWG of reconnecting to women's ordinary, living experience of men's intrusion; to understand more about the consequences of men's intrusion for how women live and experience their bodily-self; and finally to provide a new body of evidence regarding the practice and experience of men's intrusion in public spaces. In the pursuit of these four aims this thesis has introduced the concepts of a 'continuum of men's intrusive practices', 'our living body', 'situated agency', and 'ambiguous embodiment'. The findings of the study suggest that far from the trivialisation that experiences of what is commonly termed 'street harassment' often encounter in mainstream framings, the possibility and reality of men's intrusion forms a fundamental factor in how women understand and enact their embodied selfhood. This has implications for research on VAWG and theories of feminist phenomenology, as well as particular implications for theorising women's embodiment. The thesis has explored how the possibility of men's intrusion is a living reality for women, finding the experience of the continuum of men's intrusive practices a key element in women's experience of our embodiment. There are transformative possibilities here on two levels. Firstly, for the individual, in bringing to conscious awareness the ways in which modalities of embodiment respond to intrusion – experiences in our past, present and those we project forward – our habit body can be interrogated and, if found wanting, adjusted. Secondly, there are consequences from the findings of this study for how we understand embodied femininity and men's violence against women and girls: suggesting benefits in continuing to explore their relationship. This conclusion will review how the findings of the study connect to its four aims, and outline implications and recommendations for further research and/or feminist praxis.

A PHENOMENOLOGY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The conceptual framework of this thesis sits at the intersections of Simone de Beauvoir's gendered phenomenology of the situated self, Merleau-Ponty's insights on habituated embodiments and theoretical and empirical work of feminist sociologists on VAWG. In reviewing the literature, a gap was identified in examining men's stranger intrusions from a philosophical perspective. This gap exists within the VAWG literature more broadly where, despite its theoretical resonance, exploration of the insights of existential-phenomenology and other philosophical perspectives in relation to VAWG has only recently begun. As a transdisciplinary study, this thesis has demonstrated the compatibility between existential phenomenology's examination of lived/living experience and theory and research from a range of feminist perspectives, arguing that for both approaches embodied experience is the source of our knowledge and perception. It has shown how adopting a philosophical perspective has the potential to assist a feminist reframing of men's violence and intrusion, seeking to dissolve the hierarchical divisions used in policy/criminal framings and illuminate women's experiential realities. Key to this is how a phenomenology of VAWG can offer conceptual tools for speaking about connections and commonality, without collapsing the ways in which women experience men's violence differently based on embodiments and social and personal histories. Following this, it has also suggested that revisiting the work of Simone de Beauvoir today offers exciting possibilities for feminists looking to conceptualise the ambiguity of women's agency, particularly (though not solely) sexual agency, as it is lived in an unequal gender order. Beauvoir's concept of 'situation' helps to illuminate embodied and experiential differences between women, whilst connecting these differences together through their grounding in a context of men's structural power.

At both theoretical and empirical levels, the thesis has moved towards the beginnings of a phenomenology of VAWG and it is here that marks the first point for further research. Beauvoir's concept of the situated bodily-self is yet to be examined in relation to other forms across the continuum of men's violence and abuse. Feminist debates based on appeals to women's freedom of agency over their bodies, such as those of pornography and prostitution, could benefit from engagement with Beauvoir's theory. In particular, the benefits here could be seen in further developing the concept of 'situated agency' in relation to women's body forming a situation itself – one that both limits and expands our possibilities for action. In addition to this, an academic renaissance in Beauvoir's work could be translated through the academy and out into the fields of feminist practice. The work of translating philosophical concepts into accessible language without losing their revolutionary potential could be taken forward through exploring new forms of dissemination and representation. Here there are possibilities for building on the work of Beauvoir and her colleagues in using creative methods to facilitate movement beyond the traditional dogmatic abstraction of philosophy, for example developing the poetic transcript from this research into a radio play. The gap identified in the literature also suggests the importance of exploring philosophical theories outside of existential-phenomenology in direct relation to empirical work on VAWG. As a body of philosophical theory on VAWG grows, so too will the legitimacy of a philosophical framework for understanding the operations of men's intrusive practices, not solely in medical or legal terms but in the context of women's ontology.

THE GREAT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE STREETS

Existential phenomenology offers a route into legitimising investigation of ordinary, living experience. Women's mundane encounters with gendered power comprise an important part of women's living experience of unequal gender orders, with Kelly's (1998) continuum of sexual violence providing a conceptual framework through which to build connections from mundane encounters to recognised practices of men's dominance. The exploration of women's ordinary experiences of men's intrusion was at the core of much early feminist work on VAWG. The urgency, however, of developing frameworks for understanding men's violence that could be translated into the language of law and policy, has led to an increasing disconnection in much subsequent research. Where such experiences of intrusion in public space are acknowledged as important, it is still with a focus on criminal and criminalising behaviour, as seen in the campaign 'Project Guardian'⁷⁰ a joint initiative by the British Transport Police, Transport for London, Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police, launched during the course of this study.

For this thesis, one aim was to explore the importance of reconnecting feminist work on VAWG to women's ordinary experience of men's violence. The importance of reengaging with the mundanity of men's violence has been evidenced through the ways in which, for participants, men's intrusive practices were understood and experienced in relation to each other, as well as in relation to the living experience of the imminent

⁷⁰ Project Guardian is a long term campaign to reduce sexual offences and 'unwanted sexual behaviour' on London's public transport. See http://www.btp.police.uk/advice_and_information/how_we_tackle_crime/project_guardian.aspx#sthash.cg5OZeAz.dpuf, [accessed 20th March, 2014].

potentiality of men's intrusion. For women in this project the meanings of men's intrusion were understood as related not isolated. This thesis has shown how this is in tension with the dominant narratives available to understand men's stranger intrusion, being threatening (and thus criminal) or complimentary (and thus trivial), and how they work to shape the stories that can be told both to others and to ourselves. These binary framings do not capture the complexities of women's habituated embodiments in public space, modalities of living our body that develop in response to early experiences and soon become embedded and naturalised. This study proposes a third framework for discussing the particular harms of men's stranger intrusion: freedom. The findings of this study have shown that women's freedom in relation to men's intrusion both relies on and is informed by the other two frameworks (criminal/trivial), as they are by it. The study has shown that intrusion impacts not solely on women's freedom of movement but, through drawing on the insights of existential-phenomenology, has revealed an impact on women's freedom to be *in* the self – the freedom to be embodied.

There is a need for further research to uncover more about the impact on and of women's freedom to be in the self. The focus for this project has been on the ordinary aspects of one form of men's intrusive practices, however broader work remains to be done on other practices across the continuum of VAWG to explore the ways in which these impact on women's sense of self. Both Eva Lundgren (1998) and Evan Stark (2009), for example, look at the impacts of men's intimate partner violence on women's ability to exercise their freedom. Using the theoretical framework developed in this thesis, Lundgren and Stark's work could be explored in relation to the impacts on women's embodied self. In addition, the findings of this project, particularly some of the

detail about how, where and in what way men intrude on and into women's bodily selves, reveal a great need for more in-depth research with men about their practices. The theoretical framework of this thesis could also be adapted to explore the ordinary practices and experiences of men, as well as their habituated embodiments, where the structures of the gender order suggest these would most likely develop in relation to other men rather than to women (see Bird, 1996; Quinn, 2002). Finally, reconnecting to the everyday in this way suggests a benefit in bringing criminal and non-criminal practices back together when conceptualising messages around prevention or framing interventions for provision. Campaigns that attempt, for example, to increase women's reporting of rape, would benefit from understanding how women experientially connect the continuum of men's intrusive practices. The adjustments women make early in life in response to learning men's intrusion is ordinary, has substantial implications for how women make sense of future experiences of sexual violence. Campaign messages would benefit from focusing on young women's experiences of ordinary forms of intrusion – aimed towards both young women and to older women through validating their historic experiences. Targeting intrusive practices (and intrusive men) in isolated episodes is to miss how women and girls experience and make sense of them – in *relation* to each other.

WRITTEN IN THE BODY

For Simone de Beauvoir, as for Merleau-Ponty, the body is not a thing, it is a situation. It is not that 'the self' is posited in the body, and this body is then situated in the world

– our bodies are ourselves, our very means of having a world at all. This thesis has shown how experience of the continuum of men’s intrusive practices in public space, however, encourages women to see their bodies as a thing, distant and distinct from their self. Women themselves then adopt this perspective as a form of coping: alienation as strategy. Maddy Coy (2009) came to a similar conclusion in her exploration of the impacts on embodiment of young women’s experiences of childhood sexual abuse and prostitution. Using the concept of (dis)embodiment to show there was a rupture but this could be rebuilt, Coy (2009) found such experiences led to the development of a habitual mode of embodiment whereby our living body becomes something to act on rather than being experienced as ourselves acting through. The concept of habitualised alienation here extends Coy’s (2009) findings to reveal the impact of ordinary practices of men’s intrusion on women’s embodiments. Using a theoretical framework arising from the intersections of Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty and feminist sociology on VAWG, this embodiment includes our sense of being our bodies, and our sense of being *in* the world – with both of these impacting on the situation out of which our freedom arises. Such a philosophical conceptualisation is thus wider and deeper than that used by Coy (2009) and enables an exploration of everyday embodiments in relation to VAWG. For this study, public space was focused on as a context however more work could be done using the theoretical framework of this thesis to explore women’s bodily modes in ‘private’ spaces, to examine how they evolve and what modalities of embodiment are habituated. In addition to this, if, as Weiss (1999) claims, our bodily habits derive their significance from the situation out of which they have emerged and within which they are expressed, then exploring the differences and commonalities between women’s bodily habits in response to men’s practices also offers possibilities to illuminate differences and

commonalities in the situation of women in given socio-historical locations. The ways in which participants spoke about embodied, experiential connections between the practices of men's stranger intrusion highlights how their habit body was informed both from their own history of personal acts in particular situations as well as by awareness of the continuum of sexual violence as embedded in the social meaning of female embodiment. Further research on the differences and commonalities of women's experiences of alienated embodiments in relation to VAWG is needed.

In exploring the third aim of the research, looking at the consequences of men's intrusion for women's experience of self, findings support the work of gendered phenomenological embodiment theorists, such as Iris Marion Young, in demonstrating that through men's intrusive practices women come to live their body as a 'thing' to manipulate, control and regulate, rather than an instrument through which to grasp the world and express our beingness *in* the world. Here is where the terminology of intrusion assists in coming closer to the phenomenological experience and its impacts, intrusion not only onto but, crucially, *into* women's experience of their bodily-self. As such, the study has particular implications for theories of women's embodiment. A significant gap has been identified during the process of the research, from feminist phenomenological explorations of the body schema (Butler, 1990; Bartky, 1990; Weiss, 1999; Young, 2005) to perspectives in feminist psychology and psychoanalysis of the body image (Orbach, 2003; 2009b; Griffin, 2012), in acknowledging the continuum of men's intrusive practices as an element in and through which women live their embodiment. Further research is needed to explore the connections between how women perceive our bodies (the body image), how we live our bodies (the body schema

and habit body), and what this then means for our bodily-self, in relationship to the particular practices of men and a broader context of structural gender inequality.

This also suggests that campaigning work on women's body image, such as the current 'Body Confidence' campaign being run by the Government Equalities Office (GEO), needs to engage with women's experiences of VAWG. A finding of this research has been that 'being' embodied for women is in tension with strategic responses to men's intrusion; women do not want to be their bodies if that embodiment is experienced as unsafe. There is thus a need to connect work being done to improve women's body image with feminist knowledge on VAWG, alongside the need for a gendered understanding of both; where gender is understood as a living relation (McNay, 2004) and focus is turned to how the bodily practices of men have embodied consequences for women.

EXPERIENTIAL REALITIES OF MEN'S INTRUSION

The final aim of this project, to create a new body of evidence regarding the practice and experience of men's intrusion in public space, both produced this evidence and illuminated some of the difficulties in recording women's experiences of the continuum of men's intrusive practices. Despite the development of particular methodological tools for researching the ordinary, empirical findings revealed how mechanisms of normalisation combine with definitional and experiential ambiguity around 'what counts', to render precise measurement of men's intrusion difficult. This uncovered the ways in which the phenomenological detail of such practices, their frequency and their

impact, can be missed when methodologies require women to *recall* rather than *record* intrusive experiences. The continuum of men's intrusive practices is lived as part of the 'field of possibilities' (Butler, 1986: 45) of being an identifiably female bodily-self in public space. Both the practice and the possibility of men's stranger intrusion form an embodied, experiential reality of men's intrusion. This experiential reality is experienced as a formative part of women's situation, with templates of risk and safety work becoming embodied, naturalised and normalised.

This resulted, for many of the women who participated, in a disjuncture between the projected and actualised experiences of men's intrusion, making invisible the level of success of the bodily strategies women were adopting to cope with, limit or avoid intrusion. In addition to this, the experiential interdependency of individual intrusive practices operates to problematise their separation into clear and precise categories. Combined with the impact of habituated responses, this thesis has suggested that attempts to measure VAWG, in particular though not solely the ordinary or routine experiences, will inevitably struggle to accurately assess frequency and forms through survey methods. There is also an implication here for 'street harassment' campaigns, including the growth in visibility through online forums. There is a tension between sharing women's stories in order to raise awareness and help combat the normalisation of men's intrusion in public space, and challenging the habitualised projection of frequency of men's intrusion in public space – a projection that may be leading some women to alienate their body and world in order to hold onto a sense of self. It is a challenge for anti-street harassment campaigners to attempt to balance both.

Finally, this thesis adds to the dialogue on feminist self-defence (Seith & Kelly, 2003).

Where such work can be seen as sitting in tension with notions of victim-blaming (ibid), feminist self-defence is fundamental to peeling back the ways in which men's intrusive practices have created embodiments for women marked by an experience of alienation and limited capacity. Locating women's self-defence within a programme that explores women's habituated embodiments, could contribute to campaigns on women's body image, through encouraging women to experience their bodily capacities; capacities that express the self and extend out into the world – a campaign to help women live their embodied self in a mode of 'I can'.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown how Beauvoir's theory of the situated self offers a way to explore the harms and impacts of men's practices onto and into women's bodily selves, without reducing female embodiment to an effect of men's behaviours and structural processes. In considering how to translate the framework behind this in a way that holds the complexity yet is readily understandable, the analogy employed by Sara Heinämaa of femininity as being like a musical theme may be useful. For Heinämaa femininity is 'not determined by its earlier performances but is living and evolving in the environment created by them' (Heinämaa, 1999: 124). This helps to capture some of what has been revealed of the living experience of 50 women's accounts of men's stranger intrusions, and the impacts for their bodily selves. Similar to the conception fictive philosopher Milan Kundera (1999) makes of the novel, the continuum of men's intrusive practices can be conceptualised as a musical theme with variations running through the lives of

women. The motif is established for most women during adolescence, though some women in this study experienced rape and other forms of contact sexual abuse and men's intrusion in their early childhood, and some could not remember experiences of men's intrusive practices before their early adulthood. It is embedded through personal experiences, experiences of family and friends, wider experiences of other women reported in the media and cultural narratives of women's particular vulnerability to rape, and comes to be embodied – lived as part of women's bodily-self.

Our bodily-self thus is not wholly determined by its earlier realisations, but rather, like a melody, past experiences are experienced as habitual and familiar. This links to Merleau-Ponty's description of the body as comparable to a work of art, 'a nexus of living meanings' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 175). Freedom exists here but it is a situated freedom, bound by the situation of female embodiment and what that embodiment means. Uncovering our habituated embodiments, learning the tune we carry, is to recognise the weight of our past and its impact on our present. It is to reveal those actions we perform for a purpose, 'counted the most understandable' (Nietzsche, 2003: 89), but the least understood. Acknowledging this weight, both personally and collectively, is to create possibilities for letting it go.

‘(T)he future remains wide open... (t)he free woman is just being born
(Beauvoir, 2011: 767).

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Appendices

APPENDIX ONE: POETIC TRANSCRIPT

You need to find a version of the world you can be in

He came up to me and was like my mate wants to lick you out.

It just makes you feel like you're doing something wrong.

He started talking to me more like saying oh where are you going?

My thing has been to physically remove myself, not to confront.

He followed me literally all the way home.

I just don't see them, my eyes glaze over.

He was shouting at me and whistling at me saying sexy thing

and all of this

and I was 13.

He got off and he called me a tranny and a minger.

I don't know yeah I try to brush it off.

He's definitely having a wank, he's definitely doing it. In Morrisons.

I built up such a barrier.

He just had his hand there on my chest.

It's easier just to get off.

He snapped a picture and then walked back out,

he didn't run, he just walked back out

really casual as if he'd just strolled in.

And then he pointed out to me his massive erection.
I'll tuck my hair into my hat.
I had this big long fringe and he made some comment
about that must get in the way
when you're giving blowjobs.
He leaned over and asked if he could take my photograph.
I try not to sit next to a man.

He bit my neck and he had his hand on my left breast
and he squeezed my breast really hard.
He hit me.

A couple of guys as I was walking were like hey babe.
I'll wear jeans just because it's safer.
Oi bitch, oi slag, get your tits out you slag.
I always walk with purpose.
The other guy waiting there goes oh cheer up love.
I want to talk back but you're taking that risk.

Oi you come over here, sit on my face.
His trousers around his ankles
just jerking off.

He slapped me across the face.
He said can I come on your tits.
He was pushing the gate trying to get through and screaming.
It's easier to pretend I don't hear anything.

He physically had his junk hanging out the side of his shorts.

I can walk around with blinkers on

He asked if he could sit by me again.

I'll always be listening to music.

He said well I would just like to talk to you.

I walk a little different now and I do different things with my face

He was looking at me in a way that was just like,

you are just a piece of meat

and I'm loving the show.

He stayed leaning into me,

was rubbing his crotch against me

and he had an erection.

I used to carry a Stanley knife.

They just started shouting at me every day.

I would never now get onto a bus and sit by the window.

And then he put my finger in his mouth.

I always check men and I watch their behaviour.

He leaned across me and pinned me back and tried to take off my skirt.

You have to have your shutters down.

He came up very close to me, like inches away from me,

and said something like

loving the stockings girlie.

He was constantly leaning over and being like where are you going

and what are you doing

and is this a holiday

and have you got a boyfriend.

He seemed to be slowing down as if he wanted me to pass him.

He didn't say anything, he just attacked me.

He walked past us and went oh my god, lesbians.

You live in this bubble all of the time.

He turned to me and he says you look very beautiful.

I've even taken my phone out sometimes and pretended to talk to someone.

Someone shouted across the street at me 'nice, ah, mammary glands.'

I won't make eye contact or anything, I don't want to give them the chance.

And this guy came up to me and basically tried to have sex with me

outside the shop, when I was 14,

dragged me around the corner and started trying to pull the coat off.

And he kept, he kept saying

there's no need to be frightened of me.

I had one guy who mimicked a blowjob from the car window one time.

If you don't put make up on you can become quite invisible.

Someone did just literally stop and say oi love you should be on Weightwatchers.

I don't really like being in crowded places just in case.

He got out his penis and he was trying to make me touch it.

It wears you down in the end.

He yelled after me you whore, you whore, that was a compliment

why didn't you say thank you,

his friend said he wants to dog you,

and another one said you've got a face like shit.

He was going oh c'mon, just let me take a few pictures.

I'll try to avoid situations where I am going to be on my own.

He just reached up and grabbed my boob.

Look straight ahead and keep walking.

He pulled his trousers down and was having a wank.

I just refuse to let that stop me. I can't accept it.

And a guy came up from behind and attacked me

and stuck his hands underneath my

skirt and tried to assault me or did assault me.

The guy that date raped me kept asking me out for weeks afterwards.

My husband tried to strangle me.

He just said something really innocent at first.

This guy came up to me and said oh so you look nice,

I've never been with a fire-crotch before.

I won't like hit someone but I'll inch my elbows back.

One of them jumped out and went BOO like that.

I've developed what my friends call bitch face.

His arm was going back like going alright, up and down my leg.

I've just learnt to ignore them.

Sexy lady, nice tits, hello baby, hello baby.

He was chasing us and screaming at us.

He decided he was going to lock me in the house.

This young guy stood opposite me just sort of jigging up and down.

Trying to walk less sexily, trying to not draw attention to myself.

He only just said hello beautiful.

I don't look at anybody ever.

All of a sudden this guy turns up and he's got it out and he's going for it,
like actually got it out properly.

This is not happening, I'm in a glass box.

I had a man wank off over me on the tube.

He was like no you don't understand my cock is huge.

There was this guy in a bush behind us jerking off.

He just repeated it again and again following me down the street.

He just came up to me and punched me in the gut.

I try to make myself feel not scared and fine.

Some guy just took a swig of water out of his water bottle and spat it in my face.

I just mock, in a banter kind of way.

He slowed down and watched me walk on a bit and then started following me.

I know where my keys are.

I heard footsteps behind me, fast approaching, running footsteps

and I turned around

and this guy just stopped in his tracks.

I went and hid under the porch bit and he didn't see me,

and he didn't see me under my house,

and he drove back really slowly

looking.

He was like oh come on get in the car I'll give you a lift.

I prepare myself by distracting myself.

A couple of guys actually moved seats to sit in front of me.

I usually try to sit next to women.

And as he went past he just flashed.

I can just power straight past them, with my head up and barely register.

They'd called me over to the car,

wound the window down and said I need some directions.

I asked him where to and

he pointed to his crotch.

This other guy just came out of the shadows of a doorway and just grabbed me,

was just holding onto me.

He'd said something about me having epic tits.

I had somebody rubbing themselves on me.

I'll like sit somewhere else, change seats.

This guy just literally pulled down his trousers and started wanking.

I normally go at the end of the carriage.

He did a comment like oh you know, you can flirt as much as you want

but no one really wants you anyway.

I look down, I don't look at them.

Young boys like 14, 15 year olds,

coming up to us saying

are you lesbians? Kiss then.

I had one guy burp in my face.

I'll try to cross the street.

He kept saying my cunt stinks, about me.

You've got to have a book with you.

A car came up, slowed down a little bit, wound the window down, and screamed.

I just try to ignore. I don't engage.

This man just came up to our table and starting banging on it

and was like I want some chicken nuggets,

give me some fucking chicken nuggets.

You fucking bitch I'll kill you. If I see you again I'll kill you.

He was just staring at me as I walked past.

This man one time grabbed my leg.

You've got to stay polite, stay quiet and be agreeable.

He just said something about me having nice tits.

I don't walk down there at night.

And he came up behind me and grabbed both of my arms.

Never smile, never,

just never make any kind of contact at all with any men.

And he got out his dick and wanked off in front of me.

This guy stands outside the window and takes a picture of me.

He started jerking off while he was sitting next to me

They might catch me unawares but they will never catch me without an answer.

This man came up to me and put his arm around me.

I'll pretend to text.

He took his hand underneath my hand and held it there.

I've got this thing that I call the stare.

A guy came up and literally went ugh, and walked away.

I get this feeling of guilt sometimes.

They weren't subtle they said it like in audible range
and they were like what do you reckon mate, an 8 out of 10?
He raped me.

He kind of like run his hand down my back.
I basically have been hiding myself for the last 6, 7 years.
He was so obviously looking just at my boobs.
I always listen to music.
Some guy just wound down his window and started shouting at me.
I'd probably forget about it.

These two guys probably 40 walked past and said
oo you'll have a nice body on you
when you're 16.

He was like, I don't mind if you've got a baby.
I do make the choice if there is one to sit with women.
He started putting his hand on my leg.
Sometimes I'll just close my eyes.
And then I felt someone's hands on my butt cheek.
I now stay away from the colour red

I had someone wind down their window and say oi love you dropped something,
and I looked down,
and they said it's your pants.

He was like oh do you have a boyfriend?

If I don't acknowledge him, it'll turn nasty.

He kind of stopped, said I just want you to know that you're a very beautiful woman.

I still have my earplugs in, even if the music isn't on.

This guy had come up to me and been like oh give us a smile

If I want someone to get past me I try to get my back to a wall.

This guy had actually snuck behind her

and put his hand down in a way that I'd think it was her

and then she saw too and I was just like oh my God

because he'd actually touched me

there.

He just sort of pulled his trousers down.

I walk quicker or I phone someone.

Guy walks past me and starts whispering shit in my ear.

I carry my keys between my hand so I can stab.

As we left he slapped my bum.

I wish I could just wear exactly what I wanted.

They wouldn't let me get around the car, they kept reversing if I tried to go behind and pushing forward,

so effectively trapping

me as I tried to cross the road.

A dodgy guy stood next to me on the platform on the tube.

I always try to look like I know where I'm going.

He was just following me up the hill.

I take a key and I have the sharp part in between my fingers.

Some guys told me to leave my boyfriend and get in the car.

I don't really do anything.

They circled around the block and met us on the other side
and were there waiting for us
when we got down to the end.

So there was one guy who was like 'come over here I want to buy you a drink'
I use my shadow on the floor, if I'm on the street I can tell how close they are.
He took a step back and he touched my hair.
Be polite but not too polite that they want to continue talking to me.
He was making this weird noise, like a clicking noise or something.
I dress with scarves and things to just cover, take the focus away.

Some guy, very seriously in a trench coat, was following myself and a friend of mine from school halfway
up that hill,
in the forest, into a green space
and then actually exposed himself.

He started talking to me more like saying oh where are you going?
I normally ignore it and then get angry at myself.
He followed us for like half a block telling us that his flat was around the corner.
I'll purposely just look straight ahead
He pointed and went crab face.
I tend to check my phone.

he even texted my daughter saying what he wanted to do to her,
what he wanted to do to both of us.
This guy walked past me and just said slut.

He was just behind the hedging just looking at the girl's backs,

furiously wanking away.

I just kind of like glare at them

He was looking at me and he goes oh, what's your name?

I'm always very polite, I'm very polite.

One of them kicked my foot, not in a hard way, just to get my attention.

I try to tone everything down a bit, I don't want to stand out.

This guy just walked next to me on my way home

and that night I had to actually take a really roundabout route

and make sure I was always on a main road

and that I wasn't actually heading home.

Men would go in and masturbate and be asking for clothes

I'm not looking at anybody, not engaging.

This guy called me fat out of a car window.

I probably would avoid, like cross the road.

The man tried to touch me on the boobs.

You don't smile back you just look back in complete terror.

This guy came up behind me and said oh my god

you're so beautiful,

is it okay if I walk behind you and touch myself?

And I looked at him and he waved.

In general I tend to ignore and flee.

He essentially had his cock out and basically ejaculated all over the lawn.

I don't engage at all.

They were looking, very very lecherous looking.

I'll take the long way around.

He just kind of started looking and like talking really loudly
about some girl that they knew and how big her tits were
and it was like yeah yeah her tits
are really big
while looking at me.

Then these guys kind of circled us, they made a circle around us.
I don't think there's any way to react other than to not react.
This man turned around and just had this huge erection.
So I just cross the road.
A guy was trying to rape me in the ladies toilets.
I just look straight ahead.

There was a whole row of guys who were standing down this wall
and as you walked past they just leaned and grabbed
whatever part of you
that they could.

He said he'd been watching me.
I always sit quite close to the driver.
He just bit my lip and carried on walking.
You always try to find the blame with yourself.
He was just trying to get really physically close just leaning.
I can block people out.

This car pulled up and had two guys in it
and the entire time the light was red
they just sat there staring at me and making comments.

A boy I sat next to put his hand on my leg and started rubbing it.

I have my keys in my pocket.

This guy was like excuse me, you've got a really nice figure.

I don't really look back.

And he just stood across the road taking pictures.

I avoid eye contact with men definitely.

He was just staring at me and when I got up to move carriage he got up
and loitered around the middle of that carriage.

He tried to kiss me.

He didn't have a proper hold of me but he tried to steer me into the house.

My coping strategy is that I move.

One of them shouted something along the lines of I'll fuck the shit out of you
I'll take flat shoes with me.

He was like have I been good? And I said yeah. And he goes tell me I've been good.

Normally I get really angry about it.

He was like,

I'd like to do things to you,

don't worry you won't have to pay for the cab ride.

This guy had stuck his penis through the bottom of the cubicle and was wanking.

I try not to look at people.

He took a photo of my cleavage.

I pretend to phone someone, or I look in my bag.

Just a guy standing in the bushes exposing himself and wanking.

I'll always look to see when the last bus is.

One of them past me by the door and said ooo lovely.

I avoid eye contact.

I block it out.

This guy came up behind me and grabbed me between my legs,

like properly grabbed me.

He was trying to rape me.

And this guy just took his pants off.

I tend not to respond.

He did the whole look me up and down thing and said I think Ti Amo?

I don't really go on the top deck of the bus at night.

He said something like hi how are you doing.

I find myself calling someone quite a bit.

He was following me, clearly following me between train carriages.

I never make eye contact, I just look straight ahead where I'm going.

This really creepy man walking really close behind me

and pretty much breathing down my neck

and whispering things.

Never talk to a man.

He raped me.

I will get a taxi for that walk.

He did a u-turn to try to pick me up. In a semi-trailer.

Basically if I just walk with my eyes closed and my earphones on it'll be fine.

And one of them just said hi as I walked past.

I consider what I wear more.

He just started talking to me and he wouldn't leave me alone

and he wouldn't let me walk past.

He said give us a blow job.

A group of guys one of them pinched my bum when I was going up the stairs.

I wear a lot of black, I feel vulnerable when I wear too much colour.

This guy at the next table looked over and said hey sweet lips!

I walk in the middle of the road a little bit because then no one can jump out.

And then he said, so how do you guys relate to each other, I mean sexual relations.

I'll stop dead and get my phone out.

I had in the street a group of guys try to stop me and be like hey

you should totally come back to ours.

He tried to grab my ass.

Slag.

He was following us, he carried on like a whole block.

I'll have my phone in my pocket rather than in my handbag.

He turned around and went, do you know that you're beautiful?

I wear my iPod all the time.

This guy came up to me said hey, hey sexy.

I always apologise, always.

Two men walking behind me talking about my behind to each other

obviously

in a very loud voice so I would hear.

And he molested me on the bus on the back seat.

He said hey you know what girl, I like the way you look.

I look at the floor. I never make eye contact with anybody.

And then he was like oh you're such a frigid cunt.

I just listen to my music.

He was staring at me, drunkenly staring at me.

I have to fight the urge to cover up so people don't look at me.

They shouted something at me, can't remember exactly what the words were

but it was something like your ass or something about that.

A guy was wanking in the bushes.

This guy came past and said alright love.

I can deal with it now. I always have a comeback for everything.

He was just like oh hey how are you, do you want to come with me?

I'll take my phone out or pretend to be doing things.

He was eyeing me up and down and sort of shuffling closer step by step to me.

I start to become really conscious of how I'm walking

and what I'm wearing

and how I'm looking.

So he sat on the corner of the chair

and again, legs akimbo,

whipped it out, had a go.

A guy in a doorway tried to slide his hands down me.

Obviously I'll be looking away.

He wasn't looking at my face he was looking at the rest of me.

I'll call people or pretend that I'm calling people.

He told me that I looked tired.

Stop, check your phone, tie your shoe lace,

He was like get in the car, I want to, I want to.

He used to corner me so I couldn't get out from my desk.

This guy walked down the street and gave me the full up and down
and just went 'nice' as he walked past.

This guy said, really loud so everybody heard, something like can I fuck you?

I will often look at the ground.

Somebody from the other side of the street just yelled, hey mamacita.

I'll always sit next to a woman.

In the end we started running and he came banging on our front door.

I have responded in the past with like fuck off you pervert.

This guy was like oh my God, look at your profile,

it's so beautiful

I just have to take a picture.

He started spitting at me.

This guy was like I think you brought the bongos.

You just walk faster.

This big fat guy just staring at me the whole time.

I am looking down, I never look at people.

He literally just came up to me and undid my top button.

I'm not going to cross the road, I live on this side of the road.

He is checking my suitcase to see if there is any contraband

or any items that shouldn't be allowed through,

and he's chatting me up.

And then tried to kiss me.

This guy was like oh give us a chip love.
I'd wear tights and a longer skirt.
He started whispering into my ear you're so sexy I want to have sex with you.
I walk with my key in my hand and then like between my fingers.
I must have been 7. And someone wound the window down and went wahay!
My decisions about how I look are related to this sexual danger.

Guy walking past me just stopped,
stared out at me,
and then carried on walking.

I had someone wanking on the underground.
You have to text everyone to say you got home.
They started following us home, being a bit more intimidating.
I just block them out.
He was looking in quite an overtly sexual way, like a dirty sexual look.
I'll get my umbrella and have it as a stick just in case I get threatened.

And this guy was like are you alright darling?
And kept putting his hand on mine.
He was like 'hey where are you going tonight?'
Slut.

He just did this horrible thing with his tongue.
I'll take trousers in my bag.
The guy walked outside, across the street, to try to take a picture of me.
I will ignore them, always.

He went to get his coat ready, as if he was going to flash me.

Just stepped out and groped my boob.

You turn into the street look which side has more men

and choose the other one

and then call somebody.

This guy had kind of walked past and looked me up and down.

I'll just ignore it and feel quite annoyed.

They then sent me a text message saying you're fit and you know it.

And then kissed me on the lips.

He absolutely came after me.

And I think that was probably the first time, from that point onwards,

constantly scanning

for people who would do you harm.

He started talking about football and was like 'oh

so does your boyfriend like football then?'

Just as he started to follow me a car came.

And he kept trying to engage me in conversation.

And then he pulled down his pants.

He raped me.

My thing is always when I get on the bus or public transport

right where are you going to sit?

He basically won't piss off for quite a while.

A car with a guy in it just kind of came onto the pavement.

He stood in my way.
He just kind of grabbed me.
They kept eyeing us up and down.
I'd tie my hair up for some reason.

One guy started saying, not hitting on me,
but just saying oh beautiful, beautiful girl
and he was walking with his little boy,
and it was 7 o'clock in the morning.

This man was following me.
He was obviously following me.
All like are you alright ladies, do you know where you're going?
Sometimes I'll walk back through a very scary place
and text on my phone saying where I am if anything happened to me
so I can just press send.

This man exposed himself to me.
They literally did a U-Turn to drive next to me.
And a guy just came next to me and started talking to me.
I used to sit in an empty carriage because I thought great
there's no one around.

He sat next to me and started chatting.
This guy who I was waiting for a train
and ended up inviting me to wherever it was
in Africa he was from.
He went in for the kiss.

He got a coin and threw it at me.

I was pulled off my bike by this guy.

He just shouted after me.

These two boys in a car wolf whistled.

I had a nice chat once with this really sweet Turkish guy
who got on the bus at Shoreditch,
and we had a nice chat about his job as a Graphic Designer,
then he asked me to wake him up at Stockwell
and that was it.

You need to find a version of the world you can be in.

APPENDIX TWO: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear _____,

Thanks for getting in touch and your interest. It would be great to have your experiences and the way they have made you think captured in this project.

To give you a bit of background about myself. I have worked for the past 6 years at Rape Crisis in South London and am currently about 18 months into my PhD at London Met. The research unit I'm working from is the Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit.

The research itself is a three stage process. First off we meet up anywhere convenient for you and quiet enough for me to record and then we have a chat about your interest in the research, your experiences, how you feel about what happens and anything else that comes up. I'm using a new methodology which is more about conversation than about interviewing so it's not that I'll have a set of questions that I'll be firing at you. It's more fluid and it's really lead by you. You can ask me anything you like and I'll try to include some of the stuff women have said already to give you a bit of a context. I'll record the conversation and then transcribe it and send it back to you. So far the conversations haven't taken longer than an hour but as it's unstructured it's hard to gauge.

Then, if you're up for it, I'll give you a little notebook that's got some prompts in it for you to carry with you over the next few weeks whilst I'm transcribing our conversation. The notebook is for you to record anything that happens, particularly those really ordinary encounters which seem to be the hardest to remember.

Then once I've transcribed our initial conversation I'll email it back to you for your comments, thoughts, changes etc and we'll arrange to meet up one more time. at this last meeting we'll go through your notebook and you can talk about anything that came up for you and what the experience of participating in the research has been like for you. I'll record and transcribe this final conversation too.

You can opt in or out of any part of the research and withdraw consent at anytime.

Participants are all anonymised and contact details are kept separately from the transcripts in my office at the university. Once I've got my findings (probably at the end of summer) I'll send out a brief report to all my participants so you can get a sense of what's come out of it. And when the whole thing is done I will also send all participants a summary of my findings.

Attached here is the consent form which provides a bit more information, including the main themes I've been looking at so far. If you've got any other questions let me know, otherwise if you're good to go can we book in for: TIME/DATE

Thanks again for getting in touch. I'd love to have your voice in this project.

APPENDIX THREE: CONSENT FORM



The Great Problems are in the Streets A PhD Research Project at London Metropolitan University

Thank you for your interest in my PhD research into women's experiences of the ways in which male strangers respond to women in public space.

This is to provide you with some information about what we will be talking about, as well as let you know how the information you provide me with will be used, recorded and destroyed. It also acts as a consent form so I ask you to please read before our meeting and, if you agree with it, bring a signed copy on the day.

I am looking to provide a space for women to talk about their experiences of male strangers in public. I don't believe we currently know enough about what happens in encounters with male strangers. I'm interested in how you, as the particular woman you are, experience, react or respond to, evaluate, and feel about the ways male strangers respond to your daily movements in public space, responses including but not limited to verbal comments, physical actions or contact and the way they look at you.

I'm also interested in the ways in which this effects your relationship to your self and your body, and any previous experiences of men's violence such as sexual assault, rape, childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment and/or domestic abuse. I will not be asking directly about these previous experiences, though there is space for you to talk about these if you choose, but I would like to know about whether you see any links or connections and if you do, what you think these are.

There is little space for women to talk about our everyday experiences and as such we will be having more of a conversation than a formal interview. I won't have a series of questions to ask you and you can ask me anything. Our conversation will be recorded, then I'll transcribe it and send it back to you for any comments or changes.

The second part of the research involves you doing some research of your own and recording in a notebook I provide any experiences you have over the following couple of weeks. We will then meet up a final time and go through what you found in your research as well as what the experience has been like for you of participating. I'll record and transcribe this final conversation too and send back to you for comments/changes.

Your data will be anonymised (I will ask you to choose a name to be known by) and your contact details, also anonymised, will be kept separately from your data. The recorded conversation will be deleted after it has been transcribed. You can withdraw consent at any time during the research, which is due to be completed in 2013, and all recordings and transcriptions related to your participation will be destroyed.

From my initial literature review there is a huge gap in research about the ways in which women experience the ways men respond to them in public, particularly around ordinary or seemingly innocuous encounters, the things we often class as trivial. Your knowledge is vital in filling this gap. Make your voice heard.

Fiona Elvines

[Redacted signature]

I have read the above and agree to my data being used only under these conditions. I am aware I can withdraw consent at any time by contacting the researcher on the details given above.

Signed _____

Date _____

(Researcher's use) Code _____

APPENDIX FOUR: FREQUENCY TABLE

INT	Ordinary Interruption	Staring	Sexualised comment	Touched/ Grope	Cheer Up / Smile	Followed (Definite)	Whistled & Noises	Flashed	Followed (Felt)	Abusive	Blocked Space	Masturbated at	Beeped	Rape	Stranger Rape	Car (Followed / Solicit)	IPV	Photographed	GSA	Stalked
2	4	4	4	2	4	X	X	X	X	4	X	X	X	1	1	X	X	X	X	X
3	3	X	X	X	4	X	X	X	1	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	4	3	4	2	X		X	X		2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	X	X
7	4	4	4	7			7	X	X		X	X	3	0	0	X	X	X	X	X
8	4	4	3	0	4	X	7	X	X		1	X	X	1	0	X	1	X	X	X
9	4	4	4	1	4		1	X	7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	1	/	/	1	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	1	/	1	1	/	X	/	X	X
11	4	3	3	1	5	X	7	X	X	1	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
12	4	4	4	5	7	X	7	X	7	7	X	X	4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
13	1	1	2	1	7	X	X	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
14	4	5	4	1	0		7		4	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	4	4	4	3	X			1	4	1	1	X	7	2	1	X	X	X	X	X
16	4	4	4	X	X		X	0	4	X	2	0	X	X	X	X	X	1	X	X
17	4	4	4	2			4	X	4	X	1	X	4	X	X	X	X	2	X	X
18	3	X	1	X	0		1	1	X	X	X	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
19	4	4	4	1	X		7	1	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
20	4	4	1	X			X	X	X	X	7	X	4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
21	1	7	2	1	1	2	7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	X
22	4	4	7	X	4	X	X	X	X	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	X
23	4	4	1	4	X		7	3	1	X	X	1	X	1	0	X	1	X	X	X
25	7	7	7	2	X			1	X	X	X	X	X	1	0	X		X	X	X
26	4	7	4	3			7	X	7	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
28	7	4	X	1				X	0	X	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	X
29	4	4	4	X	4	2	7	1	X	7	3	0	X	1	1	X	1	X	X	X

30	4	4	X	1	4	0	4	1	7	X	X	X	X	1	X	1	X	X	X	X
31	3	4	X	1	4	1	X	X	7	X	1	X	7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
32	4	4	4	2	1	1	7	X	X	1	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
33	2	4	4	2	4	2	1	0	X	2	0	X	X	X	7	X	X	X	X	X
35	2	1	1	1	1	1	X	1	X	3	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
36	2	7	1	2	X	0	X	X	7	4	1	X	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	X
37	1	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	X	X	X	1	1
39	7	4	7	1	X	0	4	1	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
40	4	7	4	1	X	1	X	4	4	X	X	X	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X
41	4	4	4	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X
42	4	7	4	1	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	X	X	X	1	X	X
43	7	4	7	2	7	2	1	X	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	3	X	X	X	X
44	7	7	7	X	7	2	5	0	7	X	0	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
38	4	4	4	1	1	0	X	0	0	1	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
44	3	7	7	X	1	X	X	X	1	X	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
45	7	7	2	1	X	1	X	1	X	7	X	1	X	X	1	X	X	X	X	X
50	7	5	1	1	7	0	X	X	2	X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
46	7	2	1	1	X	2	7	2	X	X	X	X	X	1	X	1	X	X	X	X
47	4	4	4	4	7	7	2	7	7	4	1	7	X	1	X	1	X	1	X	X
48	3	2	1	2	4	0	1	0	0	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	1
49	2	7	1	1	X	X	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
51	7	7	3	2	X	0	7	1	7	X	2	1	7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
52	2	1	4	1	X	X	X	4	X	1	1	1	1	X	7	X	X	X	X	X
53	2	7	7	3	7	4	X	1	X	X	1	4	1	X	1	X	1	X	X	X
54	4	7	7	4	2	4	3	X	1	X	1	1	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
55	3	3	2	2	1	1	7	2	1	1	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
% (n=51)	100%	94%	88%	76%	58%	58%	50%	44%	42%	40%	32%	30%	24%	24%	20%	14%	14%	10%	6%	4%

0	Explicitly stated never happened	2	Happened twice	4	Happens regularly	7	Happens (not frequency given)
1	Happened once	3	Happened three times or more	5	Happens rarely	X	Not mentioned

APPENDIX FIVE: PARTICIPANT NOTEBOOKS (PRINTER SPREADS)

RELEVANT & SUPPORT INFORMATION

RAPE CRISIS

<http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk>
0808 808 9999

National Helpline for survivors
of any form of sexual violence.

HOLLABACK LONDON

<http://ldn.hollaback.org/>
Movement dedicated to ending
street harassment. Online peer
support forum to post and discuss
instances of street harassment.

ANTI-STREET HARASSMENT CAMPAIGN (ASH)

<http://ashcampaign.org/>
Online campaign against the sexual
harassment of women on UK streets
and in public spaces.

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

THE GREAT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE STREETS

HAVE YOU ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

HAVE YOU ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

Please use this notebook to record anything you feel might relate to the conversation we had. That might include something that happens, or your anticipation that something might happen. It might include decisions you make about how to be in public space, such as clothing or routes home, or how you respond to intrusions.

I'd also like you to think about three areas in particular that seem to be the harder ones to remember, often because they are so ordinary. Those areas are:

1. SPACE INVADERS

Male stranger/s intruding on your space (for example a man interrupting you to say 'hello')

2. THE GAZE

Being or anticipating being looked at by male strangers (for example passing a group of men)

3. SAY WHAT

Male stranger/s commenting on you (for example a man saying something about what you're wearing or doing)

The pages contain tables that may help you break down each of these in a bit more detail and also empty pages for you to write about anything else. Please don't feel limited by what is already written. I want you to use this as your own reflective space. You don't need to fill in every page or every table but as much information as you feel able to give would be useful.

Use this book over the following fortnight to record anything that happens whilst I am typing up your transcript. It may help to take it out with you on a particular day, or to just use it when you are home to reflect on anything that happened during the day. When I've completed your transcript I'll send it to you and we can organise a time to meet again where you can give me back this notebook and we can have a catch up about what your experience of participating in the research has been and anything else you want to add about your experiences of male strangers in public space.

HOW DID YOU FEEL IN/ABOUT YOUR BODY?
BEFORE
DURING
AFTER
WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THIS?
DESCRIBE

HOW SAFE DID YOU FEEL?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

HOW FREE DID YOU FEEL?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

Included in the back of this book is a brief list of support and information services if our conversation has brought anything up for you or if you want to find out more about women's experiences in public.

Thank you again for your time and openness. I hope you enjoy using this book and please remember you are free to withdraw from the research at any time.

Thanks again and see you soon.

Fiona

1. SPACE INVADERS

If you have the experience of a male stranger intruding on your space (i.e. interrupting you when you're talking to a friend, or bothering you when you're alone, or taking up your physical space) could you take a moment to just jot down your feelings about it, in as much or as little detail as you'd like.

WHAT HAPPENED?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WERE YOU FEELING?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

3. SAY WHAT

If you have the experience of a male stranger commenting on you (i.e. saying something about your appearance either complimentary or offensive, or yelling something at you, or speaking about you to somebody else) could you take a moment to just jot down your feelings about it, in as much or as little detail as you'd like.

WHAT HAPPENED?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WERE YOU FEELING?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

HOW SAFE DID YOU FEEL?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

HOW FREE DID YOU FEEL?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

HAVE YOU ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

HAVE YOU ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

HOW DID YOU FEEL IN/ABOUT YOUR BODY?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THIS?

DESCRIBE

10 SPACE INVADERS

HAVE YOU ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

THE GREAT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE STREETS

15

HOW DID YOU FEEL IN/ABOUT YOUR BODY?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THIS?

DESCRIBE



HOW SAFE DID YOU FEEL?
BEFORE

HAVE YOU ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

DURING
AFTER

HOW FREE DID YOU FEEL?
BEFORE

DURING
AFTER

2. THE GAZE

If you have the experience of being looked at by a male stranger or of feeling/anticipating being looked at (i.e. feeling the need to look down when passing a male stranger or having a male stranger stare on public transport) could you take a moment to just jot it down in as much or as little detail as you'd like.

WHAT HAPPENED?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

WHAT WERE YOU FEELING?

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER

APPENDIX SIX: FOLLOW UP (WRITTEN)

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

THE GREAT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE STREETS

CODE:

Due to the unexpected scale of this project, both in duration and number of participants, I have reached saturation point well before expected. This means that instead of sitting down to talk again, I was hoping to just briefly be able to capture your thoughts and comments on the process of participating in this research. Please write as much or as little as you feel necessary. I ask you to email this form back to me when completed and also to please forward me your address so I can send a stamped self-addressed envelope and ask you to return your notebook or any notes you took during the notebook period.

Thank you again for your on-going participation. I'll be back in touch before the end of the year with initial findings.

How was it having the conversation the first time? Did you get to say everything you wanted?
Did anything new come up?

How was it reading back our transcript? Was it what you expected? Anything surprising/interesting?

What was the process of recording experiences (notebook stage) like? Was the type/frequency of experiences what you expected? Anything interesting you found about either what happened or about yourself during this time?

There were a couple of things that really stood out for me in our first conversation and I was wondering if you could say anything more about them.

- Here a minimum of three key points were pulled out of the initial conversations and fed back.

Is there anything else you've been thinking around what we talked about or anything that you'd like me to know?

Thank you! Please return this form by email or in the stamped self addressed envelope you received for your notebook.

APPENDIX SEVEN: PARTICIPANT MONITORING FORM

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

THE GREAT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE STREETS

Thank you for your participation!

You have been part of an in-depth research project with over 50 women, one of the very few projects conducted in detail with women about their experiences with male stranger intrusion in public space in England.

All your data will be anonymised and identifiable details such as the names of your partner/children/friends will be removed, however I may want to quote you directly in the final write-up. If I do this it would help to have some monitoring data as well as a "name" to use. For example: *Maria, a 39-year-old, heterosexual Polish woman.*

You can use your own name if you'd like but I ask for a first name only. I will also be in touch if someone grabs a name before you as it would help to have everyone referred to uniquely. Please fill in as much of the following as you feel comfortable. There is also space to enter your own self-description should you prefer to use your own terms.

Thank you again for feeding your thoughts, experiences and emotions into this project. I will be in touch before the end of the year with the initial findings.

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR DETAILS

<hr/>	
CODE	
<hr/>	
NAME (to be used in research)	
<hr/>	
ETHNICITY	
<hr/>	
AGE	
<hr/>	
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
<hr/>	

OR

<hr/>



