Women's Safety When Traveling Alone at Night

My starting point of interest is rooted in personal experience. As I have grown older and gained more independence, I expected to feel progressively safer and more confident navigating public space alone. Instead, I have felt increasingly unsafe. This feeling has been shaped not only by my own experiences, but also by the shared experiences of women around me - exchanged stories casually between friends, and also the constant presence in media highlighting the experiences of women.

In most areas of my life, education and experience have led to a greater sense of control and confidence. However, when it comes to traveling alone, particularly at night, increased awareness has resulted in constant risk management. Leaving the house often involves heightened caution, vigilance, and behavioral adjustment. This contrast has led me to question the wider impact this ongoing state of alertness may have on women's mental health, emotional wellbeing, and overall capacity to manage already busy lives.

Why?

I aim to challenge the normalisation of cautionary behaviors that women are taught from a young age to "stay safe" and reposition women's safety as a collective societal issue rather than an individual responsibility.

Key issue

The unequal female experience of public space and the cognitive and emotional burden placed on women. This imbalance limits freedom, time, finances, and mental wellbeing, reinforcing wider gender inequality and shaping how women move through the world.

Stories to be shared

This project tells the collective story of millions of women and girls through everyday micro-experiences: avoiding certain routes, paying for taxis, walking with keys in hand, staying alert instead of relaxed. Small actions reveal the cumulative cost of constant vigilance.

Primary Audience
Men - aiming to build awareness of their privilege in public space and encourage accountability, empathy, and ally ship. I will aim to educate not criticize, hopefully creating discussions in all ages/genders on how small changes can have a positive impact.

Secondary .Audience
Women - to validate lived experiences and make the invisible visible.
General public & institutions - to spark discussion around urban safety, social norms, and responsibility.

Although "everyone" is affected, the campaign deliberately speaks **outward**, not just inward to women, aiming to share the responsibility and not blame women for "not being safe enough".

Using graphic communication.
"Make the invisible visible" One approach is to invite viewers to "see the world through the eyes of a woman," for example by highlighting details in familiar environments that women instinctively notice but men may overlook.

This could be achieved through comparative visuals, typographic lists, annotations, or photographic interventions that expose thought processes and safety calculations. By presenting these experiences clearly and accessibly, the campaign aims to prompt empathy, conversation, and reflection rather than blame, ultimately influencing how safety and responsibility are perceived.

Research methods

Primary research will focus on lived experiences through conversations, testimonies, and surveys with women. Secondary research will include existing campaigns, academic writing on gendered public space and mental load, and contextual statistics.

Alignment with future ambitions

This project aligns with my interest in communication design as a multidisciplinary practice that uses visual language to inform, challenge, and create social change.

Future direction

Following the course, I aim to work within an agency or collaborative design environment, with an interest in socially engaged design, alongside potential freelance or postgraduate opportunities.