

Risk Factors Associated with Women's Victimization



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...from the Director

The focus of this report is the victimization of women on college campuses in terms of property, personal, and sexual assault victimization. Several theoretical perspectives have provided frameworks for assessing campus victimization of women, namely, routine activities, feminist, and self-control theories. The findings suggest to what extent situational and personal characteristics are related to each type of victimization. As is pointed out in the report, different combinations of traits and lifestyle factors are associated with each type of victimization. The findings have important implications for both prevention efforts and intervention strategies for women.



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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Crime Victims' Institute is to

- conduct research to examine the impact of crime on victims of all ages in order to promote a better understanding of victimization
- improve services to victims
- assist victims of crime by giving them a voice
- inform victim-related policymaking at the state and local levels.



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Executive Summary

The prevalence of victimization on college campuses has been the focus of study for decades. Research indicates that campus crime is relatively problematic, but that sexual assault risk is epidemic. Specifically, prevalence estimates have suggested that 25 percent of college women will experience attempted or completed rape during their college career.¹ More recent work has reported incidents rates that range from 15 to 30 percent.^{2,3,4} This study focused on women's routine activities and levels of self-control as they related to property, personal, and sexual assault victimization. The findings indicated that:

- Decreases in self-control produced increases in victimization for college women
- The risk of property victimization increased when women spent more time shopping and partying. Additionally, living off campus, participation in drug sales, and being in their early years of college increased property victimization risk among these University women
- Personal victimization was not so much related to spending time away from home, but was related to living off campus and participating in drug sales behavior
- The risk of sexual assault victimization increased with time spent on campus and time spent partying

The results presented in this report provide important implications for crime prevention strategies on Texas college campuses.

Author Biographies

Cortney A. Franklin earned her Ph.D. from Washington State University and is currently an assistant professor in the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University. Her research interests include self-control and victimization, violence against women and specifically, sexual assault and intimate partner violence, and gender and criminal justice processing. Her recent work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *Journal of Criminal Justice*, *Feminist Criminology*, *Journal of Family Violence*, and *Women and Criminal Justice*.

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Risk Factors Associated with Women's Victimization

Understanding the etiology of victimization is one of several main goals in the study of criminology. That said, the general criminological victimization literature has developed at a relatively slow pace since the introduction of routine activity and lifestyles theories in the late 1970s. Additionally, it was not until 1995 that scholars began to investigate the impact of routine activity theory on violence against women.^{5, 6} Although research on these dimensions of victimization has generally lagged behind the rest of the field, scholars have made many noteworthy contributions in the last 15 years.^{7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13} During this time period, routine activity theory has arguably been the dominant paradigm for applying “traditional” criminological theories to issues of victimization.

While victimization research has taken several directions in terms of recent expansion,^{14, 15, 16} one notable area of success in applying theory has been the systematic investigation of individual antecedents to victimization, and in particular, the role of low self-control. Specifically, Schreck (1999)¹⁷ proposed that Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990)¹⁸ claims regarding the impact of self-control on offending behavior could be effectively applied to crime victims. He suggested that, like offenders, victims engage in high-risk behaviors that often take place in close proximity to perpetrators, which enhances their property and personal vulnerability, highlighting their attractiveness as targets for crime. Empirical evaluations have yielded support for these propositions. Of these studies, the most recent analyses have included crimes traditionally targeting female victims, such as sexual assault,¹⁹ intimate partner violence,²⁰ and stalking.²¹ These results indicate that self-control increases the likelihood of experiencing victimization outcomes.

Feminist theory suggests that there is something fundamentally unique about the victimization experiences that predominantly affect women. Specifically, structural issues of male power and inequality influence the perpetration of interpersonal crimes.^{22, 23} In a similar vein Miller and Burack (1995),²⁴ argue that fundamental gender relations and inequality in power relations between men and women in society are both necessary for understanding rape and intimate partner violence, but are ignored by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990)²⁵ in their account of the causes of crime (e.g., individual self-control). According to Miller and Burack (1993),²⁶ “the differences in the status of women in society vis-à-vis men are vital for any theory that attempts to explain violence against women” (p. 119).

Feminist theorists are correct to point out the need to account for the role of patriarchy; general victimization theory has nevertheless demonstrated utility in explaining female victimization by highlighting the effect of individual-level and situational correlates of crime.^{28, 29} As a result, the impact of general victimization measures has remained a useful avenue of inquiry for researchers. Studies investigating the relationship between routine activity theory and sexual assault have amassed since the mid-1990s^{30, 31} and the research on self-control and female-specific forms of victimization has seen recent but limited attention.^{32, 33, 34} Collectively, these literatures are less developed than empirical evaluations of general victimization, and as a consequence, require further investigation.

Studying Violence Against Women

One of the greatest challenges facing researchers who study the correlates of victimization is the risk of appearing to blame victims. While serious concerns surrounding victim blame have a lengthy political history in the study of sexual assault and violence against women,³⁵ it is important to note that there is a fundamental distinction between the scientific investigation of factors that correlate with vulnerability to victimization³⁶ and the normative values that suggest that the women themselves are responsible for their experiences. Although this study is concerned with identifying theoretically relevant individual and situational factors associated with different forms of female victimization, it is imperative to reiterate that the onus for any crime event rests solely on the perpetrator. Moreover, this investigation is motivated by furthering a knowledge base that is designed to control and prevent victimization and to empower women through access to information regarding the particular factors that may enhance their vulnerability and/or make them more attractive crime targets.

Routine Activity Theory and Self-Control

The general victimization literature has historically suggested that personal, property, violent, and interpersonal crime and victimization can be explained by assessing the situational characteristics of a given event. Specifically, Cohen and Felson (1979)³⁷ proposed that crime is the result of the convergence of three factors — the presence of likely offenders, the availability of suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians. Moreover, they suggested that individuals whose routine activities take place largely within households would experience less victimization, and those who spend the majority of their time away from their homes would be subject to more victimization. In particular, a public lifestyle consisting of daytime work outside the home or frequent nighttime activity away from home would increase exposure to risk, and consequently, crime.³⁸ In 1981, Cohen, Kluegel, and Land³⁹ broadened the dimensions of routine activity theory to include the mediating role of five risk factors—“exposure, guardianship, proximity to potential offenders, attractiveness of potential targets, and definitional properties of specific crimes” (p. 505).

Despite widespread popularity, it was not until 1995 that criminologists began to test the applicability of routine activity theory specifically on women’s victimization.^{40, 41} Routine activity theory has since provided numerous useful contributions to the study of violence against women.^{42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48} Collectively, these studies have considered the situational characteristics of crime events that take place in settings with suitable targets, likely offenders (who are often trusted or intimate males), and an absence of guardians — including self-guardianship resulting from alcohol intoxication and/or drug use. To successfully integrate routine activity theory with feminist theory, these factors have been framed within a larger sociocultural context or a “rape-supportive culture” that may excuse violence against women.⁴⁹

Unlike routine activity theory, the literature on self-control and victimization is less developed as it draws from Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990)⁵⁰ general theory of crime — a framework proposed to understand offending behavior. The authors posited that low levels of individual self-control predict involvement in an array of gratifying behaviors that coincide with crime and deviance, including smoking, drinking, fast driving, and illicit and unprotected sex. Tests of the theory have generally yielded support, regardless of the way in which self-control has been measured.⁵¹ In a seminal expansion of the general theory, Schreck (1999)⁵² argued that victims and offenders share similar attributes — namely, the propensity to engage in short-term, high-risk behaviors that produce immediate gratification with little consideration

for long-term and often serious consequences. Schreck (1999),⁵³ hypothesized individuals with self-control deficits would have less foresight in terms of behavioral consequences and thus, face increased vulnerability to risk. With a sample derived from the 1996 Tucson Youth Project survey of 1,039 college students, Schreck (1999)⁵⁴ tested his propositions and concluded that low self-control significantly contributed to both personal and property victimization among the subjects in his sample. Several studies that followed reiterated the importance of self-control in predicting victimization. The most recent analyses to investigate the applicability of self-control to victimization have assessed violence against women, and specifically, sexual assault,⁵⁵ intimate partner violence,⁵⁶ and stalking victimization.⁵⁷ Findings from these studies have demonstrated the importance of considering self-control in explaining violence against women since low self-control contributes to increased vulnerability among would-be victims, thus enhancing their suitability as targets among potential perpetrators.

While existing research on general theories and violence against women typically has not addressed the potential importance of gender and gendered power relations in society, these studies collectively posit that decreases in self-control are correlated with increases in victimization, even after considering other theoretically-relevant variables. Additionally, this general victimization research has expanded with studies that remain largely independent from one another in terms of including “general” crime as opposed to “interpersonal” crime. In other words, this research has yet to test the relationship between self-control, routine activity theory, and victimization across multiple crime types, disaggregating sexual from personal victimization in order to assess the relative utility of general theories on the types of victimization that predominantly target women.

Methodology

The purpose of the study presented in this report was to investigate the effect of routine activity indicators and self-control on property, personal, and sexual assault victimization, while considering relevant demographic variables. The data used in this analysis were part of a larger crime victimization survey of undergraduate students from eight public universities in Texas.^{58, 59} Universities were selected for inclusion in the study based on two criteria: (1) the university had to be publicly operated, and (2) the student enrollment was required to be 8,000 students or more. Based on these criteria, 15 universities were identified. The Registrar’s office at each university was contacted requesting access to university e-mail addresses for registered students. Eight universities provided usable data. Students from 8 universities were randomly selected, contacted via e-mail, and invited to participate in a voluntary online survey about “the experiences of college students in Texas” regarding “lifestyle” and “difficult and frustrating things that may have happened to you and that you may have done.” No compensation or other incentives were offered for participation. Of those students that responded to the initial solicitation, only individuals aged 18 and older and currently enrolled in a Texas university were permitted to take the survey. Survey administration resulted in 4,286 questionnaires representing students whose permanent residences were concentrated within the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, the Houston area, and central and east Texas. The current analysis was restricted to only female survey respondents from the original sample. Consequently, this study is limited to 2,233 cases.

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 presents the sample characteristics and reveals that the average age of the female respondents was 22.59 years. Additionally, 18.3 percent of the sample was made up of freshman students. Sophomores comprised 19.1 percent of the participants, followed by juniors at 24.4 percent and seniors who represented 28.7 percent of the women in the study. Finally, 9.5 percent of the female respondents were graduate students. The racial and ethnic composition of the sample indicates that the majority were White (76.6%), followed by Hispanic (10.8%), African American (5.7%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (2.3%). The remaining 3.9 percent of respondents self-identified as “mixed” race/ethnicity or “other.” Finally, more than half of the sample reported some form of employment (61.3 %) while the remaining 38.7 percent were without paid labor.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variables	Mean/Percentage
Age*	22.59
<i>Year in College</i>	
Freshman	18.3%
Sophomore	19.1%
Junior	24.4%
Senior	28.7%
Graduate Student	9.5%
<i>Race</i>	
White	76.6%
Non-White	23.4%
<i>Employment Status</i>	
Employed	61.3%
Unemployed	38.7%
*Mean values are listed	

Victimization Measures

The current analysis included three dependent variables: *property*, *personal*, and *sexual assault victimization*. To capture *property victimization*, respondents were presented with five questions describing common forms of property victimization that included larceny, burglary, vandalism, motor vehicle theft, and theft, then asked to affirm their victimization experiences during the previous two years. *Personal victimization* was defined as face-to-face crime, including violent offenses but excluding sexual assault. Personal victimization was captured by presenting respondents with three questions that provided behavioral descriptions of robbery, assault, and aggravated assault (with a weapon). Subjects were asked to affirm experiences that occurred during the previous two years. To capture *sexual assault victimization*, respondents were asked if, during the previous two years, “anyone has ever forced or coerced you to do sexual things (e.g., oral, vaginal, anal, etc.) even though you did not want to do those things?” Table 2 presents the questions capturing personal, property, and sexual assault victimization and Table 3 presents the variables included in the current analysis.

Table 2. Victimization Items From the Survey Questionnaire

<i>Property Victimization</i>
1. “Have you ever had ¹ something of yours stolen from a public place such as a restaurant, gym, club, bar, or bowling alley?”
2. “Have you ever had something stolen from your home, house, or apartment?”
3. “Have any of your things ever been damaged on purpose, such as your house or car vandalized, or your bike or car tires slashed?”
4. Has your vehicle, motorcycle, or bicycle ever been stolen?”
5. “Have things ever been taken from your vehicle, motorcycle, or bike, such as hubcaps, books, packages, CDs, stereos, tapes, or money?”
<i>Personal Victimization</i>
1. “Have you ever had something taken from you directly by force or by someone threatening to hurt you?”
2. “Has anyone ever attacked you, injured you, or beaten you up without the use of a weapon?”
3. “Has anyone ever attacked you with a weapon such as a gun, knife, bottle, or chair?”
<i>Sexual Assault Victimization</i>
1. “Has anyone ever forced or coerced you to do sexual things (e.g., oral, vaginal, anal, etc.) even though you did not want to do those things?”
¹ Initial questions were phrased so that the subject could identify if they had “ever” been the victim of specific crime events. Upon answering yes, subjects were asked if and how many times this particular event took place in the previous two years.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Variables Used in the Analysis

Variables	Mean/ Percentage	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent Variables			
Property Victimization			
No	53.4%		
Yes	46.6%		
Personal Victimization			
No	92.1%		
Yes	7.9%		
Sexual Assault Victimization			
No	87.1%		
Yes	12.9%		
Independent Variables			
Self-control	3.07*	1.00	4.00
<i>Routine Activity Theory</i>			
Exposure			
Days spent on campus	4.43*	1.00	7.00
Partying	1.13*	1.00	7.00
Shopping	1.03*	0.00	3.00
Guardianship			
Number of close friends	1.65*	0.00	2.00
Residence Location			
On-Campus	27.3%		
Off-Campus	72.7%		
Target Attractiveness			
Carry cash/jewelry	9.37*	0.00	31.00
Proximity to Potential Offenders			
Active Greek Membership			
No	88.0%		
Yes	12.0%		
Participation in Drug Sales			
No	94.7%		
Yes	5.3%		
* Mean values are listed			

Independent and Demographic Variables

Self-Control

To capture individual levels of self-control, respondents were asked a series of 24 questions that measure constructs including impulsivity, risk-taking/seeking, the preference for physical rather than mental activities, and a low tolerance for frustration.⁶⁰

Routine Activity Theory

Routine activity theory is comprised of factors that include exposure, guardianship, target attractiveness and proximity to potential offenders.

Exposure was captured by asking subjects to report the frequency of time spent away from home and in public settings. Specifically, subjects reported the number of days per week spent on campus during the daytime (before 6:00 p.m.). Participants were also asked to report the number of days per week spent both on and off campus “partying.” Finally, subjects were asked to estimate the frequency with which they “go out shopping.”

Guardianship was measured by asking subjects, “how many *close* friends do you currently have?” Arguably, individuals with close friends are more likely to participate in shared social activities (e.g., frequenting shopping centers, going to parties, etc.) and to do so with people they trust. Consequently, these individuals would have someone looking out for or “guarding” them in situations where their personal safety is at risk and/or their property is more vulnerable.^{61, 62} Respondents were also asked to identify their residence location during the school year. Students occupying an on-campus residence live in residence halls or university managed apartment complexes, both of which are attached housing with multiple residence units in one building. These living arrangements are: (1) typically organized so that residents know each other, and (2) are more densely populated than off-campus detached units.

Target attractiveness was measured by asking subjects to report the number of days in the past month they “carried 50 dollars or more in cash or wore jewelry that was worth more than 100 dollars while in a public place.” From a target selection perspective, individuals with visible signs of wealth are more desirable in terms of their “payoff potential” as compared to those with little or no visible signs of affluence.⁶³

Proximity to potential offenders was measured through Greek membership and participation in drug sales. Existing studies have measured Greek membership as the likely offender component of routine activity theory⁶⁴ because fraternity members are statistically more likely candidates for sexual assault perpetration on college campuses compared to non-members. Similarly, women who actively participate in Greek organizations are in frequent contact with fraternity men through institutionalized mechanisms that encourage gatherings designed to facilitate social bonding/intimacy^{65, 66} and often involve alcohol.⁶⁷ Further, researchers have highlighted the characteristics of school-sponsored groups like fraternities and sororities as enhancing vulnerability to property victimization,⁶⁸ though this research has inconsistencies.⁶⁹ Finally, subjects were asked two questions about their drug sales behavior in the past two years, including “marijuana,” “hashish” and other “hard drugs” like “heroin, cocaine, and LSD.”

Three demographic measures were also included as control variables: race, year in college, and employment status.

Results

Property Victimization

Multivariate statistical models were run separately for property, personal and sexual assault victimization. The first model examined the effect of routine activity measures and self-control on property victimization and the findings reveal several significant relationships. Specifically, self-control deficits were related to an increase in the odds of property victimization so that for each one-unit decrement in self-control, the odds of property victimization increased by 1.28 times. Additionally, days per week spent partying and shopping frequency (both measures of exposure) increased the odds of victimization by 1.16 and 1.23 times, respectively. Moreover, living off campus (a measure of guardianship) increased the odds of victimization by 1.67 times. Finally, participation in drug sales (a measure of potential offender proximity) increased the odds of victimization by 1.51 times. Year in college was also negatively correlated with property victimization. Table 4 presents the significant correlates of property victimization and their corresponding odds ratios.

Table 4. Significant Correlates of Property Victimization Among College Women

Property Victimization	Odds Ratio
Self-Control	1.28
Days per Week Spent Partying	1.16
Shopping Frequency	1.23
Off-Campus Residence	1.67
Drug Sales	1.51
Years in College	0.86

Personal Victimization

The second model investigated the effect of routine activity measures and self-control on personal victimization. The findings presented here continue to promote the importance of self-control in understanding victimization. In fact, the relationship between self-control and personal victimization was considerably stronger than the relationship presented in Model 1, which examined property victimization. Specifically, each one-unit decrement in self-control increased personal victimization likelihood by 1.97 times. With regard to routine activity theory, measures of guardianship (off-campus residence increased odds by 1.97 times) and proximity to potential offenders (drug sales participation increased odds by 3.48 times) continued to influence victimization as in Model 1, but measures of exposure were not significantly correlated with personal victimization. Table 5 presents the significant correlates of property victimization and their corresponding odds ratios.

Table 5. Significant Correlates of Personal Victimization Among College Women

Personal Victimization	Odds Ratio
Self-Control	1.97
Off-Campus Residence	1.97
Drug Sales	3.48

Sexual Assault Victimization

The third model assessed the relationship between routine activity measures, self-control, and sexual assault victimization, and several significant findings emerged. First, self-control was significantly correlated with sexual assault victimization so that each one-unit decrement in subject self-control increased sexual assault victimization likelihood by 1.53 times. In addition, three routine activity indicators were significant: days spent on campus, days spent partying, and participation in drug sales. In particular, for each one-unit increase in the number of days spent on campus, the odds of sexual assault victimization increased by 1.21 times. Similarly, each one-unit increase in the number of days per week spent partying translated to an increase in the odds of sexual assault victimization by 1.25 times. Finally, individuals who reported having engaged in drug sales reported an increase in the odds of sexual assault victimization by 1.98 times. Table 6 presents the significant correlates of sexual assault victimization and their corresponding odds ratios.

Table 6. Significant Correlates of Sexual Assault Victimization Among College Women

Sexual Assault Victimization	Odds Ratio
Self-Control	1.53
Days Spent on Campus	1.21
Days per Week Spent Partying	1.25
Drug Sales	1.98

Conclusions

There has been a paucity of research on the impact of self-control on women's victimization, and specifically, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. The findings presented here suggest, consistent with prior research, that self-control deficits are positively related to victimization outcomes. At the same time, feminist scholarship has highlighted the unique nature of violence against women, and has maintained the importance of gender and power inequalities as necessary factors for understanding this arguably unique form of victimization. The findings presented in this report have attempted to advance this dialogue, underscoring the continued importance of both individual and situational factors as they impact victimization through their influence on target suitability.

Several findings are worthy of additional discussion. First, self-control deficits were significantly correlated with female victimization, regardless of type. Indeed, decreases in self-control resulted in increases in property, personal, and sexual assault victimization, even after controlling for situational factors relevant in the explanation of crime events like exposure,

guardianship, proximity, and target attractiveness. This finding is consistent with prior research on the relationship between self-control and general victimization,⁷⁰ self-control and violence against women,^{71,72} and the impact of self-control on sexual assault in university settings.⁷³

Despite the inclusion of self-control, several routine activity indicators remained significant, though the pattern of these relationships differed depending upon the outcome under investigation. For property victimization, two of the three exposure measures emerged as significant, indicating that the subject's property faced increased risk as their public activities and time spent away from home increased, like shopping and partying—conclusions that directly support the propositions of routine activity theory. Off-campus housing produced a significant increase in the odds of property victimization, suggesting that the campus environment is somewhat insulated in terms of its crime protection capacity, consistent with prior research.⁷⁴ Participation in drug sales behavior was also significant and positively related to property victimization, reiterating the importance of interaction with like-minded individuals (e.g., offenders) who are provided with the opportunity to engage in crime related to participants' personal property. Finally, of the three control variables, only year in college was significantly correlated. Subjects who were earlier in their college careers were more likely to report property victimization, which may be indicative of socialized self-guardianship. In other words, younger students and those with less experience in the college atmosphere may be less likely to engage in target hardening strategies to protect their property from potential offenders.

The findings presented for personal victimization offer a different picture. While none of the exposure measures were significant, both off-campus residence and participation in drug sales behavior continued to produce significant, but even larger increases in the odds of subjects' personal victimization. Participation in drug sales produced an effect on personal victimization that was more than twice its effect on property victimization. The magnitude of this relationship underscores the relative importance of proximity to offenders and its effect on personal victimization, above and beyond its impact on property victimization.

Arguably the most interesting results are those presented for sexual assault victimization. Unlike non-sexual personal victimization, two of the three exposure variables significantly increased the likelihood of victimization: increased time spent on campus and increased time spent partying. In line with theoretical expectations, frequency of partying increased sexual assault victimization, likely as a result of exposure (e.g., time spent away from home)⁷⁵ and the potential for alcohol consumption, sexual miscommunication, and delayed danger cue recognition.^{76, 77, 78} Further, the number of days spent on campus remained significant while considering the impact of living on campus — a relationship that was relatively smaller in the other two models. Indeed, there appears to be something situationally unique about the campus context that facilitates sexual assault among these respondents, even after considering self-control deficits, partying frequency, Greek affiliation, guardianship, and demographic variables. At the same time, contrary to the findings presented for the two other crime types, residence location had no statistical impact on sexual assault victimization.

A developed body of research has highlighted the environmental contributions of college campuses and their enhanced risk for women in terms of date and acquaintance rape.^{79, 80, 81} This scholarship draws largely from feminist theory in terms of explaining how college campuses represent potential threats to women's safety. It may be that regular daytime campus exposure captured a range of socialization mechanisms (e.g., friendships, acquaintances, mate selection, coupling, "hooking up"), social opportunities, and group gatherings. Throughout this range of mechanisms and opportunities, proximity to members of the opposite sex may, in some instances, be masked as taking place in a sexually-neutral capacity, but the interactions

still have implications for women's safety. Indeed some situations may position undergraduate females as suitable targets. For example, a series of interactions viewed by a woman as sexually neutral could alternatively be viewed as "posturing" by a male interested in commitment-free sex. When these two individuals meet again at a party where alcohol is consumed, the earlier interactions may be recalled and misinterpreted by the male, leading to an acquaintance rape.^{82, 83}

Study Limitations

Despite the importance of the findings presented here, this study is not without limitations. First, this data is cross-sectional, making it impossible to establish causation. Second, the current study used a sample of survey respondents from eight public universities in Texas with a poor overall response rate. Although the conclusions from this study are suggestive, the authors recommend caution in interpreting and generalizing findings to other contexts and populations. Future research should attempt to replicate this study with larger and more geographically diverse samples and with additional emphasis on evaluating generalizability to college student populations. A systematic evaluation of survey non-response bias that features data imputation or other assessment techniques may shed light on important factors influencing underreporting specific to this phenomenon. Finally, while several of the measures used to capture elements of routine activity theory move beyond simple demographics, future research may employ a broader range of items to represent constructs like guardianship, target attractiveness, and proximity to potential offenders.

Implications for Theory and Prevention Policy on College Campuses

Results from this analysis underscore the potential contribution of mainstream criminological theory to explaining violence against women, but leave important questions unanswered. Namely, what are the mechanisms taking place on college campuses during the daytime that produced unique effects for sexual assault victimization, but not for property and personal victimization among this Texas sample? Some research has suggested very distinct differences between daytime and nighttime social processes on college campuses, such as fear of crime.⁸⁴ Feminist scholarship on patriarchal socialization and the sexually-charged nature of the college campus (e.g., sexual entitlement, traditional gender roles, rape myth adherence, pornography consumption, etc.) may lend itself to further elaboration of the findings presented in this research. Thus, important directions for future study include the integration of concepts derived from traditional victimization theories (e.g., routine activity, self-control) with feminist explanations of sexual assault victimization.

Second, results derived from this study highlight the importance of several individual and situational factors as they contribute to victimization. Self-control remains useful in the prevention of property, personal, and sexual assault victimization. According to Schreck (1999, p. 635),⁸⁵ "low self-control behavior produces vulnerability as a by-product." Specifically, self-control deficits may influence an individual's participation in high-risk behaviors that lead to enhanced target suitability, such as heavy drinking. Additionally, these conclusions draw attention to the role of routine patterns of public behavior and in particular, nighttime activities, frequent partying, and for sexual assault victimization, regular daytime campus involvement. Residence location also mattered both substantively and significantly in this study, as living on campus appears to counter both personal and property vulnerabilities. Finally, engagement in drug sales behavior significantly enhanced risk across all three victimization types, further cementing the importance of peer selection and proximity to potential offenders. Collectively,

these findings reiterate the value of prudent behavioral choices, in-school residence options, and target hardening strategies employed to guard against threats to property and personal safety. While the goal of this study is not to hold would-be victims accountable for their own victimization, it is instructive to consider the impact of lifestyle variables and how situational and individual constructs can strengthen property, personal, and sexual security.

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