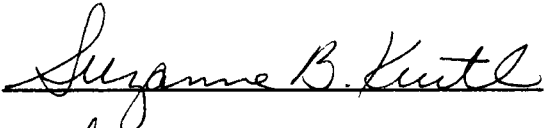
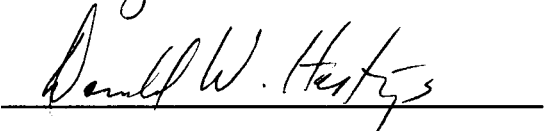


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THE ECOLOGY OF GENDER:
Single Women in the Environment

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Amy L. Chasteen

May 1992

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated
to the women interviewed for this project and the others
they represent

and to the memory of
Stephen Karatheodoris,
whose example will continue to inspire me and others

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ABSTRACT

The design and construction of housing, transportation, and leisure activity resources are based on traditional assumptions of gender and household composition. Architects and planners rely on a nuclear family model that excludes single women. Single women select housing, transportation, and leisure activities in an environment not built for their lifestyles.

Single women in Knoxville were interviewed on two main topics: their interactions with the environment and their experiences as single. First, single women's perceptions, selections, and uses of available housing, transportation, and leisure activity resources were examined. Single women's perceptions of the environment shape their movements. Women subjectively define affordability, convenience, appearance, and safety considerations according to their social position, financial situation, and socialized expectations of a single woman's behavior. Single women's considerations generally have a homogeneous impact on their selection and use of housing, transportation, and leisure resources. Affordability and safety are the two most overriding considerations affecting women's movements. Most single women have low incomes and are preoccupied with safety; they seek affordable, secure environments. Although

single women are under economic strain, most would spend a greater proportion of their disposable income for secure housing, safe transportation, and protected leisure activities to satisfy their safety requirements.

Second, on singlehood, single women report feeling socially out-of-place and vulnerable because they are not part of a couple and are often alone. For support, singles typically associate with each other, sometimes in formal organizations, sometimes informally. Single women believe their lives are different from both single men and married women because of their lower incomes, higher fear, and increased social displacement.

Safety emerges as the overriding consideration influencing women's decisions on housing, transportation, and leisure activities. From the media and familial and other social relationships, women develop a socialized fear perspective (SFP) that affects their behavior. This perspective is shaped by social myths on the vulnerability of single women; consequently, women often have unduly heightened fear. The SFP serves as a social control mechanism that circumscribes women's movements. Because of their SFP, single women perceive environmental options differently than single men or married people, and this perceptual distinction, along with fewer financial resources, reduces the environmental choices available to single women. As the length of time unmarried increases,

women's fear typically decreases, slightly enlarging the housing, transportation, and leisure activity choices they consider possible. Singlehood is a process in which women adapt to their deviant status and learn to navigate alone in space.

The available housing, transportation, and leisure activity resources are products of a society in which women have negligible input. The environment also produces behaviors by presenting particular models for housing, transportation, and leisure activities. Social institutions must recognize the growing numbers of singles and present socially acceptable, affordable, housing, transportation, and leisure activity resources.

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CHAPTER I

THE ENVIRONMENT, WOMEN, AND SINGLEHOOD

Most prior literature treats the environment and gender as separate research agendas, but the environment is not unrelated to gender. All critical foci of gender research are embedded in an environment which has been designed, constructed, and maintained according to specific norms of gender-based behavior and family composition.

The "environment" includes more than just the physical structures in and around which people live and work; the environment also encompasses social expectations and ideologies on "acceptable" uses for different persons of the physical objects in space. Spatial arrangements are socially created, and they have symbolic values that people evaluate and to which they respond. The physical, social, and symbolic aspects of the environment are interconnected and must all be included in an interpretation of the meanings people attach to spaces, their use of those spaces, and the role of space in maintaining existing social structures.

The environment rests on a foundation built on traditional definitions of "female" and "male" behaviors and spaces. In the nineteenth century United States,

public and private spheres (work and home) were more clearly demarcated along gender lines than they have been in recent years; "ideal" women were often wives who focused on and were limited to a home environment that served as a retreat from the work world for men. With industrialization and the advent of coeducation, women in the twentieth century less frequently held a separate environment and the public/private division began to dissolve (Spain 1992).

In the late twentieth century, most women work outside the home in the traditionally "male" world of work and increasing numbers of women are unmarried. Yet, some store hours and facility location continue to be based on the assumption of a two-party household in which duties are split and one person is available during the day for routine business. Other institutions have changed, but rather than shifting to housing and transportation not based on a "family" model, two incomes are now often needed to provide for a comfortable standard of living.

Although women and men often share the same environments, their experiences are different. Males and females are socialized into gender models that entail separate patterns of capabilities, attitudes, task performance, and presumed uses of space. Women and men are still expected to focus on different sets of skills suitable for separate spaces, even when they are in the

same environment. Underlying the separate behaviors and attitudes defined as "appropriately" "feminine" or "masculine" is a social assumption that the two gender models are complementary parts of a functional whole.

Single women are outside of this normative gender model, and they are penalized. Spatially, they must establish transportation patterns, find housing, and develop paths of movement in space that bridge the gap between "appropriate" female and male duties, spaces, and activities. Socially, they do not "fit in" and constantly face the possibility of exclusion and derogation. Single women must adapt to an environment not conducive to their way of life.

In adjusting to and moving in the environment, single women's perceptions of their surroundings have paramount influence on their behaviors. These perceptions are highly conditioned by both individual background and gender socialization. Women learn common ways of viewing the world that are similar and uniquely female. Few differences are evident in women's consideration of the cost, convenience, safety, and appearance of their environmental movements.

First, all women question the economic constraints various environmental options entail: how affordable is the housing, transit, or leisure activity? Determination

of "affordability" depends on women's financial situation and their judgment of what is an acceptable amount of money to spend on a given activity.

Single women also consider the convenience of housing options, leisure activities, and forms of transportation. Although actual transit time and distance to regularly used facilities can be measured, "convenience" is fundamentally defined according to expectations of "appropriate" distance to a given activity.

Appearance considerations focus on both the physical appearance of a facility and how well the single woman feels she "fits in" that environment. Closely related to appearance is safety; part of how suitable a woman considers housing, forms of transit, or leisure activities to be is how safe she believes she would be from harm in that setting.

Women have a "socialized fear perspective" (SFP) on their environment that influences their perceptions on the safety of housing choices, modes of transit, or leisure activities. This SFP is the result of women's socialization by the family, media, and other institutions; it is continually reinforced throughout women's lives. A corollary to the SFP is a belief that women are safer with men, and single women thus perceive

themselves as particularly vulnerable. The perceived safety of a particular environment strongly influences women's environmental movements.

Women's perceptions of affordability, convenience, appearance, and safety provide the bases for their movements in the environment and their approaches to housing, transportation, and leisure activity options. The singlehood experience presents a distinct environmental situation for women for three main reasons. First, the predication of many housing, transportation, and leisure activities on a family model excludes singles. Women are also potentially scorned by others if they engage in "inappropriate" activities.

Second, as single women, they are in different economic and social positions than single men or married women. Third, women's socialization fosters a way of perceiving the environment that is filtered through acquired fear and low mobility.

For these three reasons, single women are in a unique position from which they must adapt to an environment not designed with them in mind. Literature exists on singlehood, environmental construction and planning, and women's affordability, appearance, convenience, and safety considerations, but it remains to ask: How do these factors combine to impact the environmental perceptions and movements of single women?

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. SINGLEHOOD

The number of single people in the United States has been steadily increasing since the late 1960s, for a variety of reasons (Apgar, et.al. 1985: 13). First, trends toward later marriage contributed to this increase. Second, between 1960 and 1980, the divorce rate also more than doubled (Peterson 1989: 1). Third, singlehood has become more economically feasible for some women, and they may have chosen to remain single.

The dramatic increase in the number of singles during the 1970s spawned a body of research; this research literature is voluminous but uneven. Little literature exists on women who have never married; ample research can be found on women just divorced. The working poor have been studied less directly than others, although they comprise a large percentage of single women. Much of the literature is centered on a specific problem and on positive and negative aspects of singlehood, or on "how to survive" being single, rather than addressing the actual patterns single women create in their lives.

In reviewing the literature, several common themes emerge. Many books are attempting to reverse the social stereotypes of singlehood as either a social wasteland or ceaseless debauchery. The literature had a boom in the 1970s, and comparatively little research has been done in the 1980s and 1990s. Some works consist entirely of case studies of women discussing their lives as single women (Scott 1971); others focus less on the individual's experience and more on "single life" (Bradley 1977; Edwards 1974; Fracchia 1979; Stein 1981). Whatever the perspective, the works all touch on three main areas: the social image of single people, the positive aspects of single life, and the problems of being single.

Single people often have been perceived as deviant individuals because they do not conform to the "universal" norm of marriage. Research in the 1970s often focused on this aspect of singlehood. Single women have been sometimes judged to be either immature and reclusive or wild and licentious (Cargan 1982: 69). These images of singles often lead to discrimination in hiring, housing, and loaning practices (Edwards 1974: 47).

Single people are perceived as "dropouts from society," an image they confront daily (O'Brian 1973: 200). The dominant image of the "family" creates a society in which what Chandler (1991) terms "familism" is present; those who are not part of a traditional family

are stigmatized and excluded from mainstream culture. Stein calls this social expectation of a particular family compositions "the imperialism of marriage" (1981: 9). As a result of marital expectations, many single women feel a "curious sense of dislocation and mild confusion," finding themselves unable to understand their "place in the scheme of things" (Peterson 1981: 15).

Single people also have positive experiences with their singlehood. People report enjoying their privacy, independence, and opportunity to focus on themselves (Barkas 1980: 24). These people see their lives as freer than their married counterparts from the obligations of married life. They can go wherever they want and spend their time how they choose. They see their personal interests and self-introspection as incompatible with married life.

Singlehood also has a down side. Single people report feelings of loneliness and alienation. When they are bored or sick, or during the holidays, single people report feeling very alone (Edwards 1974: 31). Interestingly, the same aspects of single life have been mentioned by different singles as both negative and positive. The lack of a committed sexual relationship and finances, for example, are mentioned frequently on both positive and negative reports (Edwards 1974: 31).

In considering the wide variety of single people's

attitudes, specific situations emerge as conducive to enjoyment of the single role. The singles who enjoy their lives and do not seek to marry are exceptionally independent and energetic, and they also tend to be outside of mainstream society already in another way, such as being politically radical (Peterson 1981: 15). These people are emotionally and financially self-reliant, and they see singlehood as a means to control their own lives and regulate their interaction with and commitment to other people.

Younger singles are also often more satisfied than older single women with their singlehood. Women in their twenties who are not married are likely to be accepted socially, particularly in recent years when people are marrying later. But as single people reach the "age thirty transition," they often move into a deviant status where they face increased social pressures to marry and are questioned on their reasons for not marrying (Stein 1981: 14). The more permanent and atypical her singlehood is judged to be, the less accepted the woman's marital status.

All single women have commonalities in their place in the social world, however. First, as Bequaert says: "single women share their womanhood, their singleness, and, in many cases, their poverty" (1976: xii). Many

single women face continuous economic difficulty because of their low income. The saying "Every woman is one husband away from welfare" is statistically supported.

Women make less money than men. Unmarried women are forced to live on a low salary, and female-headed households have the highest poverty rate of any demographic group (Chandler 1991: 92). Older divorced women often face particular difficulty, as many of them married with the assumption that they would never work outside the home and are thus inexperienced in the work world (Peterson 1989: 2). Regardless of age, however, divorced women on average experience a 73% drop in their standard of living after divorce (Peterson 1989: 5). Work is also no answer for single women because of unequal work opportunities, conflicts with home care and children (if present), and lower wages (Bequaert 1976: 127).

United States society is organized on the assumption that most women are financially dependent on men for housing, food, and support of the children; when a man is not present, women have economic and social difficulties (Bequaert 1976: 114). With the combination of what amounts to government subsidies for the married and the lower earnings of women, none of the options open to single women "even approaches the income level or economic security of most married women" (Bequaert 1976: 115). For women, to be single often is to be poor.

Second, single women are often presumed to be looking for a husband, and singleness is seen as a state of limbo or purgatory. Unmarried women face institutional and personal discrimination (O'Brian 1973: 97). "A woman's place" typically does not connote a woman living alone and engaging in activities alone, but a wife. Society stigmatizes single women based on "unarticulated presumptions of moral infirmity" (O'Brian 1973: 99).

Single women are outside the normal place and patterns of a "woman" in this society. The alienation felt from this separation, as well as the prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory actions they face, are shared by these women. Single women typically develop social support networks with other single women. Unmarried women report a greater need for friends and friendship groups than married women, "but this [search for friendship] must be undertaken outside the world of couples" (Chandler 1991: 82). By establishing a separate singles network, women alleviate some of the alienation of singlehood.

Singlehood produces some level of alienation; being female only intensifies the experience. Bakos sees single women, including herself, as "women in single cages, dancing alone, looking surprised" (1985: 6). The surprise is because most single women did not plan to be in that position; they planned to marry and either it never happened or a marriage did not work.

Living on the outside in a "couple culture" is potentially alienating and economically problematic. To overcome the social stigmatization of being single, a woman must be financially and emotionally self-reliant. For people who are, the single life can be enjoyable. But for the single woman with little money who believes in the traditional role of a woman as a wife or supporter to men, single life can be very difficult.

B. WOMEN AND SPACE

Over the past fifteen years, many researchers have examined the place of women in the environment and in ecological research. Lyn Lofland's seminal article "The Thereness of Women" addressed the invisibility of women to planners and urban ecologists (Lofland 1975). Since that article, many others have addressed the assumptions on gender and family embedded in research and policies--the separation of work and home based on the traditional nuclear family; zoning laws that rely on the "family" as the basic unit; and safe housing that is unaffordable to a single woman without a man's second income (Berkely 1980; Card 1980; Darke 1984; Freeman 1980; Markusen 1981). The assumptions underlying housing policies and spatial arrangements ignore the use of space by single women. Single women are invisible; their use of the environment

is not considered by planners, and their input on the construction of spatial arrangements is not actively solicited.

One reason cited for the invisibility of women is their lack of representation in the architectural and planning professions. Twice as many men as women receive degrees in planning in the United States (Leavitt 1980: 223). In the planning profession, women hold 70% of the clerical positions and only 10% of professional ones (Leavitt 1980: 222). In architecture, 95% of professionals are male (Darke 1984: 2). Some feminists (Anonymous 1980; Berkely 1980; Darke 1984; Leavitt 1980; Milroy and Andrew 1988; Torre 1977) argue that this lack of representation results in male professionals relying on stereotypical images of women and "family" when planning construction of spatial layouts.

Spain (1992) advocates the adoption of a "spatial perspective" in gender research. She views spatial layouts as a way of "maintaining social order" and gender inequality (1992: 37). A "spatial perspective" would concentrate on the "mutual reinforcement" of architectural and planning constructs and gender inequality, "rather than on a causal agent" (Spain 1992: 79). Although women's and men's behaviors and perceptions in housing, transportation, and leisure activity selections are not solely determined by spacial arrangements, "once spatial

forms are created, they tend to become institutionalized and in some ways influence future social processes" (Spain 1992: 6). Because the environment functions as both product and producer of gender, Spain argues that research on gender inequality must address the role of spatial arrangements.

1. Housing

One of the most powerful symbols in United States culture is the "home," embedded in which are specified images of the nuclear family and suburbia. Single family detached dwellings are part of the American ideal, and the dominance of these structures in decentralized urban spatial arrangements "reinforces people's ideas of what forms of household structure are possible and penalizes them materially if they wish to pursue other visions" (Markusen 1981: 34).

Suburban single-family living has been, since World War I, the dominant ideal, reinforced by United States government policies and popular culture (Markusen 1981: 35). Between 1970 and 1980, 16.8 million households were added in the United States, a 60% increase from the number added in each of the two preceding decades (Apgar, et.al. 1985: 11). The majority of housing growth was in the construction of low-density, single-family structures; the median cost of these homes increased from \$19,500 in 1970

to \$55,800 in 1980 (Apgar, et.al 1985: 81). By 1982, the mean price of a single-family dwelling was \$87,600 (Hayden 1984:13).

During the 1970s, the number of unmarried adults increased by 36%, with 25% of all adults living alone (Apgar, et.al 1985: 13). Projections indicate this growth will continue at a fast rate during the 1990s. Despite the demographic shifts to smaller households, the last four decades have been marked by the bulk of capital resources for housing being concentrated in the detached house (Hayden 1984: 13).

The continued construction of single-family dwellings assumes a financial situation many single people cannot meet, particularly single women. Single women's income averages 60% lower than husband and wife households, but single men's income is only 15% less than married couples (Klodawsky and Spector 1988: 147).

Single women, particularly single mothers, face economic difficulties in obtaining housing. The single-family detached dwelling is often beyond their financial reach. Single people regularly find the housing options available to them lacking in flexibility, complexity, and variety (Hayden 1984: 13). Many people have difficulty locating affordable housing, and governmental rental assistance often does not meet single women's needs (Mulroy 1988: 173).

The family household norm is reinforced by zoning laws. Zoning laws limit the location of child care facilities, separate home and work, and define "family" so restrictively that sometimes it is illegal for single parents, same sex people, or older single people to share housing in certain areas (Wekerle 1981: 199). Zoning policies assume the "family" is the basic unit. Although this "family" may be defined as a married couple with children or as any combination of people, the connotation is not a single woman living alone.

Zoning policies also create housing difficulties by promoting a split between the public and private realms of social life. Certain areas are commercial; others are residential. Employment options are zoned out of many living areas. Zoning policies and housing arrangements do not simply suggest possible lifestyles; they exert "social control" and reinforce "the traditional patriarchal family" (Wekerle 1981: 207). The zoning and housing situation and the invisibility of single women is a problem that merits "special policy attention" (Mulroy 1988: 160).

Where do these invisible women go? Freeman (1980) shows that women have both legal and economic difficulties obtaining housing. In the 1970s, only 18% of houses in the U.S. are occupied by women alone or with children, and half of these women are those over sixty-five whose

husbands have died, leaving them the house (Freeman 1980: 11). This trend has continued through the 1980s and is projected to remain through the 1990s.

Single men and married couples are both much more likely than single women to live alone. The only category of single women in which the number of women living alone is increasing is the widowed (Apgar, et.al 1985: 16). This situation is not because women do not want their own home; in fact, women often see the suburban house as the ideal, both for safety reasons and as a social symbol of "success" (Wekerle 1980: 14).

2. Transportation

Single women do not fit the traditional gender model or spatial norm. As unmarried women, they perform tasks traditionally allocated to both women and men, in and out of the home. Women's participation in the work world continues to increase, but although "women's activity patterns seem to resemble what men do,...women's qualitative experience is actually quite different from that of men" (Michelson 1988: 81).

Single women are more likely to live in urban than suburban areas, because public transportation and more full-time jobs are available (Saegert 1980: 101). The

only group of single women who consistently live in suburban areas are divorced women who continue to live in the home remaining from their marriage (Mulroy 1988: 123).

Public transportation is practically non-existent in the suburbs, and women are twice as likely as men to use public transit (Freeman 1980: 12). In fact, 70% of adults without access to a car are female (Hayden 1980: 175). Women are less likely than men to have driver's licenses, although they typically travel more (Michelson 1988: 89).

To work, public transportation is important for people without an automobile. Many women without vehicles are able to borrow a family member's car, but such loans are often unreliable. Single women without cars living alone face the additional problem of not having a car in the household at all. The stress of time pressures and deprived transportation especially affects women; research has shown that men with the same amount of transit time do not experience the same level of tension as women (Michelson 1988: 89).

Suburban areas in particular reveal a variety of inequalities in transit options for women. Cichocki says that these inequities stem from the "physical isolation of residential neighborhoods, increased distance in travel, infrequent transit scheduling, and inadequate social services in outer suburban communities" (1980: 162-163).

During the 1980s, increased clustering of facilities and mixed uses of space reduced the isolation of the home, although transit was often still problematic for women.

A variety of changes are needed to reduce the transit problems in suburban women's lives. The introduction of more extensive and efficient transport, better jobs, and increased day care options could potentially "alter the perceptions and attitudes of women themselves with respect to their roles in the home and as members of modern society" (Cichocki 1980: 163). Longer store hours, more options for housing, transportation and leisure, and increased concentration of facilities are needed (Michelson 1988: 84).

3. Leisure Activities

A fundamental problem with the availability of leisure activities is the lack of direct input women have had. "Men...have been asked for their opinions on recreation resources, transportation needs or housing. We might, in fact, be forgiven for thinking, that women simply do not exist in the spatial world" (Women and Geography... 1984 :19). Women's needs and concerns are not often considered when spatial arrangements are designed and constructed. An implicit assumption often exists

that recreation centers are "experienced similarly by men and women," and women are not directly asked for input (Piche 1988: 161).

Many existing leisure activity choices are predicated on couple or family use. Theater, dances, vacations, formal dinners, and other leisure activities support the assumption that people will be in couples. Single women are not presented with many options they see as "appropriate" for their use unless they are with men.

On physical activities, however, some evidence exists that illustrates a higher tendency for singles to participate in outdoor recreation and sport than their married counterparts (Smith and Therberge 1987: 49). What type of activities single women engage in depends on their employment status. For employed women, singlehood is negatively associated with outdoor recreation and unrelated to sport participation. Among women who are not employed, single women are significantly less involved in active sport and significantly more likely to engage in outdoor recreation (Smith and Therberge 1987: 48). Although single women may restrict certain "date" activities when alone (e.g., dances), other activities that do not socially necessitate male companionship find higher instances of single women's participation.

Regardless of marital status, however, the overall mobility of women is demonstrably less than their male counterparts. From childhood, females venture less distance from the home than males, and females rarely go places alone (Women and Geography...1984 :45). Women, and more especially single women, travel only in restricted areas outside of home and have limited knowledge of supportive social services and activities (Wekerle, et.al. 1980: 13). Married women of all ages spend most of their time at home, and single mothers have an even less active social life (Chandler 1991: 84).

Single women are often unaware of opportunities available to them outside of the "couple culture," and "how people perceive spatial opportunities determines to a large extent how they will use them" (Women and Geography...1984 :93). Women also face a variety of constraints on their leisure activities. Domestic and child care duties, financial problems, and the "instability of leisure programmes" for them; single women's leisure activity organizations and suggestions are often not taken seriously by public facility operators (Piche 1988: 164). Single women are also inhibited in their leisure activities because most leisure resources "are not sexually neutral," but rather are "male" environments or sexually "charged" situations in which a woman alone is uncomfortable (Chandler 1991: 84).

C. WOMEN'S CONSIDERATIONS

1. Affordability

In the United States, a woman earns about 64% of what a man with the same education and experience makes (Reskin and Roos 1990: 80). Women also dominate low-pay occupations, such as clerical work; the majority of doctors and lawyers are men. Lower pay for women means their ability to purchase housing or cars is less than their male counterparts. To afford a home in the suburbs, a reliable car, and leisure outings, a woman needs a large income or a second source of financial support.

Spatial expenses in this society today are predicated on a two-income household; the constructed facilities assume a "family" model and demand a household unit with financial stability (Wekerle 1981: 207). Single women suffer a double disadvantage: they not only have just one income, but that income be a woman's. A woman without a man typically has a below average household income, and thus has fewer environmental choices than married women or single men.

Why do females make less money than males? Partially because of differential socialization in occupational possibilities. A survey of elementary school textbooks shows that discussions of "what boys can be" and "what girls can be" are very different (Richmond-Abbott 1983: 129). For males, typically, three times as many possible

occupations are listed, including doctor, businessman, and president. For females, their shorter list includes nurse, secretary, and wife. From childhood, females are taught that the possible occupations for them are roles that complement and support males. Both females and males are taught that roles for males include more authority and prestige and work for females entails assisting males.

As a result of this differential socialization, first, females often do not see themselves as capable of high-pay work (Richmond-Abbott 1983: 136). Second, both females and males frequently rely on notions of "appropriate" work in both applying and hiring practices. Prejudicial perceptions of gender-based capabilities are based on a male-as-authority and female-as-support model, both at home and at work. Females who are not married or otherwise attached to males find themselves in a subordinate work position with no male to compensate for this economic inequity.

To complicate this low-income problem, women also are sometimes discriminated against when they seek loans (Card 1980: 216). Although racial discrimination in sale or rental of housing was made illegal in 1968, gender discrimination was not included until 1974. And, as with race, gender discrimination is still a problem.

One of the biggest obstacles to loan acquisition is not availability, but awareness. Many single women are unaware of financial possibilities open to them. Instead of working out a loan and payment program with a bank, single women often pay equivalent money in rent. Women's perceptions of what they can afford influence what type of housing they select. A lack of information on housing possibilities creates a gap between existing housing resources and what women perceive their choices to be.

2. Appearance

Most people, including single women, take into account the appearance of an environment they consider using. With a housing or car purchase, women want their home and auto to suit their personality (Saegert and Winkel 1980: 54). Research has shown that women think houses should reflect their character more than men do, and women also get more satisfaction than men from the appearance of their home (Saegert 1980: 98).

Part of appeal is how well the woman feels she "fits in" an environment. A single woman looking for housing will consider not only the price, but whether she "belongs" in that house. If a single woman finds an affordable house that she likes in a neighborhood zoned for "exclusive single-family use," she may not feel the area is appropriate for her.

Social norms of "who should be where" are typically stronger than laws permitting or prohibiting use. As Ardner says, "space speaks" to women in particular ways (1981: 12). Single women in this culture are considered to be in a temporary category. They are often expected to live in temporary housing until they can get married, buy a house and a nice car, and have companionship for leisure activities. Single women alone who want to use space in these ways must overcome the labeling of their activities as "inappropriate" and "out of place".

Appearance considerations are related to safety concerns. Women consider the way housing, modes of transportation, and leisure activities "look" as an indication of their safety. Underlying women's perceptions of how well she "fits in" or likes a particular environment is an assessment of how safe that environment appears to be.

3. Convenience

When moving in space, the housing and leisure activity patterns women create are partially shaped by the need for convenience. Women in the United States, whether married or not, typically work outside the home and do virtually all housework (Berk 1980: 74). Single women certainly must do both. After working all day, single women find many facilities closed. Many banks and other

offices maintain "normal" work hours, assuming a "family" in which one member is free during the day (Saegert and Winkel 1980: 74).

Single women living alone must find time during their work day to take care of much of their necessary business. Single women are more likely than married women to work full-time and more likely than their male counterparts to work in a job where leaving during the day is not possible. Their facility use and housing location must be carefully chosen to minimize the time consumed in travel (Cichocki 1980: 156).

Transportation options influence housing and activity choices. If a woman is without a car, she must live in walking distance of activities or live near a bus line, in which case her shopping and leisure activities are shaped in part by bus schedules. If a woman has a car when she plans a path, she must consider normal transit time, possible traffic congestion, parking availability, and proximity of other services to the one she will be using. What she does and where she does it are influenced by her transportation options and convenience to other patterns of movement and regular locations.

4. Safety

Socialization into the role of "woman" in this culture includes learning particular modes of bodily

comportment (Young 1989), speech (Tannen 1990), sexuality (Dworkin 1987), and mobility (Mackinnon 1987). These facets of behavior are all partially shaped by fear; more especially, the fear of sexual assault that women may experience guides their daily behaviors. An integral part of becoming and being a woman is learning to fear men. Women are taught to expect attacks from men. Being female means being aware of the possibility of being raped. Being female means learning to adapt to the status of a possible victim (Beneke 1982: 9).

To cope with the possibility of being an object of attack, women learn both physical and psychological adaptive strategies. First, women are socialized to find sexual objectification desirable. Women who can make themselves attractive to men enjoy "a measure of respect and attention not generally bestowed on women" (Chapkis 1986: 95). Women's bodies are, in a sense, malleable objects able to be shaped and controlled; "female beauty is a state to be attained" (Chapkis 1986: 14). Women internalize a Cartesian mind-body split as a defense mechanism and as a way to gain power; a separated body enables the mind to manipulate the body for sexual marketability, to shape the body for avoidance of sexual attack, and to distance the body from the psyche in the event of an actual attack.

A paradox emerges here: women learn to want to be desired and objectified, but they also learn that they have a responsibility to keep themselves from being sexually assaulted (Chapkis 1986: 139). Men "naturally" are prone to attack women and women should desire the attention of men, but women also must protect themselves against attack.

Women often blame themselves for sexual assault. This self-blaming means they believe they can and should do something to prevent rape: attire, bodily comportment, and--importantly--spatial movement. Murder is viewed as an unpredictable act, but rape is a predictable act, the probability of which can be lessened by not being in the "wrong" place, wearing "inappropriate" clothing, or giving off the "wrong" cues.

Being female means knowing the socialized prototype of the rape victim and your responsibility to guard yourself by avoiding the model she presents (Dworkin 1983: 22). Females are taught that by avoiding certain areas, attire, and attitudes, they can improve the odds that they will be part of the 7.8% of women who are not sexually assaulted or harassed in their lifetimes (Mackinnon 1989: 127).

A common way women protect themselves is to attach themselves to a man, either by simply having him walk her to her car or by having a male (e.g., husband, boyfriend,

father) close by (Dworkin 1983: 14). Women are presumably safer in their homes, in parks, on vacation, or on the street if a man accompanies them. Marriage is the social norm, and in it women see protection from the outside. Women who do not get married and live alone face a different set of experiences with housing, leisure activities, and other aspects of day-to-day life.

For single women, spatial adaptation is an important survival skill. Attire and bodily comportment are also factors, but if a woman is in an "inappropriate" place, she has put herself in a vulnerable position. As Boys explains, a cultural belief exists that women in "inappropriate" places "deserve what they get" (1984: 51). Women restrict their spatial movements out of fear much more than men do.

In The Female Fear (1989), Gordon and Riger present the results of an extensive study conducted to determine the influence of fear on women's behavior. According to their research, dramatic differences exist between men and women's use of space. For example, only 25% of women reported that they would go to a movie alone at night; among men, 68% said they would (Gordon and Riger 1989: 15). Over half the women said they "never" walk by a parking lot alone after dark, but 87% of men regularly did (Gordon and Riger 1989: 15).

Women and men were also asked questions on the intrusion of safety concerns in their daily thoughts, and the results were equally dramatic. Almost three-quarters of women said they thought about safety when looking for a parking place at night, but only one-third of men did. Over a quarter of women said they "always" restricted their going out to daytime only, but 72% of men said they "never" limited themselves to the daytime (Gordon and Riger 1989: 16).

Questions on how often they wore clothes in which they could easily run from danger, how frequently they drove rather than walked out of fear, and other influences of fear on behavior brought equally differentiated results (Gordon and Riger 1989: 15-18). Men and women do not have the same level or type of fear in this society, and the fears they do have do not have the same behavioral influence. As a result of their fear, single women view the environment differently than their male counterparts who are the designers and builders of the environment.

D. CONCLUSION

Single women, as prior research has shown, find themselves "out of place" in the environment (Freeman 1980: 17). They do not fulfill social expectations of marriage, and the ramifications of their deviance are both social and spatial. Socially, women feel out of place.

Spatially, transportation patterns, housing, zoning laws, and leisure activities are constructed with assumptions of traditional gender-appropriate behaviors and attitudes (Saegert 1980: 108).

Single women's lives do not correspond to the social or environmental models; their needs and problems are different from married couples or single men. Single women have been virtually ignored by urban researchers and planners (Leavitt 1980: 229). These women find themselves struggling to adapt to an environment not built with their needs, ideas, or safety in mind.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A. NATURE OF RESEARCH

This project was an exploratory, qualitative study on single women's perceptions of and adaptation to the Knoxville environment. The environment is broadly defined as both the physical constructs in space and the social and symbolic significance given to these structures that women consider in evaluating their movement.

Twenty-five single women were interviewed on their housing selection, transportation, and leisure activities to determine existing similarities and differences among the women's perceptions and behaviors.

This project focused on single women's perceptions of the physical environment in which they live and work. The uses of housing, transportation, and leisure facilities and the perceptions that influenced these uses were considered. The goals of this research were not only to form descriptions of single women's movements in space, but also to analyze their reasoning on these movements. The research methods were oriented toward these goals.

This research is not intended to be conclusive or final, but to serve as a sensitizing project that will provide a starting point for future work in a similar

area. Comparisons to single men and to single women in other types of environments would provide both interesting and fruitful results.

B. SUBJECTS

Twenty-five single women between the ages of 25 and 55 were interviewed. All women interviewed lived in the Knoxville area. Twenty-five was selected as the sample size because of the resource limitations of the data collection and the exploratory nature of this project. Twenty-five was a small enough number to be manageable, yet large enough to give a sense of commonalities and differences in experience and perception.

The category of single women was chosen as the sample population because they were outside the traditional nuclear family model and, thus, faced with an environment not set up with their ideas or needs explicitly in mind. As outsiders beyond the pale of "normalcy," single women could reveal the perceived influence of their unique status on their uses of space.

Some women interviewed had children and some did not. By considering single women both with and without children, differences associated with by motherhood could be identified. Factors common to all women interviewed were distinguishable from those unique to single mothers.

The age range of 25 to 55 was selected to be broad enough to allow for differences in prior experiences and narrow enough to create some degree of homogeneity in their social situation. Women under 25 are often still in a rather transitional state; for example, some are in temporary work positions or living with parents. Women over 55 are more likely to be widows and have a permanent home and activity patterns based on their previous lifestyle as a married woman.

The University of Tennessee's Director of Research Compliances certified this research project in Fall 1991.

C. SAMPLING

Participants for this study were located primarily through local singles groups, both religious and secular, and a snowball sampling technique. The local YWCA also served as a channel for interview contacts.

In the sampling process, first a roster of active singles groups in the Knoxville metropolitan area was compiled by contacting churches and other institutions through which women might organize, such as the YWCA (see Appendix I.). Most groups are church-affiliated. Volunteer Singles, a secular organization focused around charitable activities, was also very active and well-

organized. In addition to these groups, the Metropolitan Community Church, a lesbian and gay church, also served as a resource.

Second, each of these groups was contacted by phone to identify a contact person and to determine if the group was still active. All the groups listed continue to meet and organize activities.

Third, a packet was sent to a heterogenous sample of these groups. Due to budgetary constraints, only seven groups were sent a mailing. The mailing contained a cover letter explaining the research project, five copies of the informed consent form, and five self-addressed stamped envelopes. These packets were sent to the leader (or contact person) of the following groups: Calvary Baptist Church; the Tennessee Valley Unitarians; Church Street United Methodist; the Knoxville Jewish Federation; Volunteer Singles; Sacred Heart Church; and the Metropolitan Community Church. The leaders were asked to discuss or distribute the letter at their next meeting.

Fourth, one week after the mailings went out, all seven groups were contacted by phone. Many of the groups have irregular meeting times, but representatives from each organization agreed to assist in finding participants. Between August and November, several meetings of different groups were attended to discuss the project further. During this time, the YWCA and Knoxville

Urban League were also contacted for participants. The Knoxville Urban League declined their assistance, and the YWCA directed inquiries to the YMCA, through which contacts were made.

Contacts were given self-addressed stamped envelopes, consent forms, and explanatory letters with phone numbers where the researcher could be contacted. Some returned the consent forms in the mail with their phone numbers; others called to express interest. Those who responded were interviewed and asked for additional contacts. Approximately half of the women interviewed were original contacts and half were reached through this snowball sampling technique.

D. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The women interviewed varied on the characteristics of age, marital history, region of residential origin, race, class, and sexual preference. The ages of the women interviewed ranged from 27 to 54. Approximately one-third (32%) of the women interviewed were between 25 and 34 years old. Another third (36%) fell in the middle range of 35 to 44 years of age, and a final third (32%) were between the ages of 45 and 54.

Within the first category (25-34), the majority of women were between 27 and 29 years of age. In the second grouping (35-44), two-thirds of the women's ages were

between 40 and 44. In the last group (45-54), most women were between 50 and 54 years old. Most women interviewed (68%) had been married at least once. Sixteen women were divorced; one was widowed. The remaining 32% of women had never been married. Almost all women who had never married were under 35 years of age.

Among the single women, most were from Tennessee, usually East Tennessee. Other women (36%) were from out-of-state. Two women were from California, three were from Washington, D.C., and the remaining four were from Illinois, Kentucky, Texas and Virginia.

The sample was largely white and heterosexual. Of the 25 women, 23 were white; the other two were African-American. Only two women openly said they were lesbian. The typical interviewee was a divorced (heterosexual) white woman from East Tennessee.

E. THE INTERVIEWS

The foci of this study were to consider single women's perceptions and uses of housing, transportation, and leisure activities in the Knoxville area. The interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions designed to elicit responses on the relative import of affordability, convenience, safety, and appearance considerations in women's movements in the Knoxville environment (see Appendix II.).

Questions on affordability of housing, transportation, and leisure activities were focused on two main issues: the reported costs in each category and women's perceptions of how critical "affordability" was in their environmental movements. The questions also were designed to ascertain how women ranked the decision-making factors in each category. For example, by asking if less expensive housing was an option and, if so, why it was not selected, the relative importance placed on expense was educed.

Convenience was defined by both distance and transit time. The questions first focused on the distance between home and other activities, then second on the women's perceptions of the relative convenience of these paths. Could she have lived in a more convenient location, or used simpler transportation, or participated in leisure activities closer to home? If so, why did she not? The questions on perception again probed the priorities the women established among the environmental considerations.

The impact of safety concerns on housing, transportation, and leisure activities was addressed first by asking whether women altered their behavior to increase their sense of security, and, if so, how. Determining whether their movements in space were conditioned by their fear was a focus of the questions on the relationships between safety concerns and usage of space.

The questions addressing appearance asked how women's judgments about appearance influenced their spatial movements and what they determined to be appropriate behaviors for a single woman. These questions elicited not only the environmental considerations of women, but also their ideas on expected behaviors of single women.

Responses to this set of questions fell along two main axes: use and perception. Single women's movements in space were affected strongly by their perceptions of the environment and of themselves as single women in that environment.

To conduct the interview on these topics, each single women volunteering for the study was contacted by phone and an in-person interview was set up. Most interviews were conducted in the woman's home, although a few women preferred to meet in a local restaurant or at their work place. The research project was explained to each woman, then she signed the informed consent form and the interview began. The shortest interview was twenty-five minutes; the longest one was an hour. During each interview, women were asked the questions on the interview schedule, and their responses were probed for further explanation. The length of time of the interview depended on the amount of discussion volunteered about the questions by the interviewee.

F. THE DATA

During each interview, extensive notes were taken; no recording devices were used. Following the interview, notes were transcribed onto a computer under the woman's assigned pseudonym. After all interviews were completed, the responses were organized into the broad categories of housing, transportation, and leisure activities. Within each of these three environmental areas, the results were further broken down into comments on safety, cost, appearance, and convenience.

These divisions of the interviews were coded according to environmental area (housing, transportation, or leisure) and topic of consideration (safety, cost, appearance or convenience). For example, responses on housing cost were "HCOST" and those on transportation safety were "TSAFE." General comments made by women about being single in Knoxville were also coded as "SINGLIFE."

After coding each word-processed interview by hand, all twenty-five interviews were entered into Ethnograph, a qualitative data analysis program, and formally coded. The data were then extracted by category, e.g., HCOST, TSAFE, LCONV. The groups of data were then sub-coded by hand according to recurring themes in the women's responses. On transportation safety, for example, many women discussed the importance of lighting and time of day

in their perception of transportation safety; responses on this topic were then respectively coded "lighting" or "time."

After this final coding step, each sub-category was analyzed, and the results were organized and written. For each environmental area, such as housing, five parts were written: on cost, convenience, safety, appearance, and the ranking of these factors. These five sections were then organized under the general environmental area, e.g., housing. These interview results then served as the bases for discussion and conclusions.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

All women interviewed moved in the same general environment of Knoxville. Housing, transportation, and leisure activity options have been constructed and presented to single women. Each women negotiated movements in this environment according to her perceptions of relevant factors. This research considered not only the movements of women, but also their reasons for housing, transportation, and leisure activity selection.

The interview results in this chapter are presented by environmental category: housing, transportation, and leisure activities. In each of these three sections, safety, appearance, convenience, and affordability are considered, as well as the single women's ranking of these four factors. After the three environmental considerations' results are given, responses to questions on singlehood are presented.

A. HOUSING

The twenty-five women interviewed all had to make their housing choices from the options available in the Knoxville area. The women had different incomes and housing preferences, but the possibilities for their

housing came from the same general pool. To understand their interview responses, the housing situation in Knoxville should first be considered.

1. The Knoxville Environment

Available housing in Knoxville targets medium through high income residents. Although almost 20% of Knox County households earned \$10,000 or less in 1989, and nearly a third earned less than \$15,000, few decent houses or rental properties exist in the \$25,000 or under price range (MPC 1991: 3). To exacerbate the problem, most of this lower-priced housing is in need of expensive, major repair.

Also, a majority of households, both nuclear family and singles, have difficulty either generating a down payment or obtaining a loan. In The State of the Nation's Housing: 1990, a Harvard research team reported that only about 4% of black renters and 20% of white renters would qualify to purchase a typical starter home (MPC 1991: 9).

In 1990, the majority of units authorized for building permits in Knoxville were single-family detached dwellings (MPC 1990). Three times as many single family as multi-family units were authorized. The single family units are detached houses that are usually more expensive

and less energy efficient than apartments or condominiums. Single family units typically require more expenditure and upkeep than other forms of housing.

The combination of low income and limited availability of low-cost housing especially affects single women, as they most likely make less money than men and have more difficulty obtaining housing. Fair Housing laws do exist in Tennessee that prohibit discrimination based on race/color, religion, sex, physical/mental handicaps, familial status, or national origin. Nonetheless, due to economic inequality, single women and minorities often have difficulties obtaining adequate housing. Because of prejudicial attitudes toward single women, particularly single mothers, women also sometimes face discriminatory rental or sales practices.

The Knoxville Area Urban League works with approximately 12,000 people annually who need assistance in obtaining housing. This organization is the only one in the area available for housing counselling. The Urban League talks to people with housing problems, helping them obtain housing, and they also regularly investigate whether loaning or renting practices are discriminatory. About 90% of the Urban League's clientele are single women.

The zoning in Knoxville is fairly typical of United States cities. The Knoxville area is divided into seventeen zoning districts included in agricultural, open space, residential, office, commercial, historical, industrial, and floodway categories. Each residential zone is based on the "family," which, as defined, does not necessitate a blood or marriage relationship (MPC 1986: 9). Although the term "family" typically connotes a marital relationship or a nuclear family, any arrangement of less than five unrelated people can legally live together in a "family" area of Knoxville.

The place of single people is not directly addressed in the zoning policies; they are simply subsumed under the rubric of the term "family." Also, in the ordinances, the Planning Commission holds the right to review uses of the area to consider whether they are in keeping with the "internal stability" and "functional relationship" of the area (MPC 1986: 32b).

One division of single family dwellings is an area defined and protected from uses not necessary to the "single family residential environment" (MPC 1986: 32b). Also, certain commercial uses and types of housing (e.g. trailers) are prohibited from most residential areas. Legally, single women can live anywhere a nuclear family is allowed--but they must be able to afford the housing and the transportation to work, and they must feel

reasonably safe. They must also be aware that certain neighborhoods are open to them even if they are not part of a traditional "family."

2. Research Results

The twenty-five single women interviewed lived in a variety of housing types and locations. About the same number of women lived in houses (13) as in apartments or duplexes (12). Of the women, 65% rented rather than owned their residence, and out of the nine women who owned a home, half of them had kept the house after a divorce. Only five women had sought and bought a house as a single woman, and two of them had adult relatives living with them and sharing the expense.

The area of the city in which the women lived often depended on their income. Most single women living in West Knoxville had above average incomes; the women living in South, East, or North Knoxville typically lived on more restricted budgets. Of the women interviewed, 44% lived in the North Knoxville area, 24% lived in East Knoxville, 20% lived in West Knoxville, and 12% lived in South Knoxville.

The twenty-five women were interviewed on their process of choosing housing and their satisfaction with their choice. General questions were asked about their criteria for selection, then specific points on cost,

safety, appearance and convenience were raised for discussion. These four considerations were the primary focus of the housing aspect of the interview; questions were aimed more at the influence of their perceptions on their choices than on the decisions the women made.

a. Housing Cost

Single women's level of affordability varied from high to extremely low. The twenty-five interviewees' responses were categorized into one of four categories of importance of housing cost: critical, restricted, flexible, or unimportant.

Single women interviewed for whom housing cost was of critical importance (n=4) only had one or two housing options they could afford. Every other consideration was subordinated to cost; these women had to "make do" with whatever they could afford. One interviewee, Kay, was homeless for a period of time and lived in a local park. Another woman, Brenda, was living off earnings from the sale of the house she lived in while married and would be unable to pay rent when that money was spent. These women were extremely unsure about their ability to pay for housing in the future.

Most single women interviewed (n=14) had restricted cost options; they had inflexible, narrow price ranges for housing. These women had a few housing options to select

from, depending on other factors, but they absolutely could not go above a certain price. Jean, 39, spent 50% of her income on rent. For Fran, 54, cost was the "big question" and "affordability is prime." The women in this category discussed difficulty finding housing in their price range. They were limited to only a few options.

Five single women fell into the flexible affordability category. These women had a wide price range, so how much they spent on housing depended on other factors such as convenience and appearance. They commented on liking a housing price "if it sounded good" and being "willing to pay more for space and safety."

Finally, only two single women considered housing price to be relatively unimportant. These women did not consider cost as important as safety, convenience, or appearance. Their options were financially almost unrestricted; price was of negligible consideration. Clearly these women were the exception. Most single women interviewed fell in the range of restricted affordability and were forced to sacrifice in other areas for housing cost.

b. Housing Safety

Women's responses on housing safety were remarkably homogenous; almost all the women employed similar decision-making criteria and took comparable precautions.

With the exception of three outliers, differences in housing safety concern were minimal. The single women interviewed considered housing safety according to specific criteria: neighborhood quality, physical layout and possible alteration of the housing, and potential social relationships.

Neighborhood Quality

Single women placed great importance on what they determined to be the "quality of the neighborhood" in which they considered housing. Women frequently responded to questions of their sense of security with comments on the area such as: "It's a family neighborhood. Everyone knows everyone."

Single women sought neighborhoods with reputations for safety. Those from the Knoxville area looked for housing in the city neighborhoods they believed were safe, according to hearsay, newspapers, and other sources. Women from out-of-town checked with realtors or, as one single woman, Rose, did, subscribed to a local paper for a few months prior to moving to determine in which areas crimes were frequently reported.

Single women also spoke of driving through potential housing areas during the day and at night to see how the area looks and "feels." One woman, Maude, looked for people outside after dark and checked the upkeep of houses

and cars in the area. Also, she checked the area for bars on house windows and evidence of vandalism. Maude, like many single women, hoped to get a sense of the security in the area by observing how others in the neighborhood behaved.

Physical Layout

Ecological arrangement was also a neighborhood security consideration. Closeness of houses, proximity of street lighting, and amount of foliage near windows and doors were all taken into account. One divorced mother, Katie, moved from one residence because the house was far from neighbors and against a woody area; she wanted an area with closer neighbors, better lighting, and less hidden surroundings.

The physical layout of potential housing also influenced single women's selection process and level of fear. Location of windows and doors, proximity of neighbors, and other arrangements were considered. Windows off the ground with locks and storm windows were typically sought by single women, although not all women could afford housing with all the safety features they wanted.

Single women sought housing with doors that could be seen outside from another point in the house, thus allowing them to see who was at the door without being

seen. The location of a door ideally was in a well-lighted area of the house, easily seen by neighbors. Hidden back doors, particularly off the bedroom, were undesirable to most single women. One single woman, Pat, nailed an outside door accessing the bedroom shut, then placed a heavy plant against it to ease her security worries.

Single women in apartments described the closeness of others as further increasing security. One woman, Cheryl, liked her "thin walls" because her neighbors could easily hear her if she needed help. Another woman, Fran, intentionally selected an apartment with neighbors above and below for the same reason as Cheryl. These women and others saw the proximity of others as a highly advantageous security feature.

Security Alterations

Connected to physical layout considerations, most single women altered their surroundings physically. Increasing the security of windows and doors with additional locks or storm protection were common measures taken. Seventeen of the twenty-five single women interviewed altered their housing in some way, and three others commented that the house already had desired security features: "The house already had dead bolts, storm windows, and locks on the windows, so I felt pretty safe."

Almost all single women checked for dead bolts, secure locks on the windows, and some outside lighting. If the house did not have these features, they usually added them. Those with above average incomes typically installed alarm systems, security lights, and/or storm windows. The number of measures taken depended largely on financial resources, rather than simply what one wished to do.

Many single women also increased their sense of security by taking further measures, such as purchasing dogs. Several women spoke of keeping weapons in their bedrooms; one woman, Theresa, stated: "I keep a kind of weapon near the bed, a trowel." Others spoke of guns and baseball bats. None of these women had ever been forced to use a weapon against an intruder, but all of them said that they, like Maude, "wouldn't hesitate a moment to use them."

Social Relationships

Single women's judgment of the security of potential housing often was influenced by their social relationships with their family and friends and to those in the neighborhood. First, single women's friends and family played an important role in their sense of safety, particularly if others lived in the same residence. Other women had neighbors or nearby friends who kept track of their movements and watched for signs of trouble.

Single women expressed a sense of increased safety with the presence of others, particularly males. Women who had sons at home tended to believe others were less likely to see them as vulnerable; similar conclusions were drawn by those with roommates. For single women, additional people did not increase safety by being available to assist in the event of an intrusion or attack, but by decreasing the possibility of an attack through image presentation. Single women felt they did not "stand out as much" as "vulnerable" when others were present.

Single women also perceived themselves as safer when they knew their neighbors. Social relationships with others in a residential area could persuade a woman to remain in the same environment after a divorce or to move into a new environment with a higher sense of security. Although, as Ruth says, "neighbors are not the same as having someone in the house," they help.

Albeit single women typically did not know neighbors beforehand, many met potential neighbors before selecting housing, commenting that a factor in their selection of their home was that the neighbors "were very nice," suggesting to "come and get us if you have trouble." Neighbors were often used as sources for safety reports on

crime in the area. Single women often invested considerable importance in the opinions of neighbors and their friendliness.

After moving in, some single women reported introducing themselves to their neighbors as single women and exchanging phone numbers. Single women described neighbors checking on their house at night and watching for their return when they were out alone. Most women interviewed knew their neighbors and considered them a safety benefit.

c. Housing Appearance

The influential facets of housing appearance fall into two categories: suitability and aesthetics. Single women considered whether they "fit in" a particular neighborhood as a single woman. Single women also were affected by personal aesthetics. The appearance of housing and neighborhoods contributed to the overall appeal of a particular housing option.

On suitability, most single women preferred housing in areas where other singles live, and they felt uncomfortable in areas characterized by nuclear family living. Women living in areas without other singles expressed feelings of discontent with the neighborhood:

The neighborhood isn't suitable for me
because it's a young family neighborhood...
it's homogeneous.

Barbara, 52

I wouldn't say I fit in because most people
are couples and homeowners. The guy next
door put up a fence when I moved in.

Beth, 28

Women spoke of avoiding housing in neighborhoods dominated by nuclear family living. Lisa, 27, said she "wouldn't fit in out west in a family subdivision around a bunch of married people with kids," a sentiment expressed by several others. Women in heterogenous neighborhoods typically felt more comfortable as single women than those in homogenous areas. Sarah, 44, commented on the appeal of a "mixed neighborhood," as did Lori, 38, who sought an area with "diversity" of age, race, and housing composition. Single women considering various housing options almost always preferred an area with flexible household composition standards.

Two types of women interviewed did not feel out of place in nuclear family neighborhoods. First, single women who continued to live in the same area after a divorce were comfortable because they were already established and accepted in the area. Marie, 44, for example, had lived in the same house for over twenty years. After the divorce,

she chose to stay in the home, partially because she perceived herself as part of the neighborhood. Marie and others in her position, however, did say they would not seek a single family area if moving in as a single woman. The arrangement of their neighborhood did not appeal to them; the comfort did.

Single women with children frequently feel comfortable in "family" neighborhoods because, as Jean, 39, says: "I 'pass' as a family." Women with children were seen by many women interviewed as a more socially acceptable unit than a single woman alone. Single mothers often expressed a preference for "family" neighborhoods, which they perceived as safer and more "suitable" for children.

Excluding single mothers and women who lived in a familiar area, single women preferred to be around other singles. When single women moved into areas populated largely by nuclear families, they tended to refrain from making contact with neighbors, partially due to time constraints and partially the result of a belief that very little if any common ground existed between them.

Concerning aesthetics, everyone has particular predilections in housing; few single women had the luxury of ranking this taste highly. No single woman interviewed placed a high value on aesthetics, saying it was "not a real factor" or "it's not important as long as it's not

falling down." Most women, however, did seek housing with "potential" -- the possibility of future alterations to create an environment closer to ideals. For example, Heather, 44, found a vacant house she said was "unkempt" and unattractive, but she "had visions" and, like Fran, 54, "felt I could make it suit me with minimal expenditure."

Most single women interviewed described processes of transforming housing after selecting it. Painting, planting flowers, indoor decorating, and even the addition of a hot tub and deck were steps taken by single women. Clearly, levels of affordability played a key role in the amount of alteration done. The few women with high incomes were able to find and alter housing closer to their aesthetic standards than the majority of single women, who had very restricted budgets. Typically aesthetic alteration consisted of indoor decoration and, if the housing had a yard, flower planting.

Marie, 44, describing her house's appearance said: "I like it...in my economic situation it's wonderful." Marie's attitude typified most single women's situation. Under restricted incomes, aesthetics could not be given much consideration, although attractive housing was desirable. As Katie, 34, explained:

Yeah, it [appearance] had some influence. I liked it because it looked nice. But I would've taken it anyway if it hadn't.

d. Housing Convenience

When single women discussed housing convenience, they focused on three points: proximity to work, accessibility to errands, and distance to friends and relatives. All interviewees but one drove a car, and all the women spent most transit time alone.

Proximity to work was the top convenience concern of most single women. Three women worked at home, and fifteen women lived within a fifteen minute drive of their work place. Only three women drove half an hour or more to work. Some women commented that convenience to work was a "prime factor" in their housing selection, and most sought housing in areas from which the driving time would be short. Those few women who had longer commutes had no serious complaints, viewing the drive as inevitable and "quiet time" to relax.

Distance to frequent errands was not a severe problem for any of the single women interviewed. Even women in fairly rural areas described their ten to fifteen minute drive to the grocery store as convenient. The convenience constraints on errands were not the result of out-of-the-way locations, but stemmed from a lack of available time to get to these places. Clearly, housing convenience (distance to work and regular errands) was more important when respondents worked more than an average number of hours per week or had to spend time with child care.

Single women also mentioned closeness to friends or family, but this factor was very important to only two women, both of whom had elderly relatives nearby. Most single women moved into an area with no previous acquaintances in the neighborhood, although many of these women met people after moving. Several women joined area singles groups or support groups to meet other single women in the area. Overall, desire for proximity to friends and relatives was of minimal consequence.

When asked about the general importance of housing convenience, most single women wanted to live in a convenient area, but only if they could afford it and the neighborhood and house were safe. For example, Sarah, 44, and Heather, 41, selected the most convenient houses they could afford. Questions of affordability and safety typically took precedence over matters of convenience.

e. Ranking of Considerations

Beginning with interview six, women were asked to rank in order of importance, from first to last, the four considerations (cost, convenience, safety, and appearance) in selecting housing. The responses were quite homogenous: 75% of the single women (n=15) placed cost first; 85% (n=17) ranked safety second; 80% (n=16) ranked either appearance or convenience third; and 95% (n=19) ranked either appearance or convenience last.

Results indicated the majority of women interviewed saw cost as the "bottom line" and, when several housing options were affordable, safety was clearly the second consideration. Only 10% (n=2) ranked a factor other than cost or safety (convenience) first. Many women, however, after ranking cost first, commented on the importance of safety:

If there was a major safety factor, well,...but in the price range I'm looking in safety won't be a big problem.

Sarah, 44

To me that (safety) is non-negotiable. I wouldn't live there no matter how cheap it is because of the safety.

Lisa, 27

I wouldn't think of looking in a neighborhood that wasn't safe, no matter what the savings was.

Theresa, 45

The responses of these women, all of whom rated cost first, indicate a dilemma: for them and others safety was the most important, but their restricted economic situation prevented them from selecting the safest housing possible. Although cost was typically rated first, safety was of extreme import.

Convenience and appearance were relatively evenly distributed in the third and fourth ranks. These two factors were considered by most single women interviewed to be either impossible or luxurious. All four factors--a good price, safety, suitable appearance, and convenience--virtually could not be found in the same housing option, so sacrifices were made in appearance or convenience. The only women ranking convenience first were women with above average incomes for whom safety was assumed in their expected neighborhood and expenditure was highly flexible.

B. TRANSPORTATION

The single women interviewed all lived in the Knoxville area and thus were making transportation decisions after evaluating the bus routes and schedules. Before considering their responses to questions on transportation safety, appearance, convenience, and cost, the ecology of the area is briefly described to provide a framework in which to evaluate the women's experiences. Each single women moved in space in her own way, but they were all faced with the same physical constructs and available means of public transportation.

1. The Knoxville Environment

Knoxville has developed commercially and residentially along the main highways. Most commercial

areas lie along the major roadways, e.g., Kingston Pike, I-40/75, Broadway, Chapman Highway. Typically, residential areas are clustered around these roadways and the facilities on them.

Commercially, Knoxville is increasingly growing west towards Farragut. Most restaurants, movie theaters, and other activities are in West Knoxville, along with the majority of higher-income, single-family housing. Southwest, North, and Northwest sectors of Knoxville are the three major residential growth areas; the Southwest area (west of Walker Springs Road between Kingston Pike and Northshore) is by far the fastest growing subdivision area. All area growth moves around and is shaped by major roadways.

Knoxville is an automobile-oriented city. Over 2500 miles of roadways exist in Knox County; less than six miles of biking/walking paths have been constructed. Some of the major intersections on the roadways in the city have over 90,000 cars pass through each day (MPC 1988).

Knoxville area residents own a total of about 300,000 cars, and these vehicles are essential to get from home to work and other activities (MPC 1988). Between 1950 and 1980 Knoxville residents increasingly relied on cars. Although the population only increased by 43.1%, the rate of auto registration per capita during this period jumped 337.2% (MPC 1988). In this interim, reliance on the bus

system decreased. The public transit system of buses (K-Trans) is now used by only 3,700,000 passengers annually (1985), down from 24,000,000 in 1950 (MPC 1988).

Evaluating gender differences in transportation patterns in the area was difficult. Neither the K-Trans bus system nor the Knoxville Commuter Pool have sex-specific statistics on use, other than one study of elderly passengers. The Knoxville County Community Action Committee (CAC) does not keep gender statistics of the individuals they assist either, and vehicle registration records are not organized by gender. National studies have shown that almost three-quarters of U.S. adults without access to a car are women. Assuming that national statistics can be applied locally, one can infer that in Knox County most of the 25% of adults without an auto are women, and single women are more likely than single men or married women to need public transport.

2. Research Results

Single women were asked about their perceptions and use of modes of transit and transportation routes. All but one woman owned a car, and most occasionally used other modes of transit. Women were asked first about transportation cost, convenience, safety, and appearance,

then they were asked to rank the importance of these four factors from most important to least. As with housing, the results were remarkably homogenous.

a. Transportation Safety

Questions on safety concerns in single women's transportation patterns focused on several topics: perception of safety when biking or walking, particularly at night; possible driving route changes after dark; avoidance of areas of the city; level of alertness when driving; and the impact of the presence of others on women's perception of safety. Overall, the responses on transportation safety were fairly homogenous.

Lighting and time of day were very important to most single women interviewed. Although the vast majority of women said they sometimes walked or rode a bike in the day, 64% of interviewees said they would not ride a bike or walk anywhere at night alone. Pat, 29, rode her bike to work on Sundays, but she drove her car during the week because she worked later and would have had to ride alone on relatively isolated roads after dark.

Those women who were willing to walk alone at night often commented, like Sarah, 44, that they were "always conscious" of their surroundings. Beth, 28, stated that if she had to walk to her car after dark she would "pick up a stick or a rock or something...I don't obsess, but in

some situations you're more aware." Typically, single women avoided walking or riding a bike anywhere after dark, and those who had to do so for some reason were extremely cautious and aware.

Driving after dark also was a fear provoking activity for most single women. About half the women interviewed either limited their driving to the daytime or changed their routes after dark. Ruth, 52, when out after dark, took a longer route home because it was better lit and more heavily populated. She commented: "I tell you, a woman alone nowadays...it's very dangerous. It really is. And, after dark, well, it's a lot worse."

Lisa, 27, said "I try not to go out at night," and she scheduled work, classes, and errands so she arrived home by dark. Like Lisa, Jennifer, 32, said she limited her activities to daytime hours "six nights out of seven" for safety reasons. For these women and many others, leaving their home after dark produced extreme anxiety and worry.

For other women leaving home after dark was a necessity. Sarah, 44, said: "I don't limit myself to the daytime because I don't have that option." Due to time constraints or inflexible work hours, many women had to drive alone at night. These women took a variety of similar safety precautions to reduce their fears of driving alone. Over half the women described avoiding

some areas of the city, considering lighting of a destination before leaving home, locking all doors, and being "extremely" alert to their surroundings. Only three women said they did not avoid any areas when driving alone, and one of them, Charlotte, had a car phone, explaining:

If I have to go somewhere, I'll go. If I go somewhere I'm not familiar with, I lock the doors and all that. I'm not really afraid, mostly because I have a phone in the car. It's a very big factor in my feeling of safety.

Another woman, Rose, had only lived in Knoxville for a short period of time and said she "didn't know what areas of the city to avoid." These women were exceptions to the general pattern of avoiding areas of the city after dark.

Several areas of the city were repeatedly mentioned by women as neighborhoods they avoided. Magnolia Avenue and its sidestreets were the most frequently mentioned places to avoid, and Mechanicsville and Western Avenue were cited nearly as often. Women also referred to downtown Knoxville as an unsafe area because of poor lighting and lack of people after dark. A few women also would not go to the Old City alone because of parking availability; women reported having had to park in isolated or badly lit locations.

In addition to the general safety of an area, the majority of woman also considered the lighting of an area before leaving home. Many of them described their thoughts as being "ingrained," part of their perception of the world:

Lighting is always in my head. I guess it comes from living in Houston. I'm always staying alert. My mind works like that.

Charlotte, 42

I don't go places without good lighting, so I don't think about it much. I guess if I arrived and the lights were out somewhere, I'd leave.

Beth, 28

I try to avoid going to the mall at night because the lighting is bad. If I went and couldn't find a close parking place I wouldn't go.

Theresa, 45

If women said they did not consider lighting, they typically explained that they already knew what areas and facilities were well-lit and which were not, and they would only think of going to places with good lighting. Lighting was critically important to single women, particularly in parking lots.

Many single women would not park anywhere after dark except near an entrance or under a light, and would not go places with extremely large lots where some areas would be far from the building or dark. Getting from the car into a building and then back again to the car safely occupied many single women's thoughts when moving in a particular environment. Alice, 29, described returning to her truck after work:

I'm real conscious of things around me...is anyone walking close? Are there dark places near my truck where someone could be?

In addition to staying in areas with ample lighting after dark, single women also were very alert to their surroundings while driving, particularly to men walking on sidewalks. Katie, 34, said that "paying close attention to things around you is good defense," and Kay, 54, described an evening when a car had been behind her on the interstate for a long period of time and she pulled off the road to report the incident to a policeman at a gas station. She said: "...maybe they were just curious. I mean, a single woman alone? You can never tell. She might be looking for something." Kay's attitude exemplified the image many single women fear others have of them: they were alone at night, they might have been "asking for it," and they were vulnerable.

Single women locked their doors and watched people driving and walking near them. As Jennifer, 32, said: "If someone comes by, I make sure the door is locked." Lori, 38, bought a car with power door locks and automatic windows to ensure her ability to lock the doors and roll up the windows quickly. Many single women like Brenda, 46, were frightened of an attack while stopped at a light; she said she was afraid "because you hear about so many people grabbing people out of cars and all that." Because of this fear, alertness, locked doors, and what Lisa, 27, described as "paranoia" reduces single women's anxiety: "luck does some, but paranoia helps."

The number of precautions single women took and their alertness decreased with the presence of others. Although most women felt safer with others, only 24% felt more safe with a man than with a woman. Some women commented that a man is more help if the car breaks down, but most judged the main contribution to safety of a man's presence to be in image, believing that people were less likely to perceive them as a potential target for attack if they were with men. Lisa, 27, typifies the reactions of women who do feel safer with a man by saying "that's too bad, but it's reality."

The majority of women who felt equally safe with a woman or a man also explained their perception as image-based. These women believed others were less likely to

notice women or bother them if they were with someone; single women alone "stand out," calling attention to themselves and thus, in many women's view, to their vulnerability.

Many single women considered safety concerns constantly when selecting modes of transportation and routes. The process of alleviating fear through measures such as not walking or riding a bike after dark, avoiding areas of the city, considering lighting, keeping doors locked, avoiding going places when alone, and remaining constantly alert was highly internalized as part of the way women moved in space. Lisa, 27, described herself walking during the day:

My habits are very ingrained. I try to look straight ahead because I don't want to encourage anyone. I walk like I know where I'm going. I try not to look like a victim.

Lisa's attitude and behavior was very typical among the women interviewed. Lori, 38, who since moving to Knoxville first stopped walking to work then changed her parking location to avoid harassment, was angered by her experiences:

Freedom to access areas as a woman in a new city always has to be re-negotiated...I'm pissed off that because of my gender I don't have freedom of access to go where I want after certain hours.

Lori's attitude was rather atypical. Few women were angry, although almost all had had experiences similar to Lori. Most single women accept their negotiation of space as inevitable, and, although they find it complicating and confining, their fear was perceived of largely as a fact of being a woman moving through space.

b. Transportation Appearance

Single women's appearance considerations were inseparable from safety concerns; the impression given by a single woman's use of a particular type of transportation was seen as a major factor in increasing or reducing safety. Interviewees considered the "appropriateness" of possible modes of transportation, and many described processes of image manipulation surrounding selection of transportation types and routes.

The general consensus was that walking or riding a bike alone after dark is inappropriate for women, but driving alone is more acceptable. Jean, 39, explains that "it's dumb to walk by yourself in the city or UT parking lots or somewhere like that" and riding a bike "is inappropriate. You're putting yourself in a dangerous situation." Jean also said that "you can drive anywhere, really, but avoid dangerous areas as a precaution." Most

women agreed with Jean. Sarah, 44, said that any mode of transportation was "appropriate," but a woman "out of a car at night looks precarious."

This precariousness stemmed from making oneself noticeable. As Alice, 29, said, if "you're walking you look weird" and "people think you're weird. You call attention to yourself." Katie, 34, agreed:

It makes me really uncomfortable to see a girl walk at night...I know their situation, I mean sometimes you have to,...but still. It bothers me.

These women's comments all addressed the image presented by women alone at night and the possible danger of that image. Women wanted to avoid Brenda's feeling of "I stick out" because of the fear it engendered. Part of the concern about image focused on others' potential judgment of the wisdom of their actions. Kristine, 28, said: "It occurs to me sometimes...someone will pass me (walking) and I think they probably don't think I'm the smartest person."

The majority of appearance concerns turned to another aspect of presentation: avoiding the replication of an image that might encourage a potential attacker. In describing her experiences being harassed on the way to

her bus stop, Cheryl commented that "people see a woman alone walking and they assume she's wanting something."

Others agreed:

When I was married my husband sure had some ideas about what was appropriate [transportation for a woman alone]. In society, people think of a woman alone as 'asking for it'.

Charlotte, 42

If I'm walking late in the evening, some men might perceive me as 'looking for fun'. If I don't react to their catcalls, it escalates the harassment...people get hysterical when they have a certain image and you don't fit.

Lori, 38

Lori believed women were limited because most people did not see any means of transit other than driving as "appropriate," particularly after dark. Most women did not comment on the limitations imposed by such standards; instead they accepted the situation and tried to manipulate the image they projected. Ruth, 52, said

It depends on where you're walking and what you're wearing. If you have on provocative clothing, people think you're advertising. It just depends on the person. You're treated the way you come across. Some people can go places others can't.

Appearance expectations evidence the sex-based "double standard" that exists in behavior, dress, sexuality, and mobility. Women are not assumed to have the same amount

of freedom as men; they face social prohibitions on their movements because of their gender. Women internalize this double standard and use it to guide their definitions of what is an "appropriate" appearance for a single woman to present.

Although some women interviewed judged image manipulation as an unfortunate requirement or perhaps even recognized it as a double standard, almost all believed it was a necessary part of being a woman alone moving through space. Trying not to "look vulnerable" by driving after dark rather than other modes of transit and trying to avoid even being alone in a car after dark relieved some anxiety of single women.

Single women typically considered the appearance of different forms of transportation and manipulated the image they presented through selection of "appropriate" types of transit and avoidance of activities that called attention to their status as a woman alone. This anxiety is clearly not limited to single women; rather, it is indicative of any woman alone. However, single women are usually more likely to be alone than their married counterparts.

c. Transportation Convenience

On transportation convenience, single women were asked about the convenience of different modes of

transportation, ways they tried to reduce transit time, and their perception of the amount of time they spent in transit relative to other people. Transportation behaviors of the single women interviewed were extremely homogeneous.

All women interviewed found the bus system in Knoxville to be extremely inconvenient, even Cheryl, who relied on this system. Walking and biking were also judged as inconvenient because of safety concerns and physical danger worries; the absence of well-lit, convenient biking and walking paths made use of a car necessary for almost all transportation. As Pat, 29, said: "Knoxville is spread all over the place. I think people were anti-social when they built it."

Pat also commented: "I used to laugh at my sister (who lives in Knoxville) for saving up errands and trying to run them all at once, but I understand it now." Most single women described "saving up" errands to run on Saturdays, during their lunch hour, or at night. Most frequently, grocery shopping, laundry, and other chores were combined with the work route.

Women regularly scheduled activities to remain organized. Heather, 41, said: "I'm very much of a list person--try to do it all at one time." Errands were typically described as "a Saturday thing" or as being "arranged around my work schedule." Jennifer, 32,

explained that she, like many women, scheduled her errands in order of their location on her work path and, to save time, did them every other week on her way home.

Single women often complained of time pressures, especially if they had children. Getting to the bank while it was still open or to the grocery before dark was more difficult if women had to pick up children from school or other activities. Although grocery stores and drugstores are often open twenty-four hours a day, many single women do not feel comfortable going alone after dark. For single women, finding time was difficult; for single mothers, sacrifices were made--in money, sleep, safety, or optional activities.

Making time to run errands was an "impossibility" for Elaine, 44, and some other single mothers. Other women who did not have children also made comments about never being home and always being tired. Brenda, 46, said: "I find it hard to do anything. I feel like I'm going all the time." These feelings of single women are not necessarily results of their singlehood, as many married women and men operate under similar conditions.

Despite time pressures, single women typically would drive longer routes than necessary to increase safety. Women wanted to drive in well-populated areas they perceived as safe, and if such a route was not the shortest, time was typically sacrificed. "In case there's

trouble," as Katie, 34, explained, "I don't want to be in an isolated area." Convenience in transportation was important to single women, but concerns over safety and the appearance of their movements took precedence when selecting modes and routes of transportation.

d. Transportation Cost

The cost of transportation was not a highly ranked factor in most single women's decisions about transit options or routes. The average monthly transportation expenditure of the women interviewed was \$43.25; the modal expenditures were \$25.00 and \$50.00. The least reported amount spent by single women was \$25.00, and \$70.00 was the most. Only two women reported spending more than \$60.00 a month on transportation.

Most women wanted to save money on transit, but they commented that reducing expenses was impossible. Beth, 28, says she saves money "every way I can, but there really isn't much way to." Beth and most other single women interviewed agree with Fran, 54, that "a car is the only realistic option" in a city like Knoxville where getting around consumes gas and is expensive.

When asked if they ever walked, rode a bike, or took the bus to save money, very few women had. Most women said that the bus is not much cheaper than driving. Several women also complained that the bus route did not include

their neighborhood. Walking or riding a bike is also unrealistic for most women because of the distance to work or errands; single women would rather pay more and have the convenience and safety of a car. As Lisa, 27, said, she could cut back on expenses by taking the bus to dance classes, but it "would cause a great deal of security worry and anxiety." For single women, avoidance of that high level of concern is sufficient cause for spending more on transit, although these women would like to save money and "cut down on environmental problems" due to the damage caused by automobiles.

e. Ranking of Considerations

Most single women viewed safety and appearance concerns as inseparable; these two factors were considered together when deciding on the type of transit and the particular route. Those women who separated safety and appearance explained that they "didn't care" what "society thought," but they also recognized that others would be likely to judge negatively a single woman in certain places or using forms of transportation other than a car.

Among the women interviewed, most (70%) ranked safety concerns first, although 30% thought convenience was most important. No interviewees ranked any factor other than safety or convenience first. In the second rank, 85% of single women selected either appearance or safety second,

and the remaining 15% all chose convenience. The homogeneity of this ranking indicate that these women are in a bind: they are under temporal, economic and perceived safety constraints, but not all three of these closely ranked factors can always be given priority. Single women must frequently make a choice; either time, cost, or perceived security must be sacrificed. Typically, the choice is time, and single women drive longer routes, leave home earlier, or make some other compromise to get where they are going more confidently.

Cost (45%) and convenience (40%) were roughly equally allotted the third rank. Most women saw these considerations as less critical than safety. In the fourth rank, cost (55%) was the majority with appearance (30%) and convenience (15%) also mentioned. Among the single women interviewed, the most typical sequence was safety first, appearance second, convenience third and cost last. Most women considered safety and appearance to be connected. This pattern illustrates that despite both time pressures and economic concerns, single women typically were more concerned with safety than either of these two factors.

C. LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Single women in Knoxville all selected their leisure activities from the same general options; they shared a

basic environment. Individual factors such as residential location, income, and patterns of activity influenced the women's choices, but many common leisure patterns can be identified in their considerations of cost, convenience, safety, and appearance. Before interpreting the women's responses on these considerations, the physical environment in which they made their decisions must first be considered.

1. The Knoxville Environment

The Knoxville area has only about five miles of bike trails and 1300 acres of parks. The city recognizes the deficiencies in both these areas and has made proposals to improve them. In addition to increasing recreational acreage, one goal of the Metropolitan Planning Commission is to make the parks safer by increasing police patrols and establishing neighborhood watches over the areas. Regardless of whom is assigned to watch out for crime in these areas, women's perceptions of danger in the parks and other relatively isolated areas (e.g., biking paths, hiking trails) limits their usage of facilities. Whether chances of attack are actually high or not is not as important as women's perception that they have an obligation to stay out of "inappropriate" areas, particularly after dark and unless they are with a man.

Other than parks and other outdoor recreational facilities, Knoxville has an ample supply of movie theaters, restaurants, and nightclubs, as well as two malls. The majority of these activities are concentrated in West Knoxville along Kingston Pike. Movie theaters are also located in East and North Knoxville, and some restaurants are located throughout the city. Other facilities such as bowling alleys are located throughout the city, but the most frequent location for leisure activity is the West Knoxville area.

2. Research Results

Single women were first asked to describe their leisure activities in Knoxville and with whom they engaged in these activities. Then, they were asked to discuss in detail the impact of safety, affordability, convenience, and appearance on their use and perception of leisure activities. Beginning with interview five, women were asked to rank the influence of these four factors on their leisure activity selection.

When first asked what they did in their "free time," most women laughed and made comments such as:

I don't have any free time.

Jennifer, 32

Oh. Yeah. That would be wonderful!

Sue, 55

Free time? Surely you jest!
Marie, 34

You're assuming I have free time.
Beth, 28

I usually collapse.
Donna, 35

Single women, many of whom were also mothers, often worked two jobs or more than forty hours a week, and they spent much of their other time working in the yard or the house. The idea of "free time" was luxurious to many of the women.

Most women did find some time to socialize, frequently by doing necessary activities, such as cooking dinner, with others. If they went out, single women most frequently mentioned eating out, exercising, going to movies, or attending singles activities sponsored by local churches, clubs or singles groups. Most single women usually went out with other single women, and they occasionally went out on dates.

Few women reported engaging in leisure activities alone. Some women said they did not go out alone because of safety concerns; others commented that leisure activities were "boring" alone. The women who did go alone typically went to movies or to dinner and said they

often felt that people saw their actions as strange. Kristine, 28, described people's reaction to her going to a movie alone at night:

Some people find that odd. I mean, I don't just go to matinees, and some people think that is really weird.

Most women did report feeling uncomfortable and "out of place" when alone, particularly at night. Most engaged in leisure activities only with others. When single women had free time, their activities were similar: movies, dinner, clubs, friends' homes.

a. Leisure Activity Safety

Single women were asked about their perceptions of safety in leisure activities and how their concerns about safety influenced their behaviors. Single women were first asked whether they avoided doing activities alone or with others because of safety concerns. Those who did exclude some leisure options because of fear were then asked to explain their reasons for doing so. Finally, single women discussed their strategies for decreasing their fears about safety.

When asked about activities they avoided doing alone, only two women said they did not avoid any activities. Most women avoided activities because of fear of physical assault, although two women also mentioned that fear of

physical injury prevented them from hiking alone. Outdoors activities such as hiking or camping were the most frequently mentioned activities women avoided; many women perceived those activities as too isolated to be safe. Sue, 54, said "I read horror stories of what happens on trails." Cheryl, 31, said that when hiking alone "I get paranoid." Others, like Jean, 39, agreed, saying that being alone in the woods "puts you in a vulnerable position."

Women also mentioned avoiding going to movies, to nightclubs, to eat dinner, shopping, to the laundromat, and to the bank machine. As Elaine, 44, explained, for these women, being alone sometimes produced "an awesome, overpowering fear." As single women, being alone, particularly at night, was something to be avoided if possible. Since leisure activities were not essential for daily life, many women just avoided engaging in activities that made them uncomfortable.

Time of day was a key factor in determining whether women went out alone. Outdoor activities were perceived by most single women to be dangerous anytime they were alone, but other environments, such as movie theaters and shopping centers, were almost exclusively avoided after dark. With some activities (e.g., movies), norms of having an escort interact with fear, exacerbating women's anxiety and their tendency to restrict outings to the daytime.

During the day, visibility is better, areas are more populated, and single women perceived themselves as less noticeable and vulnerable.

Almost all women said they felt safer with others, either men or women, particularly at night. Over three-quarters of the women said the gender of others does not matter. The decrease in perception of fear results from not being alone and appearing vulnerable; for most women, being with a man rather than a woman made a minimal difference in their level of fear.

Typically, single women were very concerned with the safety of all leisure activities, even when they were not alone. Katie, 34, explained why she avoided bars: "I wouldn't go alone, period, and even with someone there's just too much possibility for trouble." Several others agreed with Katie.

Those who did go out alone, especially at night, described their strategies for increasing their safety. Most of them, like Maude, 51, would not go to an unfamiliar place, and when they went to a place they knew, they would park near the door or under a light. Some women either waited for other women to come along or went inside and like Jean, 39, who looked "for groups of women to sit with" to "make sure no one gets the wrong idea." Some women also commented that they only went out alone when they planned to meet someone there or when they knew

friends were there. The women's basic strategies centered around trying to go places they were confident were safe, and, once there, staying with others as much as possible.

The few women who hiked alone all described using the same strategies. They, like Sarah, 44, were always "conscious of the fact that I'm alone" and were thus very alert to their surroundings. They went only on busy trails early in the day and stayed near a ranger station. Again, although these women were willing to go alone if necessary, they remained around others during the time they were out.

Fear Reduction

Women who were willing to engage in some leisure activities alone during the day or even at night frequently described an earlier time in their lives when they would not have done so. The reduction of fear to a level where it was possible to do some things alone was a long process for many women. Women who had never been married did not report going through this process, but women long divorced virtually all experienced a gradual reduction in fear over the years.

Some women like Heather, 41, said that through "determination" to do activities alone her worries about being alone decreased and now "I don't think about it much anymore." Elaine, 44, explained: "At first I didn't do

things alone, but the more I got secure about myself the more I did things." The process of learning not to be terrified was described in more detail by others:

I used to be very afraid when I first got divorced. I wouldn't go anywhere. My husband had put fear in me...I got out of it just by doing it. I used to never think of going out, then I did. And nothing happened.

Charlotte, 42

I'm much less afraid now than immediately after my divorce. I moved right into this third floor walk-up apartment, and the stairwell was long and dark. I remember being really terrified of going up those stairs...A lot of stuff about being afraid has to do with society. My generation was taught that women are more like victims than I'm willing to agree with. Women are taught so many 'don'ts' that it's hard for them to realize they have any strength...A big change came about when I started looking at me and reveling in it. I started feeling I was in charge of my own life. I knew myself. It's a long process. We're taught that everyone knows better than you do--that engenders a lot of fear.

Sue, 54

The influence of others on women's level of fear was often mentioned. Divorced women mentioned husbands who told them how dangerous it was for them to go out alone; others described similar comments from co-workers or friends. Lisa, 27, quit hiking alone and said that doing it "never used to bother me, but my boyfriend and dad" told her it was dangerous. Heather, 41, explained that she avoided telling her co-workers if she went alone

to a movie or other activity because their reactions disturbed her; "married people," she said, "often don't think single women should go out." Norms of women being accompanied influences women's perceptions of the "danger" of transgressing these guidelines.

Overall, most single women worry about their safety in leisure activities. Those recently divorced or widowed typically were the most fearful, those never married were the most likely to engage in activities alone, and those long-divorced usually described a process of learning not to be constantly scared. Despite these differences, commonalities did exist in single women's avoidances of some activities, particularly at night, and their preference for engaging in leisure activities with others.

b. Leisure Cost

Single women were asked how much they spent monthly on leisure and what activities they would have liked to do, but could not afford. The responses varied with the economic situation of each woman, but common patterns were discernible.

The amount spent per month by single women on leisure activities varied from \$15.00 to \$500.00, but only two women spent more than \$100.00 per month on leisure. The

mean monthly expenditure was \$86.00; the modal amount spent was \$50.00. Most women interviewed spent less than \$65.00 a month on leisure activities.

The importance of cost in women's selection of leisure activities was divided into three categories, based on the relative freedom of women to choose their activities without economic constraints. The majority (55%) of women interviewed lived what Barbara, 52, called a "cramped" lifestyle. Since her divorce, Barbara reported she had "really changed" her leisure lifestyle, limiting her leisure to one movie, one dinner, and one lunch out per month for leisure.

Sue, 54, also described changes in her leisure activities after divorce: "When I was married, we used to be members of things and do a lot more, but now I don't have as much money." Many women, both divorced and never married, said they could not afford many leisure activities. When asked if they could save money on leisure, their typical response was, as Donna, 35, said: "no...not except by doing nothing." These women spent a minimal amount on leisure activities and felt constrained by their lack of resources.

Other women (45%) did not feel constrained by economic problems. Two women did not experience financial strain because they rarely went out and did not want to engage in many leisure activities. They enjoyed what Ruth, 52,

called the "simple things"; these women spent almost all of their leisure time at home, watching television, reading, or visiting with friends and did not report any desire for more money to spend on leisure activities.

Another group reporting minimal financial stress was comprised of women with above average incomes or average incomes and relatively inexpensive interests. This group of women typically reported spending over twice as much per month on leisure as women in the constrained category. These women said, like Kristine, 28, that "most things here I can do" or, like Beth, 28, that "I can afford most things here that interest me." When asked if they could save money on leisure activities, these women said they probably could save some, but restricting their current activities was unnecessary.

The women interviewed were all asked what activities they would engage in if they had more money. Almost all women said they would like to travel, usually outside the country and with an organized group. Others mentioned bowling, eating out more often and taking music lessons as activities on which they would spend extra money.

Few single women felt completely unrestricted financially, and most women interviewed described serious monetary restrictions on their leisure activities. Between these two poles, a substantial group of women

reported some financial worries, although the stress was not overbearing or the primary factor in making decisions about their leisure activities.

c. Leisure Convenience

The women interviewed were first asked how far from their homes they typically went for leisure, then they were asked to describe some activities that they perceived as convenient or inconvenient. Responses depended on the types of leisure activities the women enjoyed and the amount of time available for leisure.

Most women said they either always stayed within a few miles of their homes or consistently "tried" to remain in the area. The West Knoxville area was the most popular location for leisure activities. Those who lived in West Knoxville rarely went elsewhere, and when they did, no one mentioned going anywhere but to the Old City.

Women who lived in North, East, or South Knoxville typically stated that, like Lisa, 27, they "try real hard to stay in this part of town." But as Marie, 44, who lived in North Knoxville, explained, distance travelled from home "depends on what we're going to do." Women who went to church regularly typically sought out churches near their homes.

Some women interviewed never went to nightclubs and rarely engaged in activities other than going to a friend's home. For these women like Jennifer, 32, "everything's convenient." Others, like Fran, 54, from Halls, and Donna, 35, who lived in East Knoxville, commented that "there is nothing to do" near their homes. Most of these women stayed in their area to visit friends or go out to eat, but to go to a nightclub or out on a special occasion they went to West Knoxville.

Interviewees were also asked about which activities they considered "convenient" or "inconvenient." Women typically commented that going hiking or camping was inconvenient, not because of the distance but because of the time consumed in transit and in the activity. Some women who did not live in West Knoxville commented that the drive to activities in the west part of town was inconvenient. Brenda, 46, who lived in Halls, said: "I wish they had more things...I wish there were ways to meet nice people" in the area.

But for Brenda and other single women, the inconvenience of leisure activities was an annoyance, but it did not prohibit the activity. Like Sarah, 44, the majority of single women perceived "most things" as conveniently located. The longest distance to any leisure activity mentioned by a single woman, Pat, was twenty

miles. Pat also responded that "not really" anything was inconvenient, and "if I have something I want to do I get around to it."

Time considerations were of strong import in women's judgment of the relative convenience of activities. As Beth, 28, explained, the convenience of leisure activities "varies," depending on the time she had available. Charlotte, 42, agreed: "It's a question of time and deciding priorities. I have to plan to do something." For the women interviewed, "convenience" was not measured by distance, but by the amount of time available and individual interest in an activity.

d. Leisure Activity Appearance

Single women were first asked if they avoided any leisure activities because they did not feel they "fit in" based on the appearance of the environment. Examples of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" activities for single women were also solicited in the interviews. Finally, women discussed the general impact of appearance consideration on their leisure activity selections.

All but one of the women interviewed said they avoided some activities because, as a single woman, they did not feel they "fit in." Some women like Donna, 35, said simply: "I don't fit in." Others explained that they, like Brenda, 46, prefer to go "where there's mostly single

people" because otherwise, like Katie, 34, "I just don't feel comfortable in public. I just feel really vulnerable." Fran, 54, said she felt "exposed" if she was the only single woman. Others agreed:

I don't want to be the only single woman. I have a very hard time going to an unfamiliar place of any kind.

Charlotte, 42

The biggest shock of my life was after my divorce finding out how much socializing is two by two...with [couple] friends I was the fifth wheel and they were uncomfortable with me. When I was married, I never thought to invite my single women friends to dinner either.

Barbara, 52

Single women typically avoided activities if they thought most people would be in couples. "Family entertainment" events, "nice" restaurants, holiday parties, and "places where people go on dates" were all mentioned by single women as activities where they perceived themselves as out of place if alone.

Most single women believed society as a whole had standards of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" activities for single women. Several women like Fran, 54, said social standards were "not something that I concern myself

with." Lisa, 27, when asked about society's ethics said: "Fuck them!" But she also went on to say that "yeah," a powerful standard existed:

...say I went to the Old City at 11:30 at night and I was dressed to kill, and I did get raped. Probably society wouldn't be sympathetic to me... I wouldn't go out in slinky clothes without a male escort.

Lisa's comments were indicative of many women's responses: they ranked appearance low as an influence and claimed to disregard social norms, but when they discussed their behavior, appearance considerations did have an impact. Beth, 28, explained her views on social standards:

You know...the rape victim, what were you wearing and all that. Those types of questions indicate that you should circumscribe your behavior.

Beth went on to say that although "different segments have different ideas," the mainstream social norms did influence her perceptions of appropriate and inappropriate behavior for herself as a single woman.

Women who went against what they perceived as societal standards by engaging in leisure activities alone reported negative reactions of others to their behavior:

...well, I've been accused of being too independent. People will criticize me for that as if taking care of yourself is strange. Generally a lot of people perceive that as aloof. I just prefer to be by myself.

Kristine, 28

I like to do things alone. Many people are surprised...I guess I'm surprised when I see a woman out alone. You see a lot of bachelors out, but I wonder why a woman is out alone...which is really stupid, but I guess it's one of those ingrained social things.

Alice, 29

When asked for specific examples of society's idea of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" leisure activities for a single woman, women quickly listed several "inappropriate" activities, but many had difficulty describing "appropriate" leisure activities for a single woman. As Donna, 35, said, "not much is appropriate" for a woman, unless she is with a man. Lori, 38, and others said that eating lunch out was "maybe" appropriate, if you were downtown or in another business area where people would assume you were taking your lunch break. Grocery store shopping, laundry, craft shows, health clubs, and "maybe" movie matinees were also mentioned as socially appropriate activities for a single woman.

"Inappropriate" activities mentioned were outdoors activities, bars, walking alone, "anywhere at night," movies, and travel. Self-imposed prohibitions on these activities are gender-specific, but also related to

singlehood. Exclusion of some activities (e.g., nighttime walking) are predominately gender-based, but others (e.g., movies) are more often reported ruled out because of singlehood.

As Heather, 41, said, "a lot of things" were considered inappropriate for single women. If you do these things alone, others "tend to look at you" and acquaintances "say things." Elaine, 44, described a conversation with co-workers who said she should stay home when she did not have a date because it "looked bad to be out alone."

Generally, single women felt "out of place" alone, particularly without other singles around. Single women with other single women also considered themselves "out of place" in activities where couples were the norm. Importantly, most single women believed other people and "society" shared their views; this belief contributed to their feelings of "standing out" and being vulnerable when alone.

Women's appearance concerns focused largely on physical safety, and aesthetic appearance played a role in some women's perception of a leisure activity. Ruth, 52, said she considered whether a place "looks safe." Others were more specific:

I don't like to go anywhere that looks rough...I wouldn't go into a place that had a bunch of low class people...you're thought of as a pick-up if you go there.

Brenda, 46

Anyplace I go I look at the upkeep and the appearance of people going in. I try to find out the reputation, and, if not, I go by where it is in the city.

Katie, 34

Women's overall responses on appearance were similar to housing, transportation, and leisure activity discussions on safety: women focused on "blending in" to reduce the likelihood of seeming vulnerable. Most women interviewed said a social standard clearly existed. Although many claimed to disregard leisure activity norms, almost all were in some way influenced. Despite the sometimes low priority women said appearance held in their leisure activity decisions, considerations of "fitting in" and how their behavior would be seen and judged by others were evident in their responses.

e. Ranking of Considerations

Women were asked to rank the influence of cost, convenience, safety, and appearance on their leisure activity decisions. The responses on leisure were less homogeneous than those on housing and transportation, but some patterns were evident.

Half the respondents placed safety first and another forty percent ranked it second in importance. Almost all the women who ranked safety second placed cost first. Economic flexibility largely determined whether women saw cost or safety as the most important factor; those women on extremely restrictive budgets had to consider affordability first.

Most women were somewhat flexible in the leisure activities they could afford, so the majority of women ranked cost either third or fourth. Typically, safety, appearance, and convenience were more important than cost. Women with any financial flexibility ranked other factors higher than cost.

On appearance, women typically focused on the influence of social norms on their leisure activity selection. Their ranking of appearance should not be read as the impact of the appearance of their actions and of facilities on their behavior; women typically ranked instead how much they consciously consider "what they neighbors think" when they chose activities. Most women (65%) ranked appearance low, third or fourth, although many of these women, when discussing appearance, were actually quite influenced in their behavior by appearance considerations. Only 35% of women ranked appearance first or second, but the majority of women were influence by it substantially.

Convenience was equally distributed among the second, third and fourth ranks, depending on individual women's leisure patterns and housing location. Only one woman ranked convenience first in importance.

Overall, safety was of prime import to almost all women, ranked second only by those extremely constrained financially. Those not in dire financial circumstances typically ranked affordability third or fourth. Appearance was highly ranked by those who recognized the influence of social expectations on their behavior and ranked lower by those who claimed social norms did not affect their selection of leisure activities. Cost and convenience were more dependent on individual women's circumstances.

D. SINGLEHOOD

After discussing housing, transportation, and leisure activities, single women were asked some general questions on their experiences being single. First, women were asked to describe what it was like to be single in Knoxville. Second, women were asked how they thought their lives were different from single men and married women. Third, women were asked to comment on the extent to which they perceived this society to be a "couple culture."

Single life for many women interviewed was difficult. Women often felt "outside" the society and discouraged by others. Katie, 34, commented on her experience:

Society has an image of single women, a double standard. We're looked down on if we go to bars. We're not expected to do what the men do. We're supposed to be 'ladies'...The perception people have of you is strange. You've got people on the one hand who admire what you've done and others who look down on you. It's a catch-22. You're in the middle.

Others agreed with Katie, commenting that "being single was the pits" or that they felt "like a sitting duck" for others criticism. Many women, including Katie, also discussed what they viewed as government and social ineptness in helping single women:

Single women often have just enough not to get money [from the government], but not enough income to live. That's where our government fails. It's really tough, especially on women because they don't pay women what they pay men. You can't live to a standard that's expected.

Ruth, 52

What are we doing for single women? Not one damn thing as far as I can see. There's a lot of lip service--day care for women and all that--but nothing real.

Barbara, 52

It's a real bad problem with society and how they help us. Women with kids on welfare aren't supported. As a single parent, I have to pay 'family' insurance. The government does

not understand what single people need. They don't encourage us or offer us the opportunities to make the best of our situation. We're really in it on our own. If you're lucky and can make it, well, good for you, people are proud. But if you can't, well, that's the breaks.

Katie, 34

Single women typically felt excluded from society and invisible to those in decision-making positions. They often saw themselves as a disconnected separate category, rather than as part of society. Single women described a singles "subculture." Charlotte, 42, said:

It's almost like the singles have formed their own subculture. I'm around singles a lot. Either society is changing or I'm getting more accustomed to my singleness. I think probably I'm changing.

Some women commented on the difficulty of "plugging into" singles networks. Kristine, 28, Lisa, 27, and others said meeting other singles in Knoxville was not easy; very few channels existed and, as Marie, 44, explained: "you have to ask questions. It's not just going to come to you." Many women described a process of first seeking out other singles through support groups or singles groups, then becoming familiar with the networks of people. Many then dropped out of the organized groups and continued engaging in activities with other singles. As Barbara, 52, said: "Singles team up with each other

for support."

Barbara perceived the singles' environment as supportive and enjoyable, but others saw it as depressing:

Singles groups are like the island of misfits
from 'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.' They're
all waiting for Santa to come save them.

Jennifer, 32

Others also disliked the singles-only lifestyle, although most of them continued to associate primarily with other single women and men.

The women interviewed saw a distinct difference, however, between their experiences as single and single men's lives. Most perceived differences were either related to economics or to issues of safety and mobility. On affordability, many women like Marie, 44, commented that single men had "more money and less responsibility. They've got it easier, a lot easier. Just being a man affords them more possibilities." Heather, 41, agreed: "They have more money so they can have better cars and houses." Other women made similar statements:

It seems like men can go on [when single], but women, especially if they have kids, well, I don't see how they do it. It's really, really hard. I guess society thinks everyone's wealthy. It's just a merry-go-round.

Ruth, 52

Single women don't make as much money as men. And I don't think they're taken as seriously in the workplace as men. Single women don't have the status of single men. It's totally different.

Charlotte, 42

Other women focused more on the differences gender made in the impact of safety concerns on behavior. Many women believed single men had more possible options for housing, transportation and leisure activities because of a lower level of fear:

Single men can live just about anywhere. They have more opportunities for living areas and can feel safer than women. In general, they can go more places and feel safer, while we need to be aware...When I walk my dog, I see guys alone, but I hardly ever see women. When I do see them walking, women are always in the middle of the road or other lighted places and men aren't...they have much more general social freedom...Men can go to a bar, watch tv, and drink beer. Women can't without worrying.

Alice, 29

Men probably aren't quite as concerned about safety...they go ahead where I'd think twice. Other than that they're struggling with the same things we are.

Maude, 51

Single men in Knoxville don't expect to be yelled at by some dumb fuck in a pick-up truck. I don't think they're subjected to that kind of pressure...To me, there's a continuum between the dork at the movie theater, the guy trying to pick you up in a bar, and the guy in the pick-up yelling--because you're a woman alone, they think you're 'asking for it.'

Beth, 28

Almost all women perceived single men's lives as much easier than single women's because of reduced safety concerns, higher incomes, and the greater mobility these two factors brought. Only two women commented on negative aspects of single men's lives, and both women focused on what they considered men's inability to communicate with others as well as women did. Barbara, 52, explained:

Women have with each other the habit of speaking about serious important issues...single men, under their facade of bravado, are like gasping fish out of water. They can't talk about it.

This type of negative difference in single men's lives was the only one described by women. Women also described distinctions between their own lives and those of married women. As Theresa, 45, said, these differences were both "good and bad." Pat, 29, explained:

I don't answer to anyone now. But there also are lots of things I don't do now, not because I couldn't, but because I don't want to go alone--dances, vacations, eating out...

Although many women like Lori, 38, did mention the advantages of setting their own schedules and other aspects of singlehood, most articulated what they viewed as clear advantages of married couples:

The biggest change [after divorce] is the financial. You go from a big income to a zip income and you still have the expenses...I don't think the system's right. Things I've never had to think about, now, I do. That hurts...It's like I come full circle.

Elaine, 44

Most single women believed married women were more limited in some ways because they had to "adjust their lives to a man," but they also saw married life as more flexible economically and socially. Single women perceive married women as more financially secure and socially acceptable, and these differences were enough to make a few women like Barbara, 52, want to get married:

Given a choice, I'd get married in a shot... [when single] you're odd man out. Safety and security reasons. Economic reasons. Social reasons. Everything. Some women say they won't, but I don't believe them. The problem is no decent men are out there.

Although others agreed with Barbara's view that marriage was preferable for a variety of social reasons, few women said they were "trying" to get married. The typical attitude was that if a man came along and it would clearly improve her life, a single woman would consider it, but remaining single was better than a bad marriage.

After discussing differences between single and married women's lives, women were asked whether they viewed their society as a "couple culture." Only two women said they did not think the United States was predominately a "couple culture," but several women said that it was less of a couple-oriented society than it used to be. The change in society was attributed to the growing number of singles, especially single parents, in the United States. Ruth explained:

Society is changing a great deal, but it's still set up for married people. Used to be that everyone paid attention to single people, but now it's so common. Used to be that to be a single woman was to be a slut! It's much easier these days.

Although some women agreed that single people were more accepted than in past years, most women interviewed still felt excluded from society. Some, like Alice, 29, described being outside the marriage norm as a "general feeling" that you are out of place. Others like Brenda, 46, directly addressed singlehood and leisure activities: "I feel uneasy going to a restaurant unless I'm with a man." Jennifer, 32, agreed: Socially, it seems like to go out to dinner...it should be with a man."

Jennifer and others also discussed the effect of being single on their relationships with others:

It seems like at my age, everyone is married. It makes everyone feel a little weird to see a single woman there. They don't know whether to include you or not.

Jennifer, 32

Most of my friends are married. Many have kids. People ask me about my marriage plans. It's almost like it's so expected that you feel guilty if you're not.

Lisa, 27

It's a pretty coupled society...if I go to a bar by myself, I think, well, it's definitely not a position that's envied...I date, but no one in particular. I have a lot of married friends, so I find myself with them, the third wheel.

Kristine, 28

Most women believed their singlehood excluded them from mainstream society, their friends, or both. As Lori, 38, said: "I think that society thinks people who stay single are abnormal." Single women often perceived themselves as disconnected from the "normal" world of couples and typical life patterns.

Although few of the women sought marriage, most viewed married life as an economic and safety improvement over being a single woman. Single women did have a subculture with shared patterns of behavior, problems, and needs. Regardless

of individual factors that may create some differences, singlehood in the Knoxville environment presents women with many similar perceptions and experiences of their surroundings, of others, and of themselves.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

A. CONVENIENCE

Questions on convenience focus on the impact of distance and time considerations on single women's environmental movements. The women were asked to discuss the importance they placed on convenience in housing, leisure, and transportation. Definitions of "convenient" vary, depending on women's background and expectations of "appropriate" distance to regular activities.

On transportation, women emphasize the necessity of reducing the time consumed in movement by taking the most convenient routes and "saving up" errands. Women also report a sense of always being "behind" and unable to complete necessary tasks, although most (74%) of the women interviewed also said they thought they spent less time than the average person in transit. Their time in transit is less because they combine errands, save up tasks, or do not shop except for necessities. Generally, single women report they spend less time because they have less time to spend.

Almost all women interviewed said the bus was inconvenient because of route locations or infrequently scheduled stops. Their descriptions were fairly accurate.

Women like Elaine, 44, Marie, 44, and Brenda, 46 live in Halls, and the bus does not go past Fountain City. Rose, 44, and Barbara, 52 live in West Knoxville past the furthest bus stop.

Other women's neighborhoods are "on" a bus route, but they either have to walk from five blocks to a mile or drive to meet the bus. Women are concerned with their safety and they do not want to walk alone to the bus stop, particularly before dawn or after dusk. For some women, the bus is "inconvenient" because they are far from the nearest route. For other women, the bus could reasonably be accessed, but it is defined as "inconvenient," due in part to safety concerns.

In addition to route location, the bus schedules present problems for women. Most buses, like the Fountain City route, run every 20-30 minutes during rush hour, then every hour during other times of the day. The bus also quits running by 7:00 p.m. For single women who must run errands on their lunch hour, they have to get to a bus stop, then wait possibly an hour coming and going. Other women do chores or go out after work; the bus stops running usually less than two hours after they get off work. Thus, even for women near a bus route, a car is much more convenient for doing necessary tasks during the day or after work.

To reduce transit time when driving, single women schedule activities along the work route and minimize errands. Sometimes they reduce convenience for increased safety. Operating with time constraints, economic restrictions, and safety concerns, women are often forced to rank these factors; typically, convenience is ranked as less important than safety in routes and modes of transportation.

Women's leisure activities are also influenced by convenience considerations. Women describe "trying" to stay in their area of the city and going elsewhere only for special events. But questions of convenience are, as Charlotte, 42, explained, questions of "time and deciding priorities." Most women's leisure activity choices rely less on convenience than on other factors.

With transportation, leisure activities, and housing, definitions of "convenient" and "inconvenient" vary. With leisure, women's ideas of "convenience" depend on prior experiences and available transit time. Women who have previously lived in large cities or very rural areas perceive 30 minute commutes to leisure activities as "convenient." In contrast, those who are accustomed to living extremely close to leisure activities describe 15 minute commutes as "inconvenient."

Women who work two jobs or have children define convenience differently than those women with one job and no outside responsibilities. The more available time women have, the less weight convenience carries in their movements and the larger the radius of activities considered "convenient."

On housing, variations in perceptions of convenience also are evident. Initially, women consider proximity to work and other facilities when selecting housing, but, over time, the distance to work and other regular activities becomes accepted as givens. Time spent in regular transit becomes the measure of a typical drive after women become accustomed to it.

Convenience problems for single women are conceived of as problems of time, not distance. Saving time for single women is frequently the goal; distance cannot be avoided. Space becomes a backdrop, scenery for women to move past, and time becomes the focal point for convenience concerns.

Convenience concerns influence single women's environmental movements, but they are rarely the prime influence. Women engage in nominal efforts to increase convenience, such as reducing or concentrating errands, but typically distance and time spent in necessary activities are accepted as givens.

B. AFFORDABILITY

Single women typically have low incomes compared to single men or two-income couples. Since divorced or widowed women previously had a larger household income, they generally are more aware than never married women of their lower than average income as a single woman. But virtually all women, regardless of marital history, described considerable monetary constraints in housing, transportation, and leisure.

The importance of cost in environmental movement varies greatly from transportation to leisure to housing. On transportation, affordability was not a powerful influence on women's movement. For the most part, women use automobiles and rarely spend excess time driving. Although almost all women wish they could spend less on transit, few can without compromising convenience or safety. Single women are under economic pressure, but they "take it in stride" because they must. They must get to work and run errands, and they almost all drive a car. Women save money by refraining from unnecessary driving, but transit savings are minimal.

On leisure, women's expenditures are more flexible than transportation or housing; reducing their leisure activities is how most women save money. Women who were previously married, like Barbara, 52, and Sue, 54,

describe dramatic leisure activity shifts after their divorces. They simply cannot afford to engage in the same activities on a budget that has been cut at least in half.

Women describe a process of re-definition of what qualifies as "leisure" after a marriage ends. They begin to view hobbies (e.g., reading or crafts) as "leisure activities" and define more expensive pastimes as "special events". Leisure activities that were commonplace when married now are rarities, and occasional pastimes are now their dominant form of leisure.

Single women often wish they had more money to spend on leisure activities, especially travel, but they adjust their leisure patterns to less expensive activities. Never married women do not go through a process of re-definition, but they also have expensive activities defined as "special occasion" or "date" leisure activities.

Housing requires the most money of any cost discussed in the interviews. Housing expense is less negotiable than leisure activities; women typically have a very inflexible price range for housing. Women's incomes have exceptional influence on their housing selection. Single women with above-average incomes have more housing options than others and can give more priority to safety and other considerations. Those women typically seek housing in

West Knoxville; women with lower incomes do not even consider that area, searching for housing instead in North or East Knoxville.

With housing, leisure, and transportation, almost all single women view their expenditures as typical of other single women. For example, on leisure, the women who said they spent \$15.00 or \$20.00 when asked about their monthly expenditure reacted no differently to the representativeness of their response than the women who said \$100.00 or \$500.00 per month. This response pattern concurs with previous social psychological research that reveals the tendency for people to see their own situation as typical, not as reflective of some personal circumstance (Ross and Nisbett 1991: 83).

Definitions of "affordable" depend on a woman's income and her ideas of "appropriate" expenditures for housing, transit, or leisure. Each woman's monetary situation also influences her perceptions of safety. What is "safe" for a woman with an above-average income includes a wider range of requirements and alterations than what is defined as "safe" for women with severe economic restrictions.

In each category, the questions on cost were designed to elicit responses that would indicate the level of economic constraints on single women's movements in space. Most women perceive themselves as under economic duress

when making housing decisions. Many also report economic restrictions on leisure, but few view transit expense as limiting.

Even in housing, most women do not rely on their economic situation as the primary criterion for their selection. Income increases or decreases the number of housing, transit, or leisure options open to women, but it does not exclusively control movement. Housing, transportation, and leisure expense is usually subordinated to concerns for safety.

C. SAFETY

In housing, transportation, and leisure activities, safety concerns are the most salient determining factor influencing single women's spatial movements. Women face a variety of environmental choices and, more than affordability, convenience, or appearance, women seek safety. In moving in the environment, women carry into their adaptive process a socialized fear perspective (SFP) on the world, others, and themselves. Gordon and Riger also recognize this element of women's worldview; they say this "special fear" is "part of the contemporary experience of being a woman in the U.S." (1989: 2).

The United States is a culture of violence in which categories of people (e.g., women, the elderly, the physically disabled) have little social power as a group and are stereotyped as "vulnerable." These people are socialized to see the world from the perspective of a potential victim, seeing primarily males as potential perpetrators. Women are socialized to see themselves as rape victims in particular. If socialization is "successful," women are afraid, they circumscribe their movement, and they feel guilty if they transgress social regulations.

Fear is an element in all women's perspectives of their surroundings; women are socialized into being afraid. Fear is part of being a woman. This "socialized fear perspective" includes both fear of verbal and physical assault and fear of being scorned for violating social standards. Women's fear of rape is the most powerful aspect of their SFP, but other fears influence their perceptions as well.

The SFP varies in influence among women, depending on other factors, such as age, marital history, and socioeconomic status. For some women, their SFP is in the forefront of their thoughts, superceding all other ways of seeing an environment. Other women's SFP has been relegated to a less overarching status; other considerations can have consequential influence. Although

variance in the degree to which women's SFP shapes their movements is clear, all women consider their fears in environmental decisions more than their male counterparts.

Connected to women's SFP are two beliefs. First, women typically concur with the idea that they have a high responsibility to avert the results they fear (e.g., rape), primarily through image manipulation and spatial restrictions. By avoiding personal appearances and environments that replicate those of a "victim," women try to reduce their chances of assault. Women who do not engage in these precautionary behaviors are foolishly transgressing social norms and, if their fears are realized, their incompetence is partially to blame. Thus, women's SFP infers that if fears are ignored, women can be blamed for the results.

A second corollary to the SFP is that women see men as capable of reducing the chances they will be harmed. Greater physical strength is part of men's presumed ability to protect, but the dominant advantage of a man's presence stems from image. Women often believe that when they are with men they are less open to assault because they "look" less vulnerable. Although women's SFP includes a fear of "other" men who are strangers, it also encourages women to seek husbands, male friends, or other "known" men for protection from dangerous men.

Women's SFP is acquired and internalized as part of their worldview and their definitions of what are "appropriate" environmental movements for women in this society. Part of the "double standard" for women and men's mobility, sexuality, and capabilities is women's SFP; the SFP serves as a social control mechanism to reinforce women's subordinate social status and circumscribe their movements.

Being female means being reserved, cautious, and fearful. Going out alone, particularly at night, is considered unacceptable for women. Women are expected to be afraid, and, from birth, women are taught fear; "learning to fear is a process that begins at birth for women and continues throughout their lives" (Gordon and Riger 1989: 118). This SFP is acquired in several ways.

1. Developing a Fear Perspective

The two sources most obviously contributing to the development of a SFP are the media and women's social relationships--family, friends, and co-workers. Both of these aspects of society reflect gender-based assumptions of women's attitudes and behaviors and teach women to fear transgressing social norms.

Media

The media comprise a dominant institution of socialization in the modern United States. From birth, women are surrounded by television, movies, and printed media. Young children typically watch two to four hours of television each day; by age sixteen, the average person has spent 15,000 hours in front of a television, 4,000 hours more than in the classroom (Richmond-Abbott 1983: 123).

What people see in television and other media's treatment of women is what Tuchman calls "a national social problem" (1978: 5). Men are more frequently seen on television programs, and they are often pivotal characters. Women, in contrast, are usually peripheral characters with less power and authority (Richmond-Abbott 1983: 123). Women are underrepresented, trivialized, and neglected. On television, viewers witness the "symbolic annihilation" of women (Tuchman 1978: 8). Television "proclaims that women don't count for much" (Tuchman 1978: 10).

This media reality is both a product and a producer of United States society's norms and values.

The mass media perform two tasks at once. First, with some culture lag, they reflect dominant values and attributes in the society. Second, they act as agents of

socialization, teaching youngsters in particular how to behave...they teach that women should direct their hearts toward hearth and home.

(Tuchman 1978: 37)

On media as products, Tuchman proposes a "reflection hypothesis" that holds the "mass media reflect dominant societal values"; these "ideas and ideals are incorporated as symbolic representations of American society, not as literal portrayals" (1978: 7-8). Television mirrors social mythologies about gender, not the actual experiences of women and men. The media are products of the values of the culture and those creating media representations. The distorted portrayals of women in the media reflect the lack of power, respect, and authority accorded to women in United States society and the symbolic punishment of women who transgress social norms.

Normative marital expectations and gender-specific behavior are portrayed in the media, as well as the symbolic punishment of those who do not fulfill the presumed models for women. Tuchman discusses the media relationship between violence and women's marital behavior:

The pattern of women's involvement with television violence reveals approval of married women and condemnation of single and working women...single women are more likely to be victims of violence than married women, and working women are more likely to be

villains than housewives. Conversely, married women who do not work for money outside the home are most likely to escape television's mayhem and to be treated sympathetically. More generally, television most approves those who are presented in a sexual context or within a romantic or family role...

(1978: 13)

As a system of reflective social myths, media portrayals of women clearly indicate particular ideals on marriage and the symbolic reproof of those who do not comply.

In addition to fictional media, newspapers and other news sources also illustrate the myths of women and violence. The violence against women reported in the media is greatly distorted. For example, although mainstream news sources report thirteen completed rapes for every one failed rape attempt, actually three attempted rapes fail for every one that succeeds (Gordon and Riger 1989: 69). The obvious and false conclusion of media accounts of rape is that women almost never escape from sexual assault.

Another media inaccuracy involves the rapist prototype. Most rapes highlighted in news reports are attacks on women by strangers, often outside their homes, but most rapists actually are acquaintances of women, willingly let into a home (Gordon and Riger 1989: 70). Women are shown fearing strangers when out, but, in actuality, they are infrequently attacked in this way.

Although media are a product of society, they also have the potential to produce behavior and attitudes in women. The media encourages audiences to accept representations as "truth." Images are particularly powerful in modern United States society, which has in recent years been extensively critiqued as a media-dominated postmodern culture (Baudrillard 1983, 1990; Kellner 1989; Lash 1990; Milner et.al. 1990; Wakefield 1990).

The U.S. is a postmodern society in which media reality can supersede physical experience. Sensate experience takes a backseat to fantasies of sensations, and women's experiences become removed from their lives and placed into archetypes and scenarios repeatedly seen in the media.

Toeplitz outlines the three most common portrayals of women in the media: the "dumb blonde" who is sexually appealing but socially unacceptable; the "nice girl" who is virginal and marriageable; and the "middle-class working woman" who is "domineering, sharp-tongued, unattractive, and castrating" (1980: 57). Each of these three types is accorded different treatment by others. The nice girl is the least susceptible to violence, and, if she is attacked, she receives more sympathy than any

other character. In postmodern society, these media types can produce a reality typology through which viewers learn to categorize their behaviors.

In Simulations, sociologist Jean Baudrillard presents perhaps the most complete account of this postmodern society. Simulation is "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map" (1983: 2). The real is found through the playing out of pre-defined models for behavior. People do not simply behave spontaneously; they engage in ritual performances of expected behavior.

The media are the impetus for an implosion. In earlier eras, the media were thought to be mirrors; now media representation is more "real" than the real. Instead of reality always sending messages out, images can send reality in. The media (or images) precede reality, creating a hyperreality more believable and exciting than reality itself.

Rather than women's experiences solely being reflected by the media, the depictions of women also influence women's behavior. Tuchman says it is plausible that people model the "behavior and expectations" on television (1978: 33). Women like Beth, 28, describe the impact of television programs on her fear as "considerable," commenting that the "theme of the season" seems to be "victimized women." Other women mention that books,

magazines, and horror movies also heighten their fears, particularly of rape. Charlotte, 42, comments on the influence of movies on women:

I wish they would stop making movies about bad things happening to women. It's always a woman by herself. It keeps women afraid and trapped. I won't, I can't sit through them.

The precedence of media reality has repercussions in the lives of women, particularly single women, because media reality misrepresents violence against them. In movies or on television, single women out alone are often raped or assaulted. Consider a few examples. One, a tv movie shown in November 1991: the entire plot of the movie focused on women riding the bus alone who are raped at the bus stop. Events such as this do happen, but less frequently than depicted by the media.

Messages in docudramas like this reflect stereotypical standards of behavior for single women: if those women had been with men, they would not have been raped; if those women had stayed "in their place" they would not have been harmed; women are unable to defend themselves adequately when alone. That movie and countless low-budget horror films focus on the woman alone in the "wrong" place at a "bad" time and often behaving in an "unladylike" way being attacked by a stranger.

Another related theme is seen in a current commercial for a home alarm system. The scene opens with a woman alone in bed, frantically turning on a light and looking around. The male voice-over says "maybe it was the wind, or maybe...." The commercial then goes on to try to sell a home alarm system. The message again is that women alone are vulnerable to attack by strangers.

In both these examples, women's SFP is both amplified and manipulated. Single women are disproportionately depicted as lonely victims susceptible to violence from crazed criminals. Women are rarely portrayed as reasonable, confident people aware of the likelihood that they will be attacked by "normal" men and that their rape is likely to be from someone they know, not from a stranger at a bus stop.

Media presentation of women may "symbolically capture the position of women in American society" through symbolic annihilation, but people do not simply mime the behavior seen on television (Tuchman 1983: 27-28). Researchers often confuse the media producers, the products, and the results produced in society, i.e., claiming that because men hold power in media, the media distort women's lives and prevent them from achieving high social status (Tuchman 1983: 26). This model assumes and asserts a stronger causal link than probably exists. Tuchman's advocacy of a perspective that views the media

as "a community of discourse" engaged in myth replication and creation simultaneously avoids extreme causal assumptions and provides an opportunity for feminist critique of media.

Myths presented in media are stereotypically derogatory to women, reflecting social attitudes toward women, especially women who deviate from normative social and marital expectations. These media myths help socialize women into a fear of deviation from the norm and the psychological and physical punishment of which society seemingly approves. Tuchman elaborates:

The mass media in general and television in particular have replaced religion as a source of social control in American life. Like the medieval church that broadcast one message... all the mass media disseminate the same theme about women to all social classes: They announce their symbolic annihilation and trivialization.

(1978: 30)

Many cultures embody myths of socially appropriate behavior for women and men in their dances, songs, and ritual objects. Like the Barasana of South America's mythological songs describing the attack or gang rape of women who go into "male" areas, United States media myths symbolically illustrate what behaviors are "appropriate" for women unattached to men (Spain 1992: 45).

Social Relationships

Through interaction with others, both strangers and acquaintances, the myths women encounter in media are reinforced. Assumptions of "appropriate" behavior and sanctions of "inappropriate" actions reflect beliefs about "a woman's place" in society.

Connected to media depictions, single women also encounter sexual harassment, both physical and verbal. Most women interviewed stated that when they are out alone, men often say something to them that is frightening. Simply walking down the street to work for many of these women is intimidating because of the verbal assaults they fear from men.

These confrontations with men on the street reinforce women's SFP and encourage them to "stay in their place." The SFP serves as a control mechanism to maintain spatial inhibitions of women, reducing their mobility when alone. This same message is often given by women's male acquaintances and relatives and their married female friends. When women and men are asked to estimate the risk posed to women in a variety of environments, men's estimates are consistently quite higher (Gordon and Riger 1989: 39). Men's perceptions can then be "used to justify men's insistence that their wives, mothers,...are unsafe out alone and should therefore go out only in the company of men" (Gordon and Riger 1989: 39).

The single women interviewed for this study evidenced similar perceptions. Charlotte, 42, said that her former husband "put fear" in her. Katie, 34, described her former husband's attitude:

When I was married, my husband was concerned that I was out a lot. He said there was a problem with men on interstates finding single girls, pretending to be cops or something, and raping them. He used to mention that all the time.

Katie's comments were echoed by many other women who had similar experiences with boyfriends, fathers or brothers. Other women described reactions from co-workers or married friends that reflected the same ideas. Like Heather, 41, who avoided discussion of her "inappropriate" activities with co-workers, many women reported others admonished them to stay home unless they were with men.

Both women and men's socialization take into account women's SFP. Men learn to expect fear from women, and men also acquire a perspective of themselves as protectors of "their" women, e.g., wives, mothers, sisters. Men often feel obliged to guard women with whom they have a relationship from attacks by "other" men. The corollary to the male protector ethic is that women who are unattached to any man are "fair game" to those "other men."

Underneath this "bodyguard" role of men and the warnings given by the media and others, women hear a corollary admonition: if you violate social standards by behaving inappropriately, you are asking for trouble. To varying extents, almost all women buy into "blaming the victim" for her ignorance of spatial or social norms. Lisa, 27, recognized that society would be "unsympathetic" to her if she were raped while alone in the Old City at night if she were "dressed to kill." Jean, 39, said walking in a parking lot alone after dark was "dumb" because "you're putting yourself in a dangerous situation."

These women and many others believed that if they engaged in some activities and they were assaulted, it would be partially their fault. If women do engage in "inappropriate" behavior, they feel both afraid and guilty. Part of the SFP is recognition that certain activities will cause a woman alone to be, at minimum, scorned, and possibly raped.

The SFP is the result of socialization and the cumulative reinforcement by the media, the family, peers, and other social institutions of prototypes of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" behaviors for women. It is a diffuse, nonspecific fear that is generalizable to a variety of environments and circumstances. The SFP is part of women's worldview. Even if women recognize the

existence of the SFP, it cannot be ignored, only controlled. In considering housing, transportation and leisure activities, women's assessments of safety and their movements in space are influenced by their SFP.

2. Definition of Safety

Women move through space in a manner similar to men entering a foreign country or city: tentatively, aware of being in other people's space. Women are not in their own space. They move in a "man's world" in which "a woman's place" is inside, with a man, and those women who leave their "appropriate" spaces clash with existing norms and expectations. Women who move into areas where they are not expected to be fear they are putting themselves in a position where they could be blamed for any assault they face. They are not just crossing into what they perceive to be "dangerous" areas, but they are also potentially to blame for what happens to them there.

But women, especially single women, cannot stay in "appropriate" areas only. They must live, work, and move in space, often alone. They have to adapt to space they perceive as hostile. Women's SFP contributes to an environment for single women that is fundamentally different than the environment single men or married women face. The same streets, parking lots, or houses look very different to single women than to others. A secluded

house on a forest-surrounded lake may be private, beautiful, and soothing to men, but to single women such a house would likely be terrifying. Women look at the environment from a SFP that views the environment as hostile.

Fear for women is subjectively defined. All women approach housing, transportation, and leisure activity options with a SFP, but how this perspective views a particular environment differs from woman to woman, depending on other factors. When considering the personal risk involved in a given environment, "women rationally, and automatically, take account of the situation and do a mental calculation of the danger present before deciding how to behave" (Gordon and Riger 1989: 19). Women calculate subjective ratings on risk that depend on their income, marital history, ideas of "appropriate" female behavior, and familiarity with the environment.

Women's idea of "safe" housing, for example, varies according to income. Although women with above average incomes consider only upper middle-class neighborhoods to be a safe possibility, women with low incomes look for safe working-class housing. Both women can potentially find housing that they perceive as "safe" in very different areas of the city, and the women can report feeling equally safe. Perception of safety and standards for what is "safe" housing, transportation, or leisure

varies with social class and other factors. Interestingly, women with higher incomes living in areas of the city considered to be very safe, such as West Knoxville, were no less frightened than women living in areas of the city usually judged as unsafe, such as neighborhoods off Magnolia. In fact, women in West Knoxville often reported more fear than others, reflecting both the inaccuracy and subjectivity of women's fear and the influence of income on that fear.

Marital history also has an impact on women's definition of safety and how influential their SFP is on their spatial movements. When divorced singles were asked to compare their anxiety over safety with their anxiety level when married, most women in this sample reported having the same or less fear when married. Their fear level either increased or remained relatively constant after their divorce.

According to the interview responses, women's housing safety concerns decrease with the length of time unmarried and degree of mobility; recently divorced or widowed women tended to be more scared than women never married who were accustomed to renting alone, living alone, and being single. Women long divorced described changes over time from frightened inhibition to cautious mobility. Over time, women tended to become less afraid and more comfortable with their singlehood. These results concur

with those of Gordon and Riger, except married women in their study were the most frightened of any category of women, and this sample typically reported feeling more safe when married (1989: 10).

Women's identification with traditional female roles also influenced their definitions of a "safe" environment. Women who saw a woman's place as married and supported by a man were the most fearful and uneasy with their social status as a single woman. Women outside of traditional gender definitions considered marriage an option, not a requirement; these women were more confident in housing selection and had greater feelings of security. For example, Marie, 44, strongly identified with traditional women's roles, claiming that "God made me to be married." Marie was extremely uncomfortable being single and making housing decisions alone; she was often depressed and frightened in her home.

In contrast, Sue, 54, said she prefers singlehood; she believed women are psychologically stronger and can "get in touch with themselves" when they are not married. She considered herself a feminist and viewed traditional female roles as restrictive. Sue lived alone in what other single women considered a "bad neighborhood," yet she was only cautious in her behavior, not constantly frightened.

Another factor also noted by Gordon and Riger as influencing women's level of fear was degree of familiarity with the environment; women with more comfort in a community tend to be less fearful (1989: 55). In this study, women who have lived for long periods of time in the same location report feeling much more confident, often due to connections to neighbors and comfort in the house. In contrast, recently divorced women who have to establish themselves in new environments are more fearful.

If women reside in the same location after divorce, their perceptions of the safety of the area and their knowledge of neighbors reduce the prevalence of their SFP. They know the ecology of the area and the patterns of various residents, and their own housing is familiar to them. If single women move from this context to an unfamiliar one where they do not know the neighbors, the frequency of crime, or the prior history of the house they express a higher level of fear. Ignorance of the environment increases the impact of women's SFP.

Although factors such as these can be used to explain deviant cases and minor differences among typical cases, single women in Knoxville are remarkably similar in their safety concerns regarding housing. Single women's definition of "fear" is molded by their expectation of being afraid. Women claim not to be scared at all, yet they also say they added dead bolts and storm windows,

nailed an infrequently used door shut, or never slept without simultaneously listening for unusual noises. Women claiming not to be afraid seem to mean that they were no more afraid than is expected, than everyone in their position is. Because of women's SFP, home alterations, sleeping next to a weapon, and making "a mad dash to the house" from the car are not unusual behaviors. Single women develop an attitude of "not dwelling on it" in order to adjust.

3. Adaptation

Women do not dwell on their fear because it is not an irregular foreign intrusion to their daily life, but a part of themselves; it is an internalized perspective. Women do not preoccupy themselves with concerns over their fear in the environment. They adapt because they have to. And they adapt in similar ways, although different women have divergent attitudes toward the environment. Some women reacted to their environment by withdrawing and avoiding as many activities as possible, particularly after dark. Other women found mechanisms to push their SFP out of a position of control and force themselves to move in space with minimal fear.

According to a typology of "patterns of response" to women's fear of rape, women fall into one of four types: the susceptibles, the invincibles, the realistic

pessimists, or the realistic modernists (Gordon and Riger 1989: 116). "Susceptibles" lives are shaped by a dominance of their SFP, and they engage in a variety of withdrawal behavior. Ruth, 52, is a perfect example of the susceptible woman. Like those in Gordon and Riger's study, she has little education and has not always worked outside the home.

The second type, the "invincibles," accept violent crime as inevitable and push their SFP almost completely away. These women typically live in extremely violent inner city neighborhoods, unlike any women involved in this research (Gordon and Riger 1989: 116). Nonetheless, traces of this type of woman who is uneducated, underemployed, and familiar with many victims is seen in Cheryl and other interviewees.

The "realistic pessimist" believes that chances of being raped are high. They have some education, work outside the home, and have "mixed views" on women's roles (Gordon and Riger 1989: 116). Most women interviewed in this study fell into this category. They believe society should change to reduce the risk of rape, but they also agree to some extent with the belief that women are responsible for rape prevention.

The "realistic modernists" are typified by Sue and Kristine. These women are rather non-traditional in their views of women, and they take relatively minimal steps to

ensure their safety. For these women, their SFP is present but in the background, not the forefront.

Although women's levels of fear can be separated into different categories, all women are to some degree influenced by their SFP; "No woman is free to ignore it" (Gordon and Riger 1989: 117). No women ignore it, not even the most non-traditional "realistic modernist."

Even the one-third of women in Gordon and Riger's study who said they "never" worried about being raped took elaborate precautions against attack. In this study, the same attitude was evident. Women like Pat who nailed her back door shut, Kay who pulled off the interstate if a car drove behind her for long, and the many women who would not go alone to the movies all claim to feel "safe." Definitions of safety are influenced by women's SFP: constant fear simply raises the level of what is defined as "being afraid."

4. The Veracity of Women's Fear

A reasonable question to ask when considering single women's SFP is: How realistic is women's fear? Should they be constantly afraid? The answer to this question is complicated. First, on one level women's fears are appropriate. The United States has the highest rate of rape in the world; here women are more at risk than anywhere else in the world (Gordon and Riger 1989: 37).

Estimates of rape vary widely, as the majority go unreported, but general figures are one out of every three to five women will be raped in their lifetimes; according to F.B.I. statistics, in the United States a woman is raped every three minutes (Dworkin 1979: 103). Other studies have revealed that only 7.8% of women will not be sexually assaulted or harassed during their lifetimes (MacKinnon 1987: 23). Considering these rates and women's SFP, one can see why Catharine MacKinnon said: "To be about to be raped is to be gender female in the process of going about life as usual" (1987: 7).

Women in the United States live and work in a rape-prone society, and moving through space in that kind of an environment is frightening. As Gordon and Riger explained, "since women know the devastating emotional consequences of rape [from the media and their peers] and know they are responsible for preventing it, their heightened fear is a rational response" (1989: 46).

Rational or not, women's SFP is unrealistic, however, largely because of the types of precautionary behaviors it ensues. Women's perception is clearly skewed toward the types of assaults that are unlikely, and the SFP also encourages behaviors that counter self-protection. Women are taught to stay at home, to depend on men, and to be physically weak. Nationally, 63% of women "thought they were less physically competent than both the average man

and the average woman" (Gordon and Riger 1989: 54). Women are taught to feel weak and helpless, and many do. Women learn to protect themselves on a nominal level through housing alterations, environmental restrictions, or other techniques, but they are not encouraged to be independent or physically strong. Women learn to fear environmental movements without men.

Single women in Knoxville report avoiding various areas of the city because of fear of assault. Most women had at least one area they would not drive through alone at night; women would not walk in many areas alone. For the most part, women's fears are unreasonably high. Although areas around Magnolia Avenue and Mechanicsville have reputations for high crime rates, the types of crimes being committed are typically not intrusive to people passing by (i.e., prostitution, drug dealing). According to a spokesperson for the Knoxville Chief of Police, the chance of a woman driving through these areas alone late at night being assaulted is "very, very, very minute."

Areas of the city mentioned by some women, particularly downtown and the Old City, were described by the police spokesperson as "safe". When asked if a crime problem existed in the downtown area, he immediately responded "No. Absolutely not." He also said that in the Old City the police department has walking patrols to maintain additional protection against possible crime.

Drug dealing was the only activity mentioned by the spokesperson as one where people have been assaulted driving through an area; people who go into "the projects" late at night to buy drugs have in the past been harmed, even killed. The police spokesperson said that, overall, for the "law-abiding citizen" street crime is not a problem. Women are more likely to be assaulted in their home by someone they know than out in any area of Knoxville.

According to these data, women's fears of moving alone in the environment are unnecessarily heightened. However, although women's SFP is a distorted window through which to view society, it is also potentially useful in protecting some women. As Gordon and Riger elaborate:

Until society and the major institutions in this country are willing to take responsibility for female fear and do whatever is necessary to reduce both rape and the fear of rape in women, it would be unwise to advocate that women completely stop being afraid. Fear and related behavior may protect some women.

(1989: 118)

The SFP with which women select housing, transportation, and leisure activities does help some of them avoid assault, but it is a dangerous distortion of the actual likelihood of being harmed. The SFP serves the function of keeping women's movements restricted and encourages the belief that women need men for protection.

It "has the cumulative effect of reinforcing social norms about appropriate behavior for women" (Gordon and Riger 1989: 122).

D. APPEARANCE

Appearance considerations strongly influence women's movements in space. How an environment "looks" and how they look in that environment influence women's housing, transportation, and leisure decisions. Women's perceptions of their environment are of great import in their thoughts and movements.

Women consider whether they "fit in" a particular environment as a single woman; Women do not want to look "out of place." Single women want to live in neighborhoods where they blend in, to engage in activities where they are accepted, and to use modes of transportation they judge as acceptable. Women want to move in space in a way they see as suitable for them as single women.

To determine suitability, women rely on two main reference points. First, the presence or absence of other singles is considered: Do other single women engage in that activity, live in that area, or use that type of transit? Women look to other singles for examples of "appropriate" behavior. If other singles are visible, their movements will fit in.

The second referent for single women is perceived social norms. Through the media and other people's comments, single women discern normative behaviors without ever witnessing the events. Clearly, married or unmarried couples are the norm, and women outside of this norm are not expected to behave in the same way.

In housing, transportation, and leisure, women describe norms of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" behaviors and spaces. Some areas are distinctively couple-oriented, such as nuclear family neighborhoods, and are perceived as unacceptable for single women. Also, areas viewed as dangerous--isolated parks, secluded bike trails, poorly lit neighborhoods--are judged to be "family" or "male" areas hostile to single women.

Other environments are more neutral. Apartment complexes, matinee movies, and daytime biking in public areas are examples of activities not necessarily nuclear family or singles-oriented and thus sometimes acceptable for single women. Finally, environments such as heterogenous neighborhoods, work routes, and grocery shopping are considered "open" to women without men.

Women categorize areas into different types with great similarity. Areas acceptable to women are well-lit, heavily populated areas with some security provided. Environments become neutral or masculine when they are isolated, poorly lit, and/or without accessible security.

The predictability of which environments are judged hostile or neutral or open to single women is partially attributable to media influence. Women mention how they "never see" a single woman living comfortably in a nuclear family neighborhood or riding a bike alone in a "bad" neighborhood.

These comments often do not result from women being in a dangerous neighborhood and not seeing a single woman on a bicycle, but from the absence of single women in media depictions of a "bad" area. Single women do not "belong" in areas where no others are usually seen, in person or through the media. As Ardner says, "space speaks" to women, but this speech does not have to be received in person (1981: 12).

Women perceive themselves as having a responsibility to know what spaces are appropriate for them and to stay in those environments. If women venture out of spaces appropriate for single women and move into "male" space or "family" space, they believe they are engaging in high risk behavior; even neutral spaces are judged as somewhat risky (e.g., matinee movies).

The risk involved in a given activity falls somewhere on a continuum between uncomfortableness and possible scorn to physical assault. Women believe that others will "look down" on them for being alone, possibly judging them to be "unladylike." Women view judgments of that type as

potentially ensuing harm. If women violate the image of "appropriate" activities for single women by moving into a neutral space like a matinee movie or lunch in a restaurant, they often feel uneasy; they believe others look at their singleness with disdain. If they go a step further and violate norms by moving into a male space, like a bar, they feel very visible and vulnerable, open to assault, verbal or physical.

Stepping outside perceived spatial boundaries is seen as dangerous, and women often feel frightened in such circumstances. They have knowingly stepped across a line and opened themselves to attack. Women typically try to avoid violation of spatial norms. Although they often report disregarding norms, most do not. Women say that they "don't care" what "other people think," that "I do what I want." Yet, they also circumscribe their movements, avoiding certain areas and activities.

Since single women usually work and live alone, they must negotiate space alone, often moving by necessity in "inappropriate" areas. Women cannot drive only during the day, live only in areas with other singles, or go to the grocery for leisure. To live and work in a productive way, single women must violate standards, so they often try to slight the influence of these norms.

More often than norms are disregarded they are internalized to the point that they do not have to be considered constantly and overtly. Spatial boundaries and standards of "acceptable" movements become a part of the women's thoughts and judgements of when and where they will move in the environment.

E. THE SINGLEHOOD PROCESS

From the women interviewed, singlehood is clearly discernable as a process, not a status. The ambiguity of the singlehood role is evident in the ways each woman adapts to life as a single person. The process of learning to be single involves several phases revealed by the women interviewed.

First, all women originally begin with a socially "normal" status. Divorced or widowed women previously fulfilled the normative expectation of marriage. Other women, when younger, were at ages when most people were single. As women grew older or became single, they moved into an "abnormal" status because of their age and the expectation of marriage.

Younger women in the study, like Jennifer, Lisa, and Kristine describe feelings of being "pushed out" of social circles as they grew older because of their singlehood. Many of their friends have married and unmarried women begin to feel like the "third wheel" when engaging in

social activities. These women and others like them are moving from a time when everyone is single to a situation where most of their acquaintances are married.

Many older women interviewed recount their experiences becoming divorced or widowed at a later age when most of their friends were in couples. These women describe being surprised at how much socializing is "two by two" and feeling estranged from society and their peers. Both never married women who become the minority among the peers when they age and divorced women accustomed to being in a couple move into the "abnormal" social status of a single woman.

This social ranking carries with it some positive elements along with negative ones. On the positive side, women like Pat see singlehood as freedom from the constraints of adjusting your life to another person or from the multiple problems associated with bad marriages. So, on one level, single women recognize the independence and self-sufficiency of singlehood as an advantage in being outside the marriage norm.

On another level, singlehood carries with it burdensome elements. Women are displaced socially; they must move alone in an environment set up for couples. They are spatially and socially penalized for their singlehood. They typically have access to less money than single men or married women, and they have the additional

burden of their socialized fear perspective, which inhibits their movements and decreases their comfort in any environment.

As many women elucidate, the abnormal status of singlehood is a deviant status. Schur (1984) detailed ways in which women are labeled as deviant in the United States. Single women live in a society in which marriage is the norm and expectations of a woman being a wife is a "sacred script" (Schur 1984: 60). Unmarried women are stigmatized. Even in recent years when cohabitation is common, divorce rates are high, and the number of singles is growing, no significant difference in women's negative experiences being single have emerged (Schur 1984: 61).

Negative aspects of singlehood, such as lower income and alienation, apply more strongly to women, particularly single mothers, than to men (Schur 1984: 62). Single mothers suffer the economic disadvantage of having to pay "family" insurance. Single women all face mobility constraints due to financial problems and their SFP. Divorced women, particularly mothers, describe the burden of maintaining a decent lifestyle on half their previous income.

Women frequently believe the government and society are antagonistic to them; women like Katie, Ruth, and Barbara address the invisibility of their problems to people in positions of power. Single women often feel

like they are victims of a male, couple-oriented system that excludes them and penalizes them for their singlehood and gender. From being scorned for engaging in leisure activities alone to economic difficulty finding housing to complete exclusion from mainstream social circles, as women move into socially recognizable singlehood they move into a deviant status.

Single women have difficulty identifying which factor is the most influential in their lives, their singlehood or their gender. For most, singlehood is in the forefront of their concerns because it is an alterable social state, unlike gender. Women can get married and move into "normalcy," but they will always be female.

As single women, however, they must adapt to survive, and they do. Single women often describe initial difficulty locating the "underground" channels through which to plug into singles' networks. Social avenues for singles, unlike couples, are not obvious or easily accessible. But, through singles groups or other sources, most women eventually become integrated into a singles lifestyle.

A singles-only network serves several functions for women. First, by creating an alternative social world in which they are the norm, a singles' environment eases women's sense of displacement. Second, it gives women a resource pool for leisure activities and friendship with

other women who can identify with their deviant status and possibly advise them on such important matters as housing. Third, singles' norms, values, and activities replicate closely those of the larger culture, so women can still feel a part of the majority society. In many ways, coping with the abnormal status of singlehood for women requires an alternative singles network in which women are both accepted and supported.

Some women have difficulty assimilating into the singles-only lifestyle or accepting their status as single outside the singles network. Women like Jennifer, 32, who is at an age when she is beginning to seek out other singles, finds singles groups depressing and comprised of "misfits." Other women, like Barbara, 52, and Rose, 44, hope to re-marry, but they are only willing to do so if it is clearly an improvement over their single life. They see marriage as an arrangement that would bring them back into a normal status, but that "normal" arrangement also has the potential to be abusive. Marriage, even for women unhappy with singlehood, is not a situation they actively seek.

Thus, single women are in a paradoxical situation: they have a deviant status, but they do not see marriage necessarily as a desirable alternative. In this society, their options are to stay single and face the economic, social, and spatial problems that ensues, or marry and

hope not to end up with an abusive or extremely demanding husband. Many women are frustrated with this situation, particularly those women who have not found supportive singles networks.

Singlehood is often an enigmatic and confusing process for women. Women move from a normal status to an abnormal social standing to which they must adjust. By becoming part of a singles' network that tries to replicate the majority culture, to provide support, and to serve social functions, some women adapt to their singlehood with relative ease. Others do not reconcile their singlehood as well as are less satisfied with their lives and more insecure with themselves.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The intersections between gender studies and environment research offer important perspectives on the social problem of gender inequality. The environment is a product of United States society and a producer of attitudes and behaviors. The physical environment and the ideologies with which it is built and the ways in which it is interpreted reflect and shape social structures and interaction.

Although the "public" and "private" realms of social life are no longer as separated or clearly demarcated along gender lines, social expectations of women's and men's use of space are dissimilar. Women use space differently than men; they experience the same physical environment in qualitatively divergent ways. Differential gender socialization includes different perspectives on the surrounding environment.

The physical environment first can be viewed as a product of a society in which women's influence, especially unmarried women's, is minimal. Historically, women have had minimal input in the design of housing, transportation, and leisure activity resources. Few women are in the architectural or planning professions; women

have rarely been asked for suggestions. Women have been largely invisible to those in environmental decision-making positions; environmental structures are typically not built with the perspectives of women in mind.

In addition to being a product of society, the environment can also be seen as playing the role of a producer. The environment is constructed and maintained according to physical and ideological guidelines for socially acceptable housing, transportation, and leisure. These aspects of the environment are equally as important as the physical surroundings typically considered to comprise "the environment." Since the housing, transportation, and leisure activity resources in the United States are largely built with assumptions of nuclear family usage, people are spatially encouraged to fulfill this model. Those who do not conform to these assumptions face environmental as well as social transgressions.

Single women are in a unique position vis a vis their environment. First, they have lower incomes than single men, so their environmental options are financially more limited. Second, women often see male companionship as necessary for some social functions, and they avoid a variety of activities where they would feel out of place

as a single woman. Third, women are socialized into fear, and they circumscribe their movements to increase their perceived safety.

Women's perceptions of the environment affect their movements; these perceptions are influenced by social myths about "normal" household composition and sexuality, patterns of behavior for women, and the likelihood they will be assaulted by men. Single women view their environmental options as limited when they are alone because of their nascent fear and the social expectations of couples. These women must live and work in an environment not suited to their needs.

Since the 1970s, the number of single people has grown dramatically in the United States; in 1990, over a third of adults were unmarried. The traditional "nuclear family"--a male breadwinner, a female housewife, and children--represents only about 10% of the population. Households have decreased in size, and most women work outside the home.

These demographic changes have evidenced some shifts in society. Grocery stores are typically open twenty-four hours a day. Banks and pharmacies can be found in many of these stores. Products such as single-serving food items are targeted toward a growing singles market. Singles cruises, dances, and other leisure activities have become

more common. Apartment complexes designed for singles provide a residential community and structured leisure activities for unmarried people.

Such changes as these illustrate a shift toward recognizing the needs of singles, but a culture lag persists. The majority of housing built targets higher income or dual income households. Transportation choices are still minimal outside urban areas. The majority of socially desirable leisure activities are predicated on couple or family usage; housing and leisure activities designed for singles' needs are still outside mainstream social life. The environment continues to be based on specific normative gender expectations of spatial use, and the experiences and perspectives of women, especially single women, go largely unnoted.

Although some aspects of single women's lives are common to many people in society--time pressures, financial problems, alienation--they are often more extreme for single women, or are exacerbated by other factors, such as socialized fear. Single women differ from men in their lower income and greater fear. Married women typically have more household income and social acceptance. Because of their unmarried status, their gender, and their typically lower incomes, single women face difficulties with housing, transportation, and leisure.

To address the environmental problems of single women, both the difficulties related to singlehood and those connected to gender should be considered. Architects and planners must ground their design in the needs of the population rather than in social myths. Approximately 43% of women are single in the United States today, and a slightly lower percentage of men. These people need housing not designed for a two-income family and socially acceptable leisure activities that do not assume couples. Many single parents also need convenient, affordable day-care options, instead of social policies based on assumptions that parents have either a mother at home or enough money for expensive child care.

In addition to problems caused by singlehood, single women face gender discrimination, and their SFP inhibits their movements and limits their environmental options. First, greater economic and social equality for women would give single women more input in environmental design and increase the housing, leisure, and transportation resources they perceive as open to them. Second, rape in the United States must be addressed, along with women's fear. When rape is less likely to occur and women's fears of moving in the environment more accurately reflect the risks of their actions, women's perceived environmental options will increase.

The findings of this project concur with prior research, provide a window into the experiences of a category of people not often considered, and suggest directions for future research. However, this project clearly has a variety of limitations. The nature of this research is exploratory, limited to a relatively small number of women in a particular environment. Questions asked focused on a specific, somewhat narrow agenda; not all aspects of women's perceptions and use of the environment or their experiences with singlehood were explored. The project cannot be assumed to apply to all single women everywhere, or to exhaust all important facets of single women's lives.

Despite these limitations, the results found contribute new data and suggest a projects that could examine further the findings of this study. Similar studies could be undertaken on a larger scale in a variety of environments to probe the degree of consistency of these findings. Comparable projects incorporating interviews of single men and married people would likely provide insight into a variety of similarities and differences in people's perceptions and use of the environment. Quantitative, large-scale surveys could also be employed to address specific aspects of these findings, e.g., single men and women's home security alterations.

This project is a sensitizing study undertaken to explore the experiences of single women in the environment. The results indicate the need for increased research on the intersection between gender and the environment. Future studies addressing gender and the environment must incorporate a broad definition of the environment. The environment cannot be reduced to physical surroundings; research must include questions on the symbolic significance and the presumed social roles that are part of the environment itself.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.**Singles Groups Contacted**

Calvary Baptist Church 3200 Kingston Pike
Central Baptist Church of Bearden 6300 Deane Hill
Chilhowee Hills Baptist Church 4615 Asheville Highway
Church Street United Methodist 900 Henley Street
Cokesbury United Methodist Church 9908 Kingston Pike
Fifth Avenue Baptist Church 2500 5th Avenue
First Presbyterian Church 620 State Street
Greater Warner Tabernacle AME Zion 3819 Speedway Circle
Knoxville Jewish Federation P.O. Box 10882
Metropolitan Community Church
Middlebrook Pike United Methodist Church 7234 Middlebrook
Redemption Christian Center 3550 Pleasant Ridge Road
Sacred Heart Church 711 Northshore Drive
Second United Methodist Church 1524 Western Avenue
Sevier Heights Baptist Church 3706 Sevier Heights Road
Smithwood Baptist Church 4914 Jacksboro Pike
Tennessee Valley Unitarians P.O. Box 10507
Volunteer Singles

APPENDIX II.

Interview Schedule

HOUSING:

When did you move to this location? How many other places did you look at? How did you select it?

Affordability

(use) When you were looking for a place to live, how much of your income were you willing to spend on housing? What price range were you looking in? Have you had any problems paying rent?

(perceptions) How affordable is this place compared to most others in the area? Did you look at any less expensive housing? If so, why didn't you choose it?

Convenience

(use) Do you work? Where? How long does it take you to get there? How close is your home to regular errands you run (grocery, laundry, etc.)? Do close friends or family live nearby?

(perceptions) Is there any housing more convenient to your work or other regular activities? If so, why didn't you choose it?

Safety

(use) Have you ever moved because of fear for your safety? Did you ask the police or anyone else about the safety before you moved in? Have you ever been broken into or have you had anything at all stolen? Did you do anything to your home to make it more secure? Do you have an unlisted phone number? If in the book, is your full name or just initials listed?

(perceptions) Has anyone else in the area had problems with safety? Do you feel safe in this area? Do you ever worry about your security? If you lived with a man, would you feel safer? If you lived with a woman?

Appearance

(use) Did the appearance of housing influence your decision of where to live? How? Did you reject any housing because you did not think it "suited you"? What bothered you about it?

(perceptions) Do you like the way your home looks? What about it do you like/dislike? What about your neighborhood? Do you feel you "fit in"? Are there any areas you looked at that you don't think you would fit in? Why?

Ideal Home and Neighborhood: Describe the home and neighborhood you would choose to live in if you weren't limited by finances.

Ranking: Of the four factors (convenience, safety, cost, and appearance), which would you say is the most important?

TRANSPORTATION:

What are the most common routes you take to work or anywhere else? How do you get around? Do you own a car?

Affordability

(use) How much money do you spend on transportation every week/month?

(perceptions) Are there cheaper ways to get around? Why don't you use them?

Convenience

(use) Do you always take the most convenient way of going somewhere? Do you try to schedule many trips into one to save time?

(perceptions) Do you spend less or more time than most people getting around?

Safety

(use) Do you ever walk anywhere during the day? At night? When you do walk, how often do you avoid looking people you do not know in the eye? Do you consider the lighting of an area before you go decide to go? Do you go different routes at night? Are there any areas you avoid going through at night? When you go out, do you ever consider the parking lot--it's size, lighting, etc.--before you decide to go? To what extent do you try to limit your going out to the daytime hours? Do you lock your doors while driving?

(perceptions) Are you safer walking, in the bus, or in your car? When you are out, how alert and watchful would you say you are? Do you try to keep yourself safer at night? How? Do you feel safer when another woman is with you? With a man?

Appearance

(use) Do you consider the appearance of different forms of transportation? Does it influence how you get from place to place?

(perceptions) What type of transportation do you think is appropriate for a woman alone?

Ranking: Of the four factors we discussed, which would you say is the most important in your transportation?

LEISURE ACTIVITIES:

What are some places you go regularly in your free time? Who do you usually do these things with?

Affordability

(use) How much money do you spend every week/month on leisure activities? Are there any activities you would like to do but don't want to spend the money?

(perceptions) Could you save money on your leisure activities? How?

Convenience

(use) How far away from your home do you typically go when you have some free time?

(perceptions) What are some activities that are convenient for you? What are some things you would like to do that aren't that convenient enough?

Safety

(use) Do you avoid any activities because of safety concerns? Would you do any activities with someone but not alone? Are there any activities you would do at day and not at night? Why?

(perceptions) Can you do anything to make yourself safer? What? Do you feel safer with another woman? With a man?

Convenience

(use) Do you avoid any places because of the way they look? Because of how well you "fit in"?

(perceptions) What is a place you like the appearance of? What is one you don't? Why? What is an example of an appropriate leisure activity for a single woman? What is an example of an inappropriate?

Ranking: Of the four factors discussed, which would you say most influences what you do in your free time?

VITA

Amy Lane Chasteen was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama on May 6, 1969. She graduated from Athens High School in Athens, Alabama in 1987. While in high school she attended Birmingham-Southern College and Calhoun Community College, and she received an Associate's degree from Calhoun Community College in 1988. The majority of her undergraduate work was done at New College, an interdisciplinary program at the University of Alabama. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree with a depth study in Environmental Sociology in December 1989. In August 1990, she entered the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she received a Master of Arts degree in Sociology in May 1992.

She is presently pursuing her Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Michigan. Her main interests are feminist theory and gender studies. She plans a career in teaching.