The securitization of street harassment in Rotterdam:
Government's and women's articulations of safety for women.

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Abstract

This thesis aims to examine the securitization of street harassment by government entities in Rotterdam as well as explore women's experiences of this public issue. The objective is to understand how security operates in addressing street harassment by highlighting both individual's experiences and analyse how government entities address street harassment. The research employs qualitative analysis techniques, including interviews and document analysis. Divided into two parts, the study examines both government and women's articulations of street harassment, comparing and analysing them to provide an institutional and personal perspective.

The findings reveal a discrepancy between the government's approach and women's lived experiences. While the documents focus on identifying disruptive actions of malevolent perpetrators and maintaining public order, they risk neglecting the inherently sexist nature of street harassment. In contrast, the interviewed women articulate a broader understanding of security, they advocate for an all- encompassing notion of security, which includes the social, emotional, and sexual aspects, and they highlight the risks posed by a patriarchal order.

This study underscores the significance of incorporating a gender perspective when examining security and crime control. It also acknowledges the contradictions, tensions, and oppositions encountered when exploring security through a gender lens. Documenting these challenges is crucial for informing policy development and facilitating the pursuit of effective approaches and solutions to combat gender-based violence.

Keywords: government entities, Rotterdam, securitization, street harassment, women's experiences.

1. Introduction

Street harassment is a form of gender-based violence that mostly affects women and gender non-conforming individuals worldwide. Street harassment can take on many forms, such as sexualized comments and gestures or even go as far as unwanted physical contact. These acts occur in public spaces and are often inflicted by people who are unfamiliar to the victim. Through conversations with victims, scholars have identified the widespread negative impact of street harassment on an individual's overall well-being (Fisher, et al. 2018). Furthermore, street harassment has increasingly been recognized as an issue that limits people's ability to move through public spaces comfortably. Despite this, street harassment has been treated as an inevitable social phenomenon, too complicated to address in policy or by legislators (Siggemann, 2021). However, the securitization of street harassment has increasingly become a topic in Dutch politics. A report by Fischer and Sprado (2017) revealed that 84% of women in Rotterdam had experiences with street harassment. In Rotterdam, there have been more policy intervention attempts to criminalize street harassment. Critics point out that criminalization and securitization of this issue requires careful analysis because they can lead to increased discrimination against marginalized groups (Henry & Powell, 2018). In Rotterdam, the topic of street harassment was mainly made public by the right-wing political party Leefbaar Rotterdam. In this thesis, I argue that the way street harassment is made public by right-wing political parties carries the risk of anti-immigrant discourse being advanced as well as the sexist nature of street harassment being rendered invisible. This thesis has two main goals, firstly, to scrutinize the way government entities address and securitize the issue of street harassment. Secondly, centering the experience of women on street harassment and what this says about the way they experience public space and security at large. The additional perspective of women's experiences is valuable because it helps understand security in a way that prioritizes the safety of individuals instead of any other ulterior motive. Ultimately, I hope to find out how security is at work in addressing street harassment. The following research questions were formulated to reach this goal:

Research question: *How is security expressed in articulations of street harassment in Rotterdam?*

Research sub-question: *How do Rotterdam government entities address security in making street harassment a public issue?*

Research sub-question: *How do women in Rotterdam address security in the articulations of their experience with street harassment?*

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Defining Street harassment: The shifts and tensions

Street harassment is a form of harassment that involves verbal and nonverbal behaviours in street contexts. Street harassment was defined by Di Leonardo (1981) as an interaction that occurs when strange men accost women in a public place (p.51). Di Leonardo (1981, p.51–52) goes on by stating; 'Through looks, words, or gestures the man asserts his right to intrude on the woman's attention, defining her as a sexual object, and forcing her to interact with him'. Furthermore, what is definitionally important, is the different types of interactions that comprise street harassment including staring, whistling, sexist slurs, and groping.

Even though street harassment does not only happen to women, this thesis will look at the street harassment of specifically self-identifying female people, this is not to render the experiences of other gender identities unimportant but to focus and dive deeper into this specific gender identity, since gender-based violence has particular meanings when directed from men to women given the prevalence of violence against women and girls (Vera-Gray,2016). In this thesis, I intentionally avoid a gender-neutral framing of the issue of street harassment, by referring to the category of (self-identifying) women. I argue that it is important to acknowledge gendered differences in understandings of gender-specific harms. The contribution of feminist-legal literature offers a specific insight to this as well, this literature claims that the denial of difference in women and men's realities is engrained in legal statutes based on the principle of the 'reasonable man', which claims to represent an objective standard against which any individual's understanding or conduct can be measured (Vera-Gray, 2016). When reading Bowman (1993), you can expose the flaws in this principle by linking the harm to women's fear of rape: the "reasonable man" may not typically feel threatened or fearful when a stranger yells something sexually suggestive and offensive on the street, the response of a "reasonable woman" may differ, because of her constant awareness of the violent consequences of male hostility to women and her realistic fears of rape (Bowman, 1993). Therefore, I find usefulness in upholding the category "women" in this thesis, there will be a further elaboration on this choice in the method section.

Despite the overwhelming occurrence of street harassment and more women openly discussing how it affects them and their feelings of safety in public, the implementation of

effective legal redress has been complicated (Siggemann, 2021). Street harassment has historically been framed as a harmless issue, it is viewed as an inevitable social phenomenon and therefore policy discourses surrounding women's public safety have been incomplete (Aharoni & Feron,2020). Siggemann (2021) explains that addressing street harassment in policy or law is hard because of its lack of a clear definition, the different degrees of severity to which street harassment can occur make it difficult to determine a concrete termination. Without a clear definition that is widely accepted, the issue and the harm it can inflict on women's everyday lives get easily overlooked. However, cross-national evidence reveals that various countries have been picking up street harassment as an issue of security and communicating it as a threat to public safety (Aharoni & Feron, 2020; Amar, 2011). The acknowledgment of street harassment instituted policies to minimize street harassment as a response to security threats. The transition of street harassment from a harmless issue, impossible to redress, to a threat to public safety, implies a conceptual shift. This shift had implications for the way policies addressed street harassment. To understand how the issue of street harassment has turned into a matter of security, it is crucial to critically analyse the securitization process and its mechanisms.

2.2 The critical components of securitization

The term 'securitization' emerged in the Copenhagen School for Peace Studies in the late 1990s (Buzan et al. 1998) the term was coined to describe how through political discourse or media representations, political subjects are produced, and their everyday social, economic, and cultural governance is transferred to the realm of emergency police enforcements and military occupations (Amar, 2011). To put it differently, securitization is the process of the state transforming political matters into security concerns. This process allows for the use of measures in the name of security. When critically analysing the process of securitization, we can better understand how the issue of street harassment has become constituted as a security issue and therefore also politicized. In what follows, I will introduce different viewpoints of how securitization and its practice can be understood, to apply these different viewpoints on the analysis of street harassment and how it is addressed in Rotterdam.

The act of securitization in mainstream security studies is explained by Hansen (2000) as "always related to the claim of the presence of an existential threat" (p.289). However, only when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to the state, incorporating government, territory, or society it is seen as a societal security issue. However, according to

Hansen (2000) when an issue is viewed to concern questions of entitlement and social justice, the social issues within this field are not placed within the same "rhetoric of danger" (p. 289). The reason for this is that these issues- to which street harassment can be considered- present only a danger to individuals *in* society and do not threaten the breakdown of society. This can be an explanation as to why gender-based violence in general, is not taken as seriously. Additionally, when understanding securitization as the construction of existential threats, it is important to be critical of what and who is constructed as threatening. Gomes and Marques (2021) argue that securitization theory "has neglected the political effects of colonialism and race as relevant categories to be analysed in the construction of threats". Racialization should be considered more throughout securitization theory and more importantly, securitization processes because it helps understand the role of power relations and marginalization better (Gomes & Marques, 2021). Amar (2011) adds to what Gomes and Marquez state and draws from critical race theory to explain that one of the ways a state employs securitizations is through the construction of the "parahuman subject". Amar (2011) explains this concept with the help of the logic of hypervisibility. They state that racialized and sexualized bodies become intensely visible as objects of the state, police, and the media as targets of fear or desire. Paradoxically, when someone is hyper-visualized, they do not get recognized as complex or legitimate social beings. Keeping in mind the construction of "parahuman subjects" is crucial to understanding street harassment, especially the way this issue gets problematized and/or politicized and in this process, who is made visible and in what way. The role of the security state is pivotal in the sense that its practices can generate sexualized, criminalized, and sanctioned subjects.

Furthermore, Securitization can be understood through the concept of governmentality, developed by Foucault, governmentality as a study is defined as "the (study of the) mentality (rationality, calculation, and reflection) of governing (guiding, leading, managing and constraining) ourselves, others (e.g., the mad, the sick, the criminal, children, families, communities) and the state (and the study of its effects)" (Van Houdt, 2014). within this definition the government is defined as a "technology of power that aims to secure the population and economy" (Van Houdt, 2014). Governmentality is concerned with understanding how certain issues are problematized (by whom is it problematized, who are the practical objects, and according to what political rationalities are they understood) (Van Houdt, 2014). The concept of governmentality will help answer the research question of this thesis in the sense that it helps understand what role power hierarchies play in the way that

certain publics are governed in the context of street harassment. Through the concept of governmentality, it is possible to uncover the mentalities of government, which pertains to the ways government practices are shaped by conceptions of subjects.

2.3 Governance and women

In the section that follows, I will expand more on the relationship between government and women and how this relationship generally shapes the way issues of gender-based violence are governed. One way this relationship can be characterized is the lack of a gender dimension in political institutions. This in combination with the role of patriarchal power relations in these same institutions has been recognised as leading elements that jeopardize women's security. The ideology of patriarchy is understood as the idea that positions male power over the female, and is rooted in the belief of superiority of the father in a nuclear family, the dependence of women and children upon him, and the reckoning of descent through the male line (Ní Aoláin, 2009). For this thesis, it is important to understand the way patriarchal ideology and particular masculinities arise within societies and political institutions, and how this can affect the way gender-based issues such as street harassment are addressed.

The role of masculine norms in giving rise to violence against women has been theoretically discussed more, some argue for a need to deconstruct the negative aspects of masculinity through for example, integrating men and boys into programs aimed at reducing violence against women (Anderson, 2008). However, Ní Aoláin (2009) argues that the effort to dissect the patriarchy inherent in political institutions as well as "revealing the masculinity bias of these same bodies and the actors who represent them" (p.1060) has been neglected. In her study, which focuses on transitional justice, Ní Aoláin (2009) highlights that because of the negligence of the role of patriarchy in the make-up of these institutions, they fail to provide women security.

Much research on violence against women have stayed outside of the realm of thinking about security and crime for a long time (Radford & Stanko, 1994). Chesney-lind (2006) states that the insistence of violence against women to be handled as a criminal matter has put victim advocates into an "uneasy alliance" with law enforcement (p.14). This uneasiness stems from the feminist critique on the criminal justice system in the West (Gelsthorpe, 2004). Critics have observed an overly legalistic approach in determining what is fair and just, rather than focussing on factors such as social and cultural contexts, power

dynamics and systematic inequalities. This over-emphasis is linked to an over-evaluation of individualism that exists within the criminal justice system (Gelsthorpe, 2004). This is seen as problematic because it prioritizes individual rights over collective responsibility. Feminist critics vouch to challenge these norms within the criminal justice system and advocate for a more holistic and intersectional approach to justice, an approach better equipped to tackle gender-based issues.

Feminist definitions of gender-based issues often seem to not fit in rigid man-made legal categories. This can be explained through the idea that legal definitions are often set up through dichotomies: good versus bad, lawful versus unlawful and crime versus no-crime. However, women's experience with violence are often way more complex than this. Because of this, many forms of violence women experience end up being ignored. What does come to the attention, is the crimes of an evil perpetrator. It is through this lens that street harassment has been reconfigured to an issue of crime control. Crime control is continuously associated with maintaining public order, when something becomes a threat to society, it is often because it causes problems for public order with increased policing of this public order as a solution (Radford & Stanko, 1994). What then becomes the problem are those who derange that public order; the deranged and evil stranger who wishes to injure others when out in public. This angle of crime control neglects the overwhelming occurrence of street harassment women experience by regular people on the street who might not mean harm. Ultimately, this approach to crime control neglects the gendered nature of this issue, because of this negligence, political institutions fail to challenge the patriarchal order and, arguably, therefore do not confront gender-based issues adequately.

2.4 (In)security in public as experienced by women

To operationalize women's security and understand better their feelings of safety in public spaces, we need to analyse how women experience public space differently from men and identify the specific challenges and barriers they face. Acknowledging women's accounts of security is crucial to this thesis because the aim is to understand the articulations of street harassment by the government as well as women themselves, and to see if and in what way, these articulations are linked. Security as expressed by government entities is usually manifested through utterances of securitization. Securitization refers to the discursive formation of security threats and is based on the notion that government officials and elites set

the security agenda through "speech act" (Buzan et al. 1998). Speech acts are defined as utterances that represent and recognize certain phenomena as "security," and from there on legitimize extraordinary measures (Glover, 2011). However, speech acts present significant obstacles to the acknowledgment of security issues that typically address women (Chisem, 2011). Women are often largely absent from elite government circles; therefore, the security of women is often discussed less, Hansen (2000) refers to this as the "security of silence". Because of the women's absence in these spaces, they are unable to influence the security agenda. Partly for this reason, I argue that street harassment as made public by the government does not focus on women's accounts of safety enough.

According to Turkheimer (1997), Street harassment becomes an everyday remainder of the prevalence of gender and women's vulnerability in the face of male domination. The public space becomes a realm wherein gender hierarchies are perpetuated. Women's fear in public is explained as a consequence of their fear of other gender-based violence, in contrast to men, women's perceptions of safety in public space are intimately linked with their fear of sexual assault and rape (Macmillan et al, 2012). Women's fear is unique in the sense that it leads them to certain behavioural changes, these behaviours in response to the potentiality of street harassment, are defined as "safety work" (Kelly, 1998). Most women experience the feeling of being on guard and observant of the behaviours of strange men in public (Vera-Gray, 2016). Being aware of one's environment has become routine to many women, scholars argue that because of this routine vigilance, street harassment has taken upon the illusion of normalcy (Stanko, 1985; Larkin, 1997). This normalcy is also supported by many other gendered micro-aggressions that women face daily. According to Stevens et al. (2020), women's experience of daily threats can do two things when it comes to their view on the role of the government to deal with those threats, for some, it might raise scepticism about the government's ability to deal with those threats. On the other hand, women may be apt to see the state as the main security provider with a caregiving role.

3. Methods

This chapter focuses on the qualitative approach employed in this thesis, which aims to understand how both the government and women attach meaning to security in the context of street harassment in Rotterdam. Qualitative research recognizes the social construction of realities and aims to interpret phenomena based on the meanings people bring to them (Flick, 2007). By employing qualitative methods, this thesis aims to provide rich and descriptive explanations of security expressions. This will help answer the research question of "*How is security expressed in articulations of street harassment in Rotterdam?*". To ensure a comprehensive understanding of how security is expressed in articulations of street harassment, this research utilizes two qualitative analysis techniques: interviews and document analysis. The use of multiple data sources allows for a more comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon under study, capturing different aspects of security in the context of street harassment (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The research is divided into two parts, examining government articulations and women's articulations which will later be analysed together and compared, to provide both an institutional and personal account of the public sphere. This approach facilitates triangulation and cross-validation of findings, as comparing data from different sources helps identify themes and perspectives that may not be evident from a single source alone (Patton, 2015).

3.1 In-depth interviews

Gender scholars have been researching ways to make the field of security more inclusive, one way to do this is by focusing on the individual (Stern & Wibben, 2014). The method of in-depth- interviews is a perfect way to employ this. Wibben (2011) explains that incorporating the everyday experiences of women -experiences that are usually ignored in security studies- creates the opportunity to understand better how power operates and therefore, understand security differently. Enloe (2014) argues that security studies generally fail to understand power dynamics because it overlooks the experiences of 'ordinary' women outside the sphere of elite politics. In the case of this thesis, the objective is to explore whether these women offer an alternative conceptualization of (in)security compared to the state's perspective. Stern (2006) highlights the lack of studies that seriously engage with the specific and contextual meanings of (in)security in locations beyond the framework of state sovereignty, a gap this thesis aims to address.

In-depth interviews provide a personal approach to data collection, enabling a comprehensive exploration of individual experiences. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews are chosen due to their flexible nature. During these interviews, the interviewer actively engages in a meaning-making process with the interviewee, fostering a collaborative approach (Warren, 2002). While the interview followed a pre-established list of topics and prompting questions, there was room for the interviewee's personal input, which allowed the conversation to flow naturally. This approach encourages interviewees to provide in-depth answers, thereby enriching the data. The interviews lasted approximately 45 to 90 minutes.

3.2 Participants

The participants selected for the interviews will be self-identifying women between the ages of 18 and 30. This age range was chosen because street harassment is most prevalent among women within this age group (Soumokil, 2017). The women selected for participation reside in Rotterdam and indicated to feel comfortable enough to discuss the topic of street harassment and share their personal experiences. To ensure a diverse range of perspectives, it is important to include women from different racial identities. Davis (1993) emphasizes the significance of acknowledging women's embodied experiences, which are influenced by factors such as race, age, class, sexuality, and appearance. These factors shape women's perceptions of fear, their interpretation of certain behaviours as harassment, their coping strategies, and their overall expressions of security (Vera-Gray, 2016). Ultimately, the choice of a "diverse" group of women as participants is done to get a holistic view of the issue of street harassment and its gendered nature. Interestingly, despite their different profiles, the experiences of the women interviewed were found to be remarkably similar.

The decision to focus specifically on women, rather than adopting a gender-neutral perspective, is addressed within the theoretical framework. During the analysis process, commonalities in the experiences and articulations of the interviewed group of women will be explored to enhance understanding of the gendered nature of street harassment. While this sample within the category of "women" does not represent the entirety of women's experiences, it does shed light on their structural position (Gunnarsson, 2011). Despite the importance of deconstructing essentialist notions of gender, the category of "women" remains

a valuable feminist analytical tool for understanding women's specific relationships to gendered structures.

Convenience and snowball sampling methods are used to recruit participants. I reached out to potential participants through my personal network (excluding family and close friends) via email, social media, or, in some cases, phone numbers. See table 1 which presents pseudonyms and ages of the participants.

Table 1:

Overview of participants

Pseudonym	Age
Amber	23
Anna	23
Djamilah	24
Laila	25
Yara	22

3.3 Interview Analysis

To derive my results, I employed an inductive thematic analysis. After obtaining informed consent from the participant, the interview was recorded for transcription purposes. Along with audio transcriptions, notes were taken during the interviews. Once the data was well acquired and I familiarized myself with the data, generating codes is the next step. This process starts with ascribing the interview transcripts to several open codes, these codes are then grouped into categories and provided with axial codes. From the axial codes, all-encompassing themes are identified that help answer the research sub-question: *How do women in Rotterdam address security in the articulations of their experience with street harassment?*

3.4 Critical Discourse Analysis

To understand how street harassment is made public through discursive practices of government entities in Rotterdam, this thesis will employ the method of Critical Discourse Analysis of documents. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a valuable approach to meaning-making because the researcher must capture discourse in all its complexities. When this is done carefully, you can connect understandings to larger social structures (Van Dijk, 2001). Through the lens of CDA, language is understood as a form of social practice, that can legitimize, maintain, and naturalize forms of social power and inequality (Bouvier & Machin, 2018). CDA often deals with texts produced by those considered to be in powerful positions such as political institutions and news media. "The language produced by these institutional organizations reflects the interests of those in power and creates a kind of "consent" that they are common sense and best for all" (Bouvier & Machin, 2018, p.178). CDA is focused on analysing the way interests of, for example, classism, sexism, and racism are sustained through language (Van Dijk, 2001). This method is therefore well aligned with the aim of this thesis, to critically assess the expression of security as addressed by the government. I focused on the way racialized groups are framed and how their position in society is criminalized regarding street harassment. Furthermore, within CDA it is also important to make sense of what is not said, and what this absence implies, for example, the absence of explicitly referring to the sexist nature of street harassment in documents. The aim is to turn the gaze back on the state to reveal the interests, histories, and power relations that generate certain race, sex, and moral subjects within the discourse of security, to ultimately answer the second sub-question: *How do Rotterdam government entities address security in making street harassment a public issue?*

3.5 Data collection of documents

The documents used for this research were obtained from public databases of the municipality councils of Rotterdam and national government databases. The criteria for selecting these documents were that they should discuss the securitization of street harassment in Rotterdam. The chosen documents specifically focus on the city of Rotterdam and were written between 2017 and 2023.

The first document to be analysed is titled "Straatintimidatie" ("Street Intimidation") and is available on the municipality of Rotterdam's website. It provides an overview of the municipality's plans to combat street harassment.

The second document, "Aanpak seksuele straatintimidatie in gemeente Rotterdam" ("Approach to Sexual Street Intimidation in the Municipality of Rotterdam"), is a comprehensive report on the municipality's strategies to address street harassment. Interestingly, this report is not publicly displayed on the municipality's website but was obtained from the national government's public database.

The third document is the APV Article 2.1 of the municipality of Rotterdam, also titled "Straatintimidatie." APV stands for Algemene Plaatselijke Verordening (General Local By-Laws), which contains municipal rules related to public order and safety. This document is significant for analysis as it represents the main legal instrument that enables the criminalization of street harassment.

The fourth document to be examined is the approach to street harassment and sexual violence presented by the political party "Leefbaar Rotterdam" in their election program. This political party initiated the APV proposal that has been altered and thereafter adopted by the municipality. The document is titled "Veiligheid en vrijheid voor vrouwen in Rotterdam" ("Safety and Freedom for Women in Rotterdam"). Although this document covers a broader range of sexual violence against women, the focus of this research will be on the parts that address street harassment.

The fifth document, titled "Plegers seksuele straatintimidatie" ("Perpetrators of Sexual Street Intimidation"), is a research study conducted by the research department of the municipality of Rotterdam (OBI).

In Table 2, all the documents are listed along with their publication year.

Table 2:

Overview of documents

Title	By:	Year of publication
"Street intimidation"	Municipality of Rotterdam	2017
"Approach to sexual street intimidation in the municipality of Rotterdam"	Municipality of Rotterdam	2022
"APV article 2.1: Street intimidation"	Municipality of Rotterdam	2023
"Perpetrators sexual street intimidation"	Research department of the municipality of Rotterdam: Onderzoek en Business Intelligence (OBI)	2017
"Safety and freedom for women in Rotterdam"	Leefbaar Rotterdam	2022

3.6 Document analysis procedure

Analysis procedures in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are highly interpretive and incorporate key features, including a problem-oriented focus, analysis of semiotic data, recognition of discursive power relations, contextual understanding of discourses, and acknowledgment that language expressions are never neutral (Van Dijk, 1993; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). While CDA is not restricted to a specific method, this thesis will utilize analysis steps developed by Mullet (2018).

Step 1 involves identifying the discourse related to societal inequality, specifically the discourse surrounding security in the context of street harassment for this thesis.

Step 2 entails the data collection process described earlier.

Step 3 focuses on comprehending the social and historical context of the texts, considering factors such as, production context, intended audience and author characteristics.

In step 4, the texts are examined for internal relations, identifying linguistic patterns and devices that represent power relations, social context, and speakers' positions (Mullet, 2018). This includes aspects such as headlines, tenses, word order, layout, quoted material, and linguistic devices like metaphors, analogies, and the rule of three. Language implying a singular truth or omitting details will also be analysed.

Step 5 involves interpreting the hidden meanings within the texts, leading to the subsequent step.

In step 6, a thematic analysis is conducted using qualitative coding to identify major and sub-themes. The analysis starts with open coding, followed by axial coding, and finally, the establishment of comprehensive themes. Both interview and document data are analysed in a complementary manner, allowing for the application of codes derived from interview transcripts to the document content and vice versa. This integrated analysis across data sets enhances the depth of step 6 in the data analysis process. Please refer to the code book in appendix C which presents the axial codes and final themes.

3.7 Ethical and privacy considerations

For this thesis, women have been interviewed about their experiences with street harassment. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, ensuring a safe and secure interview environment is of utmost importance. To achieve this, several measures were implemented. Firstly, all participants received an informed consent form (appendix A) that explains the purpose and nature of the research. They were informed about how their data will be handled, including the duration for which it will be kept. Importantly, participants had the right to halt the conversation or withdraw from the research at any point without facing any consequences. Additionally, participants chose a pseudonym for privacy reasons.

Burgess-Proctor (2015) suggests that certain conversational techniques can contribute to a comfortable experience for participants, such as expressing and reciprocating emotions and allowing them sufficient space to freely express themselves. The fact that I am a woman who has personally experienced street harassment may create a more comfortable atmosphere for the interviewees.

In addition to interviews, this thesis employed document analysis. Using pre-existing documents as a form of data poses fewer ethical concerns, as these public documents are accessible to anyone (Morgan, 2022). However, it should be acknowledged that this method relies on the analyst's interpretation of the data, which raises ethical concerns related to researcher bias. Therefore, the researcher's reflexivity is crucial. Furthermore, it is important to note that public documents may also carry inherent biases. However, the CDA method utilized in this thesis will help identify and address any potential biases present in the public documents.

3.8 Positionality

This research requires a lot of reflexivity throughout the whole process, I therefore must be aware of my position in the field. I am 22-year-old women who has experienced street harassment on multiple occasions and in multiple contexts. This fact made it easier to relate to the participants without a need to over explain. Moreover, I am a current resident of the city of Rotterdam, which works in favour of this research since I know the city and can recognize its cultural characteristics more easily.

Furthermore, I identify as an intersectional feminist, with the use of feminist theory I approach street harassment from a perspective that has influenced my personal understanding of the topic. I am aware that from an epistemological perspective I am inseparable from my reality and thus from my own truth. In addition to this, I recognize that the documents that I analyse are also a construct of a representation of a truth. With this research, I am not trying to achieve an "objective truth", but I do want to offer an alternative reading of documents which are often presented as the objective truth, by highlighting the perspectives of women.

4. Analysis

Throughout this chapter, I will discuss the findings of the document analysis and interviews, which present the articulation of security in the context of street harassment by women and government entities in Rotterdam. The 6 inter-related themes that surfaced where constructed through critical confrontation and comparison of both data sets. In the subsequent discussion chapter, I will apply the established theory from the theoretical framework to these findings. However, before delving into these findings in more depth, it is important to provide an overview of the context in which the securitization of street harassment in Rotterdam took and takes place, these contextual insights provide a framework to which the findings can be better understood.

4.1 The context of Rotterdam

Over the last 10 years, street harassment has gained attention in Dutch politics, particularly its securitization, becoming a topic of debate. A publication commissioned by the municipality of Rotterdam in 2017, authored by Fisher & Sprado, revealed that 84% of 1,186 women surveyed in Rotterdam had experienced unpleasant and sexually suggestive intimidation on the street. This drew the interest of the national government and political parties such as PvdA, VVD, and CDA, who advocated for the legal criminalization of "intimidating women with sexual words and propositions, walking inconveniently close behind someone, making obscene gestures and shouting perverse things" (Soumokil, 2017). However, their attempts have not been successful to date. At the local level in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, there have been more policy intervention attempts to criminalize street harassment, with a focus on Rotterdam in this thesis.

Around the early 2010's the local party of 'Leefbaar Rotterdam' vouched for a criminal law approach to combatting street harassment. To expand the criminal law options, Leefbaar Rotterdam drafted an APV article and presented it to the city council and the Public Prosecution Service, whereby sexually intimidating behaviour can be punished with a fine of up to €4100 or imprisonment of up to three months (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2017). APV stands for Algemene Plaatselijke Verordening, which is loosely translated to The General Local Bylaws which contains the municipal rules in the field of public order and safety. The APV as proposed by Leefbaar Rotterdam has been slightly altered and adopted in the article on public order of the municipality of Rotterdam. However, national judges have rendered the criminalization of street harassment legally invalid due to the subjective nature of the offense.

Furthermore, judges stated the criminalization of verbal intrusions on the street to be violating the constitutional right to freedom of expression (Waever, 2019). As a result, street harassment often remains unpunished.

There have been growing concerns about the ulterior motives of Leefbaar Rotterdam in criminalizing street harassment given their right-wing political stance. Dekker (2022) states that parties like Leefbaar Rotterdam often attribute the problem to loiterers with a migration background, presenting the criminalization of street harassment as a means to protect public order. In an interview with Tanya Hoogwerf, municipal councillor for Leefbaar Rotterdam, concerns were raised about the risk of ethnic profiling, as she stated that "groups of young people from ethnic minorities" are a major part of the problem (Dekker, 2022).

Bernstein (2012) describes how policies regarding gender-based violence, sometimes lead to disproportionate repression of men of colour and disadvantaged backgrounds, she describes this as 'carceral feminism'. Furthermore, research by Farris (2017) on what they call, "femonationalism" shows how right-wing political parties are playing an increasingly active role in implementing gender-based violence policies, linking this problem to migration. Farris describes "femonationalism" as the increasing attempts of western European right-wing parties and neoliberals to advance xenophobic and racist politics behind the mask of gender equality. As Dekker (2022) also points out, right-wing political parties have increasingly been picking up gender-based issues and using them to substantiate an anti-immigrant ideology, Dekker calls this the "culturalization" of gender-based issues.

I deem it important to have mentioned some of these contextual considerations, especially to sketch an image of the lens in which some of the findings where interpreted. Now, I move on to present the findings of the analysis through the different themes established.

4.2 "Maybe when they see a woman, they feel like they can do that because not only is this street mine, the world is mine."

From the analysis it became clear that 4 out of 5 documents defined the perpetrator as the primary cause of street harassment. In "Street Intimidation," the municipality of Rotterdam states that their approach is mainly about acting against the perpetrator. Similarly, Leefbaar Rotterdam's document highlights the perpetrator as a threat to women's safety. However, when examining Leefbaar Rotterdam's election program, it becomes apparent that their approach carries a racist undertone. They openly associate perpetrators of street harassment as men with non-Western backgrounds, describing them as "poorly educated and disruptive young people." Additionally, Leefbaar Rotterdam introduces the concept of "patsercontroles," the word "patser" is a Dutch word that describes a type of male obnoxiously shows off their dominance, Leefbaar insinuates that men that present to be "patsers" should be controlled by law enforcement more. Leefbaar Rotterdam explicitly sketches the profile of the perpetrator as aggressive "patsers" with "expensive cars" who perform illegal activities and are of non-western backgrounds. This very obviously, is not only a racist depiction of what the perpetrator of street harassment looks like but also a false and grossly simplified one.

While the "Street Intimidation" document from the municipality is less explicit about the perpetrator's profile, it does refer to the "Perpetrators of Sexual Street Intimidation" document, which focuses on the perpetrators' characteristics, particularly their ethnic background. The document does not explain why ethnicity is relevant, leaving room for various interpretations. This lack of elaboration implies a need for a physical description of the perpetrator to facilitate identification, raising concerns about racist motives.

Moreover, 4 out of 5 documents emphasize hissing sounds as unwelcome behaviour exhibited by men towards women. This emphasis stems from the media's popular reference to the ban on street harassment in Rotterdam as the "sissing ban." However, the term "sissing" carries cultural connotations associated with men of North African migration backgrounds. This portrayal of perpetrators from non-Western migration backgrounds is further supported in the "Perpetrators of Sexual Street Intimidation" research, where unwanted comments include phrases like "hey dushi," which means honey in Surinamese.

The document titled "Approach to Sexual Street Intimidation in the Municipality of Rotterdam" stands out as it places less emphasis on the perpetrator as the sole cause of street

harassment. It refrains from mentioning the perpetrator's ethnic background or sissing. Instead, it highlights the importance of holding men accountable and enlisting them as allies in the fight against street harassment.

During interviews, women expressed that while they feel threatened by the harassers in the moment, they recognize that street harassment is a broader issue than just the perpetrator. The documents heavily focus on the perpetrator, often substantiating racialized agendas, while women strive to view the problem from a wider perspective. Participants emphasized that men's sense of entitlement in public spaces leads to their harassing behaviour on the streets. Amber identifies the root of street harassment as a by-product of how men have historically been seen as superior in society. She remarks:

> The problem obviously lies with the person who harasses, but I also feel like…The whole world is designed for men... So maybe when they see a woman, they feel like they can do that because not only is this street mine, the world is mine.

While most documents emphasize that the municipality should address these perpetrators, women highlight the importance of accountability among men. Anna points out a significant paradox within the discourse surrounding street harassment. She acknowledges the need to hold perpetrators accountable but emphasizes that men should not use the broader societal problem as an excuse to stop taking individual responsibility for their actions.

> On the one hand I think it's ok if perpetrators are put down as the bad guy in that moment, because if the municipality wouldn't do that I would feel as though women's experiences could possibly be downplayed, by being like: "oh they're just people affected by patriarchy". However, I also think, there must be put more serious attention on these men and why they do what they do.

The theme that emerged from these observations is "**The perpetrator as the threat**."

4.3 "You report street harassment immediately, we handle it"

After understanding that within documents, street harassment is attributed to certain individuals, I delved deeper into whom the solution is then attributed to. The role of law enforcers in combating street harassment is mentioned in all documents but with different approaches. In the "street intimidation" document by the municipality, the focus is on the APV article that grants law enforcers the legal right to intervene. It explains that law enforcers can address the perpetrator by talking to them or filing a report. The municipality does underline that they have limited power in terms of criminalization, as that decision rests with the Dutch state. The municipality tries to take responsibility by stating the following in "street intimidation": "You report street harassment immediately, we handle it". This one-liner, intended to comfort victims, unfortunately does not seem to promise much since there is no elaboration on how this will be handled other than confronting a perpetrator within the limits of the APV.

The APV article reveals that street harassment can only be legally pursued when the perpetrators are caught in the act, like other public order disruptions. Therefore, law enforcers need to be well-equipped to identify and appropriately respond to street harassment. The subjective interpretation of the issue, particularly between men and women, makes this a challenging task. The broad definition of street harassment in the APV article aims for inclusivity but risks being too vague, diminishing its effectiveness as a legal instrument. With no clear definition of behaviours constituting street harassment, the judgement relies heavily on law enforcers themselves, which may lead to issues such as ethnic profiling. Moreover, law enforcement might lack the necessary skills to provide victims with adequate support and comfort.

Whereas the municipality talks about law enforcers "handling" the issue by approaching the perpetrator, Leefbaar Rotterdam advocates for a more aggressive approach. They advocate heavy surveillance and for law enforcers to be able to do random body checks in the name of security: "We stand for a fierce approach to this street scum and that means more frequent preventive searches, more cameras…."

The women I interviewed expressed their own ideas about the role of law enforcement within the context of street harassment. They mention that law enforcers should be better

equipped to step up when they see street harassment happening. This reinforces the finding that a law enforcer's judgement and ability to recognize street harassment is key. Djamilah explains:

> I think that having law enforcers around, and they notice a man partaking in street harassment, that they can say something about it even if it is just a "hey guys, stop that", but I feel like even law enforcers sometimes don't even notice it.

From these findings I managed to identify the second theme: **"The role of law enforcers".**

4.4 "A prison sentence, community service, ankle monitors or whatever…. that won't help"

Throughout all documents it became apparent that criminalization of street harassment is prioritized, despite the national court denying this. The APV of Rotterdam is the only legal instrument put in place. The APV underlines the way street harassment threatens public order, since this is the only frame through which street harassment can legally be criminalized. In the document "Approach to sexual street intimidation in the Municipality of Rotterdam", they explain that compared to previous approaches, there now is more attention to preventive practices instead of repressive practices. This entails more attention to advocating a change in social norms regarding street harassment through campaigns, awareness trainings, and involving men. What is interesting however, is that this new approach is presented as a second best to criminalization this is mainly visible through the following quote: "As long as the criminalization of street harassment has not yet been realized, we are looking for ways to draw preventive attention to the problem"

Whereas the documents use a more militaristic approach, with language such as "persecuting" and "handling" the perpetrator, The interviewed women mention criminalization as a means to an end. The end goal is to foster a wider awareness among men about how street harassment should not be accepted or normalized. Amber expresses her thoughts on this matter as follows:

> I am a firm believer in making people realize what they did wrong, so yes you can punish people by means of a prison sentence, community service, ankle

monitors or whatever but that won't help. So, what I would do pertains more to creating awareness. Maybe a fine or a mandatory course on street harassment, preferably given by a woman

Considering these notes on criminalization the theme of "**The possibility of criminalization**" was established.

4.5 "A problem of the whole society, not Rotterdam citizens themselves"

Continuing the unveiling of priorities, all documents touch upon a need for street harassing behaviour to be acknowledged and reprimanded instead of normalized. The municipality wants to emphasize that street harassment is not appropriate behaviour and should therefore not be treated as such or pushed under the rug. In "street intimidation" there is talk of developing campaigns to "let citizens of Rotterdam know that street harassment is not accepted". Furthermore, Leefbaar Rotterdam insinuates that there is a problem in our culture that continuously turns a blind eye towards violence against women. Both documents mention that street harassment has been normalized but they do not acknowledge the institutionalized nature of this issue explicitly. The emphasis on the perpetrator that pertains in both documents makes their talk of social awareness less valuable. These documents tend to place the lack of awareness on others instead of framing it as a wider societal issue of sexism.

The document "approach to sexual street intimidation in the municipality of Rotterdam" is the only document that heavily focusses on prevention through social awareness. They expand the issue of street harassment and try to not blame citizens by mentioning that street harassment is "a problem of the whole society, not Rotterdam citizens themselves". In the document they state that they will invest in awareness training for law enforcers and hospitality staff, invest in youth workers, use campaigns and other communication to change the social norms regarding street harassment, as well as involve men in the solution.

The role of social awareness was defined as the 4th theme, because in all the interviews a wider social awareness about street harassment, its nature, and the harmful consequences it can inflict, was a point that kept coming back as the one and only long-term solution to street harassment. Amber stated the following about this:

I feel like a big part of it is that men simply don't know, so what it would take for me to feel safer on the street is that men seek this knowledge, how they come across, the damage they can possibly do.

4.6 "I would love to think us women can smash the patriarchy together"

During the interviews women were asked about their own role in combatting street harassment. They were unanimous in that women cannot do much to solve street harassment. Anna shared the following thoughts:

Well…not much when we're talking about street harassment from men to women, because then it's about a power dynamic. Of course, I would love to think us women can smash the patriarchy together, but in this case, I think there needs to be a fundamental switch (in thinking) … of a lot of men and an awareness of this power dynamic and its consequences…also, with men who don't necessarily partake in street harassment

Laila also concluded that women have few options, aside from engaging in conversations with men to raise awareness about their impact on women's experiences in public spaces.

The documents primarily attribute the role of women in combating street harassment to their willingness to report incidents. However, both the municipality and Leefbaar Rotterdam acknowledge that reporting can be challenging for victims, leading to the development of the StopApp. The app allows anonymous reporting of street harassment to facilitate action by the municipality against the perpetrators. It is emphasized that victims need only report the incident, and the municipality will handle the rest. The women interviewed revealed that they had never reported street harassment to police, and they expressed scepticism about the immediate impact and effectiveness of reporting through the StopApp. Some felt it took more time and energy to report an incident than to deal with it internally. Amber worried about invalidating her own experience and shared the following: "Even though I do feel uncomfortable and unsafe in that moment… I feel like I invalidate my own experience which makes me refrain from reporting."

This statement by Amber was supported by Laila and Djamilah, who explained they refrain from reporting because they "don't want to make a big deal". Throughout the interviews you could identify a contradiction between recognizing street harassment as a serious issue and hesitating to involve police or report it.

"The role of women" in combating street harassment, as derived from the data, emerged as a significant theme.

4.7 It's never: "Ok, today I shouldn't bother a woman"

Throughout the documents, there is a notable absence of explicit mention regarding the sexist nature of street harassment. While the municipality acknowledges that women face routine street harassment, it fails to provide a deeper explanation for this phenomenon, neglecting to address sexism or patriarchy as underlying factors. In the document titled "Approach to Sexual Street Intimidation in the Municipality of Rotterdam," there is only one sentence that briefly attributes street harassment to issues of gender inequality, without delving further into the topic.

In the document of Leefbaar Rotterdam, there is explicit talk of violence against women:

> The freedom and self-determination of women and girls has come under enormous pressure in recent years. Society has looked away long enough. Leefbaar Rotterdam specifically mentions the violence problems that women and girls have to contend with. We will continue to break taboos where necessary.

There is a sense of pride that can be identified in the way the above sentence is constructed, Leefbaar Rotterdam frames itself as the party that doesn't shy away from mentioning violence against women. However, this account must be approached with caution because as identified before, throughout Leefbaar's document the problem of street harassment and violence against women is not attributed to a patriarchal culture but to the acts of "thugs".

Furthermore, the document titled "Perpetrators of Sexual Street Intimidation" more explicitly frames street harassment as a gender-related issue. It portrays street harassment as a form of violence inflicted by men on women. Female participants were provided with a

definition of street harassment that described it as "sexual statements or behavior by men or boys on the street that irritate, bother, hurt, insult, threaten, or limit your sense of personal freedom." However, considering that this document aims to establish a profile of the perpetrator based on ethnic background, a similar pattern emerges as with Leefbaar Rotterdam's document. There is a greater emphasis on certain men as the cause of street harassment rather than addressing the root of the problem.

Throughout the different articulations of street harassment by women, the sexist nature of the problem was something that repeatedly came up, explicitly but also inexplicitly. Yara shares an important insight that is related to the way sexism influences our society, especially in the context of street harassment.

> Because of an overall dynamic in society, that men determine things and women must adapt to it. I think that that can be recognized in how we have learned to deal with harassment. Namely not those men have to adapt, but we have learned that as a woman you have to protect yourself. It's all about how a woman is a victim and must prevent that in the future….it is not aimed at men having to prepare themselves when they go out. "Ok, today I shouldn't bother a woman", No it is done the other way around".

From this data the 6th and last theme was identified: "**The role of sexism".**

5. Discussion

Next, I summarize and synthesize the findings stated in the previous chapter, vis-à-vis the literature explored in the theoretical framework. First, it was found that in most documents there is a great emphasis on the perpetrators; their profiles and a need to apprehend them. I argue that with this framing government entities risk the wider and societal aspect of the issue of street harassment to not be acknowledged enough. The way documents address street harassment, is by presenting the perpetrators as an existential threat to the state and public safety, without acknowledging that street harassment is a result of a patriarchal culture in which the state plays a big role. This argument aligns with the findings of Hansen regarding securitization (2000), he states that for something to be considered a security issue and handled as such, there must be a claim of the presence of an existential threat. The issue of street harassment is a matter of gender-based power dynamics and entitlement, however, Hansen (2000) explains that when an issue is concerned within the social domain it is not treated with the same sense of imminent danger. This explains why street harassment is addressed in the documents as the consequence of the existential threat of the dangerous perpetrator.

In the theoretical framework, I stated that it is crucial to critically evaluate who is portrayed as menacing in the construction of existential threats. In the case of 4 out of 5 of the documents this were mainly men with a non-western migration background. The articulations of security in the context of street harassment within these 4 documents generate a racialized and criminalized subject, which Amar (2011) describes as the "parahuman subject". These subjects become intensely visible to the state but at the same time, do not get recognized as social complex beings, this was something that the interviewed women did articulate and considered to a larger extent. When I asked the participants why they think street harassment happens, they all expressed aspects of patriarchy and sexism in our society, most of them mentioned the existing power dynamic between men and women, as well as the entitlement to public space that men feel they have due to a patriarchal order. Whereas social awareness was expressed to be the only real solution to street harassment by women, government entities tend to prioritize criminalization. The tension between awareness and criminalization is one of the main characteristics in which street harassment is articulated in Rotterdam.

Another significant finding of this research was that all participants expressed that they would not report street harassment or involve the police. Some could interpret this as

illogical since all women do find street harassment a serious issue in need of redress, however, considering theoretical findings this is not as surprising. Both the theory as well as the women interviewed confirmed that because of how street harassment has become so routinized for women they often do not think to enlist legal consequences. In accordance with the findings of Stevens et al. (2020) women's daily encounters can lead to scepticism regarding the governments competence in handling the incident, this was something that all the women I interviewed identified with. Furthermore, Chesney-lind (2016) describes that victim advocates, in instances of violence against women, are sometimes put in an "uneasy alliance" with law enforcement. This uneasiness was something observed in the interviews, some of the participants (justifiably) found it very hard to come up with fitting consequences or criminalization for street harassment. Whereas the documents approached the securitization from a more militaristic approach, the participants found it hard to do so. The findings by Gelsthorpe (2014) help explain why this is; they state that women's experiences with violence are too complex to be addressed well within the traditional frames of criminal justice. Not only is it defined by legalistic dichotomies of good vs. bad but also, prioritizes the rights (and wrongs) of an individual over collective responsibility.

Addressing street harassment, in terms of criminalization, becomes challenging due to its subjective nature and the fact that not all behaviours are universally perceived as intimidating by women. The documents aim to address the ambiguous nature of street harassment by attributing it to the disruptive actions of a malevolent perpetrator, which disrupts public order (Radford & Stanko, 1994). However, this approach risks overlooking the inherently sexist nature of street harassment. In contrast to the documents, sexism is an aspect that defines the discourse about street harassment as articulated by the women I interviewed.

In general, the documents tend to point towards a narrow way in which security is understood, this is noticeable in multiple things: The framing of the perpetrator, the language that the municipality uses that tends to simplify the act of "catching" the culprit and "handling" the issue, and the focus on public order that the APV implies. In contrast, the participants articulate a more embracive notion of security beyond a narrow militaristic approach, they attribute street harassment to a patriarchal problem and therefore the women argue for an all-encompassing social, emotional, and sexual security that is put at risk through a patriarchal order.

6. Conclusion

This study sought to explore the articulations of security in the context of street harassment by Rotterdam government entities as well as women living in Rotterdam to eventually answer the research question: *How is security expressed in articulations of street harassment in Rotterdam?*

In conclusion, the discourse on security in relation to street harassment in Rotterdam is characterized by the presence of numerous contradictions and opposing viewpoints. The articulations of government entities tend to overlook the gender-based power dynamics and entitlement underlying street harassment, whereas women perceive street harassment as a manifestation of patriarchy and sexism, emphasizing the need for social awareness. Furthermore, there seems to be an underlying racist agenda identifiable in the documents, mostly the document by Leefbaar Rotterdam, which confirms the finding of Dekker (2022) and Farris (2017) that right-wing political parties pick up gender-based issues and using them to substantiate an anti-immigrant ideology. For the women I interviewed, the ethnic background of men partaking in street harassment was unimportant.

Furthermore, the contradictions where not only noticeable between the documents and women's articulations but pertain to women's articulations as well. Even though all participants perceive street harassment to be a security problem serious enough to address legally, it is often hard to imagine how this would be done successfully, since they express that legalistic and militaristic notions of criminalization upheld by the state run short.

The participants remind us that it is through the patriarchal order that street harassment and other gender-based violence must be confronted. This study sought to highlight their perspectives, and approaches security and crime control through the lens of gender. When trying to explore security through the lens of gender you come across many contradictions, tensions, and opposition. Nevertheless, we must discuss and document these difficulties to challenge policy in a way that makes for a pursuit of better approaches and solutions to gender-based violence.

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Appendix A

Informed consent form

Research	Master's Thesis: The securitization of street harassment in Rotterdam: government's and women's articulations of safety for women.
What is the research about	The aim of the thesis is to understand how both government as well as women attach meaning to security in public space, in the context of street harassment. The interview will be about how, you, as a self-identifying woman in Rotterdam, experience street harassment and its effect of the feelings of safety in public space. To ultimately answer the Research sub-question: *How do women in Rotterdam address security in the articulations of their experience with street harassment?*
How will I conduct this research?	I will conduct an interview of 45 to 90 minutes based on a general topic list. I wish for the conversation to flow naturally and there will be enough room for follow up questions from me as well as the interviewee. The interview will be audio-recorded for the sake of transcription. If information is shared during the recording that you do not feel comfortable to be published in the thesis, this can be reported during the interview or to Serena van den Boogerd, 531559sb@eur.nl afterwards.
Potential inconveniences or risks	There is a chance that sensitive topics come up in the interview in regard to your experiences with street harassment. You do not have to answer any question that you don't feel comfortable with, nor do you have to elaborate on anything if you don't want to. The interview can be stopped at any moment.
Data confidentiality	I can protect your privacy to the extent desired. To protect your privacy I will make use of pseudonyms in the final thesis Please let me know your desired pseudonym below. *I would like for my real name to be replaced with the following pseudonym:* ………………………………….

You decide whether to participate	Participation in this research is completely voluntary. As a participant, you can stop your cooperation in the research at any time or refuse that your data may be used for the research, without stating reasons. This means that if you decide to opt out of participating in this study prior to the study, this will not affect you in any way. You can also revoke the permission you have given to use your data. In these cases, your data will be removed from our files and destroyed. Stopping participation will not have any adverse consequences for you. If you decide to stop participating in the study, or if you have any questions or complaints, or want to raise your concerns. please contact the research leader: Serena van den Boogerd via the email stated above.
What do you get for participating?	Unfortunately, there is no (financial) compensation for participating in this research.
Who can see your Data and for how long will your personal data be stored?	The research will be read and assessed by my thesis supervisor and the second examinator. Would you like to receive the results of the final thesis? YES / NO • I store all your data securely on my laptop and written notes. • Only persons involved in the research can see (some of) the data. This includes the researcher, the thesis supervisor and the second examinator. Only I will have access to your real name, but your real name will not be written down anywhere besides this consent form which will be destroyed after completion of the thesis at the end of August 2023.

	• Recordings are transcribed. Your name is replaced with the pseudonym. • The audio recordings and transcriptions, as well as notes with your personal data will be deleted after completion of the thesis at the end of August 2023.
What data will I ask you to provide?	During the interview, the following personal data will be collected from you: Desired pseudonym Age Gender Audio recordings Occupation Sentiments about your experience with street harassment Opinions about women's security in public spaces Please provide your e-mail address to send you the final thesis if desired. *My email is*: ……………………………….
Consent statement	By signing this document, you indicate that you are at least 18 years old; that you are well informed about the study, the way in which the study data is collected, used and handled and what possible risks you could experience by participating in this study. If you had any questions, please indicate when signing that you were able to ask these questions and that these questions have been answered clearly and clearly. You indicate that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form. I agree to participate in a research project led by Serena van den Boogerd. The purpose of this document is to establish the terms of my participation in the project. 1. I received sufficient information about this research project. The purpose of my participation as an interviewee and discussion partner in this project has been clearly explained to me and I know what this means for me. 2. My participation as an interviewee and discussion partner in this project is voluntary. There is no express or implied compulsion for me to participate in this study. 3. My participation means that I will be interviewed by a student of Erasmus University. The interview itself will last approximately 45 to 90 minutes. I give the student(s) permission to make audio recordings and to take written notes during the interview.

	4. It is clear to me that, if I nevertheless object to one or more points as mentioned above, I can stop my participation at any time, without giving any reason. 5. I have the right not to answer questions. If I feel uncomfortable during the interview, I have the right to stop participating in the interview. 6. I have read and understood this form. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. 7. I have received a copy of this consent form also signed by the interviewer.	
Signature and date	**Name participant**	**Name Researcher** Serena van den Boogerd
	Signature	**Signature**
	Date	**Date** 26/3/23

Appendix B

CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Bonnie French, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Master's thesis on street harassment and articulations of security by women and government.

Name, email of student: Serena van den Boogerd, 531559sb@eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Willem Schinkel, Schinkel@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: March 2023 until June 2023

Is the research study conducted within DPAS   YES -

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1.   Does your research involve human participants.   YES -

   If 'NO': skip to part V.

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research?   - NO

2.   Does your research involve field observations without manipulations
that will not involve identification of participants.   - NO

   If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3.   Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary   data
that has been anonymized by someone else).   - NO

   If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1.   Will information about the nature of the study and about what
participants can expect during the study be withheld from them?   - NO
2.   Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written
'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study?   - NO

3.   Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation
at any time be withheld from participants?   - NO

4.   Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants?   - NO

Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or
negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by
participants?   `   YES

Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g.
racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union
membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person,
data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual
orientation)?   YES

Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot
give consent?   - NO

Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study?   - NO

Can participants be identified by the study results or can the
confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured?   - NO

Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study?   - NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

The study involves the sensitive topic of street harassment, the interview mainly aims to discover women's idea of safety on the street, but a part of the interview will be catered to their personal experiences. Participants will be asked about their experiences with street harassment, which involves catcalling, unpleasant sexually suggestive comments, or even unwanted physical contact. You have no preconceived notion how intense the incident might have been for a participant; therefore, I cannot guarantee that a participant won't experience negative emotions or psychological stress. Furthermore, the participants chosen to be interviewed will be a group of women from different ethnic backgrounds because the way people articulate (in)security in public space is integrally related to how they relate to a gendered or racialized identity. the choice of a "diverse" group of participants was done to get a holistic view of the gendered nature of street harassment. However, participant's ethnic background is not mentioned explicitly in the thesis.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

To ensure the safety and protection of participants' well-being and privacy during interviews, certain measures are implemented. Firstly, an informed consent form was provided to all participants. This informed them of the purpose and nature of the research, as well as the handling of the data collected during the interview. Additionally, participants have been given the option to choose a pseudonym to be used in the thesis to protect their privacy. After completion of the thesis, participants were able to review the final version. To create a more comfortable and open atmosphere during the interview, certain conversational techniques were employed. For instance, expressing and reciprocating emotions with participants helped build rapport, as well as allowing for sufficient time for the participant to speak freely. Lastly, participants will not be pushed to extensively elaborate on any unpleasant experience they have had.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

A possible unintended circumstance that might inflict negative emotional consequences in my research, is that interview participants might find it uncomfortable or emotionally challenging to talk about street harassment.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

The documents analysed for the thesis will be collected from public data bases of the municipality of Rotterdam as well as national government.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

The size of the sample was 5 documents and 5 interviews

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

There are a lot of public documents available online about street harassment and its securitization in the Netherlands. On the website of the Dutch national government about 150 documents are available.

Part V: DATA STORAGE AND BACK UP

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

Data will be stored on my personal laptop and written notes.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I am personally responsible.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Every week the data will be backed up.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

Participants indicated what pseudonym they would like to use. Participants real names will not be recorded or written down.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Name (EUR) supervisor:

Serena van den Boogerd

Date: 26/3/23   Date:

Appendix C

Code Book

Axial codes and final themes derived from document as well as interview data.

Axial codes	Final Themes
Sissing Coming in action against perpetrator Handling the perpetrator Ethnic background of men Non-western migration Perpetrator as the bad guy Victims of patriarchy "need" for a profile of the perpetrator Men as allies Men taking responsibility Power dynamic between men and women Ethnic profiling Being in a group or alone "patser controles" The acts of "thugs" "Poorly educated young men" "hey dushi"	**The perpetrator as the threat**
Reporting in the StopApp Ambiguous definition of street harassment Subjective nature APV as a tool	**The role of law enforcers**

Interpretive effort of law enforcement The municipality handling it Little trust in law enforcement Ethnic profiling Labeled as public order disturbance	
Criminalization prioritized APV as legal tool in Rotterdam Addressing the perpetrator Filing a report little trust in criminal justice approach Nationally legally invalid Preventive over repressive Real solution doesn't lie in criminalization Heavy surveillance Involving the police No direct consequences Fines Unsure what to report	**The possibility of criminalization**

Everyone must become aware, not just perpetrators Not just a women's issue but of society Cultural reset Turning a blind eye towards women's issues Effectiveness of campaigns Courses for men Workshops for hospitality staff Men as allies Initiatives for youth Communication Having conversations with men High school Being aware of your body in public space	**The role of social awareness**
Reporting in the StopApp Normalized behavior Barriers to report Little confidence in law enforcement Being guarded in public Invalidating own experience Not making a big deal Ignoring Taking measures before leaving the house Talking to friends Clothing	**The role of women**

Boys will be boys Normalcy "proving" masculinity Street harassment part of life as a woman Constant vigilance Coping being a responsibility of women Power dynamic LGBTQI+ often also victimized by street harassment Hesitant to take space Thinking the worst of strangers Patriarchal order Male validation The power of a social norm Accomplishing a change in behavior Men showing dominance on the street	**The role of sexism**